

The CORD

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COVER AND ILLUSTRATION CREDITS

The cover and illustrations for our February issue have been drawn by Sister M. Raphael Fulwider, O.S.F., Chairman of the Art Department at Maria Regina College, Syracuse, New York.

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Esser's Testament

THE RECENT DEATH of the learned Franciscan author Cajetan Esser makes this work in a way his own Testament to fellow Franciscans. The briefer of the two parts of the book is a series of conferences on the Rule. Esser discusses the influences of legend, asceticism, and a legalistic mentality on Franciscan perceptions of the Rule. Abandoning the 12-chapter division, he divides the Rule into 40 sentences and has a commentary on each. Three themes are underscored: the Rule is a genuine reflection of the mind of Francis; the Franciscans are first of all a fraternity, a brotherhood; the Rule is a spiritual document which proposes a form of *living*.

Part Two includes fourteen conferences on the Testament of Francis, conferences dating from 1974-1976. In each Esser is careful to delineate the *Sitz im Leben*—the historical context—of each passage. Then follows an application to present-day Franciscan living. Esser shares something of himself throughout. He recalls, e.g., how he gave away every year a pull-over made for him by his mother, for which he found no use, until he finally prevailed on his mother to make the garment for the poor. The themes of the conferences which struck me most were that of Francis as Pilgrim, as Eucharist-centered, as obedient to the Church. With respect to the last of these, explanation of Francis's "obediential" emphasis on praying the Office was new to me: The Cathari, rejecting the Old Testament, had no use for the Psalms. In this section, too, Esser sharply criticizes Mario von Galli, who seems to have imbibed much of the anti-Curial bias which Sabatier (p. 158 speaks of Sartre!) read into the Rule and Testament.

The Rule and Testament of St. Francis: Conferences to the Modern Followers of Francis. By Cajetan Esser, O.F.M. Translated by Sister Audrey Marie, O.S.F. Chicago: Franciscan Herald Press, 1977. Pp. viii-226, including Appendix. Cloth, \$7.95.

The Rule and Testament of St. Francis communicates a sense of the organic growth and continuity between the two basic Franciscan documents. The blend of scholarship and commitment to Franciscan values which comes through every page fills the reader with admiration for one who has given so much to Franciscans. What I have called Cajetan Esser's "Testament" is must reading for every Franciscan.

A. Julian Davis OFM

Reflections on a Box of Wheaties

Tasting cereal
promises a share
in one man's glory.
Yet the taste, so
like his finish, is
split-second, passing,
was.

Jesus is
this day. Our yawned
"alleluia" is response
to a glory too intense
for early morning.

Ennui changes
nothing.
Jesus is
in triumph where
his coordination is supreme—
a marvel of Spirit.
It is dawn. Time
to unplay the cynic;
to move from glory to Glory;
to leap with childheart
into the energy of a
Victor.

Sister Antoinette Kennedy, O.S.F.

Franciscan Unity

SERGIUS WROBLEWSKI, O.F.M.

IN THE beginning of my search for the meaning of Saint Francis I singled out his poetry of poverty, like everybody else. Poverty seemed to capture the essence of his life and ministry. There is no question but that the will to be poor was a defining imperative of Francis's life.

But in recent years it dawned on me that a negative quality like poverty could never exhaust the meaning of the greatest human being in the West, as Toynbee called Francis. The more I studied his writings the more I realized that his whole intent was worship; that poverty was subordinate, a self-emptying, an elimination of self-glorification in order to glorify the Lord God.

At the same time I had the growing realization that in the history of the Jewish People and the Christian Church the divine intervention through Moses and Jesus was intended to prepare a clean oblation unto the honor and glory of God. Worship had always been central to the Judeo-Chris-

tian tradition.

Some years ago I was confirmed in this insight upon reading Kenneth Kirk's *The Vision of God*, published in 1932. In this remarkable history of the Church, Kirk demonstrated the thesis that Christianity had come into the world with a double purpose: to offer men the vision of God and to call them to the pursuit of that vision; to call men to contemplation and worship, to intimacy with God and to His glorification.

In my view Francis grasped this as the substance of the Catholic faith; in fact, he was called to enhance it. To demonstrate this, I want to sketch the history of worship in the Church from Moses to Constantine and to place Francis's contribution in that context. I base myself on a recent book, *The Origins of the Christian Doctrine of Sacrifice*, by Robert J. Daly, S.J.

The key phrase in his book is "the spiritualization of worship."

By that Daly means getting at the true meaning of sacrifice—at the inner, spiritual or ethical significance of cult, over against the merely external understanding of it. But he makes it clear that this "spiritualization" does not exclude the "incarnational element" that Paul mentioned when he called upon Christians "to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God which is your spiritual worship" (Rom. 12:1). In other words, Paul advised them to offer all they did in the body provided they walked in the Spirit.

The Stages of Spiritualization

LET US NOW look at the stages of spiritualization. The Old Testament shows the divine intervention in the history of the posterity of Abraham to have promoted a progressive spiritualization of worship. Consider the great moments.

Under divine guidance Moses provided the People of God with cult and code. As time went on, the people tended to separate the covenant from the cult: that is, to violate the code but to continue the cult. The prophets reproached them, as when Isaia told them, "Bring no more vain offerings. . . . Cease to do evil, learn to do good" (Is. 1:13, 17). In effect, Isaia declared that submission to God's word was imperative and that without such obedience cult was useless.

The admonition went unheeded, and the Babylonian Captivity followed. The Jews found themselves without Temple or cult. They had the word of God only, around which the synagogue service developed. They learned that God takes "no delight in sacrifice" (Ps. 51:16). After the Return, however, the people soon fell into the old ways.

In the New Testament Jesus came to cleanse the Temple; more, to build a spiritual one. It was to worship that Jesus himself gave absolute priority. Jesus came to purify worship and to provide a clean oblation. During his public ministry he chastised the religious leaders for allowing the profanation of the Temple (cf. Mk. 11:17). He branded the current cult hypocrisy (Mk. 7:5). More, he promised a new Temple and a new cult (Jn.4).

To that end, he offered himself on Calvary and passed over into the heavenly Sanctuary to mediate there as our priest, victim, and altar (cf. Hebrews). Thus a spiritual Temple replaced the Temple in Jerusalem, as Jesus promised the Samaritan woman: "When the true worshippers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for such the Father seeks to worship him" (Jn. 4:23).

Jesus is now the Head of the new Temple while his members are "like living stones . . . built into a spiritual house to be a holy priest-

Father Sergius Wroblewski, O.F.M., author of several books on Franciscanism and a member of the summer faculty of the Franciscan Institute, delivered this address at a workshop held at Siena College, Loudonville, NY and sponsored by the Reinhold Niebuhr Institute of Religion, June 24, 1978.

hood to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ" (1 Pet. 2:7). Christians of the apostolic age felt no need of church buildings or sacred furnishings or an expanded ritual. Besides, these were neither available nor deemed necessary.

So it was until Constantine, when the "edifice complex" took hold of the Christian community. Basilicas sprang up and an elaborate liturgy was developed; but at the same time, walking in the footsteps of the Suffering Servant faded with the cessation of martyrdom and the rise of the Imperial influence of the Church. Bishops began to adorn themselves with Greek tinsel. Rites and sacred things and buildings loomed as "religion."

It seems that worship always tends to degenerate into a purely cultic thing. People tend to reduce religion to "going to church," while their lives and passionate concerns are strictly secular, unrelated to the divine will.

After Constantine, the process of spiritualization went on through monasticism. It was through religious life that the Holy Spirit promoted the interiorization of worship.

Negatively, monasticism was a reaction against the drawing-room kind of Christianity that arose with the union of Church and

state. Hermits and monks reacted against "pomp and circumstance" in society as well as in the Church.

But the positive thrust of monasticism was worship. Antony, Pachomius, Basil, and Cassian gave priority to worship and contemplation—that is, to "seeing God." This latter phrase did not have the sense of questing for ecstasies and visions, but of "looking towards God" and glorifying him.

The amazing thing is that even in barbarous times (the fifth to the tenth centuries), the praise of lips resounded in monastery chapels and churches. The Rules of St. Columbanus and St. Benedict guided many in contemplation and worship even while barbarians ravaged Europe.

But from the Carolingian period onwards, monasteries acquired large tracts of land which made for a certain attachment to the goods of this world. Keeping up the property became a passionate concern which diminished devotion to adoration.

Already in the second half of the tenth century there was a new stirring, a renewal, as new forms of Benedictine life sprang up. An eremitical trend arose around the powerful personality of St. Romuald and his Camaldolese, who along with other groups of contemplatives prized a stance of adoration above everything else.

Thus, even in this age of cathedrals worship was being "spiritualized," for these contemplatives gave attention to inner action and a eucharistic disposition.

A century later the Cistercians aimed at purity of worship. This is clearly shown in the correspondence between Peter the Venerable and St. Bernard of Clairvaux. Cluny, headed by Peter the Venerable, prided itself on splendid churches and liturgical grandeur. The Cistercians, however, with Bernard as spokesman, opted for liturgical simplicity.

Bernard's first objection was to Cluny's emphasis on the aesthetic:

... but these are small things; I will pass on to matters greater in themselves, yet seeming smaller because they are more usual. I say naught of the vast height of your churches, their immoderate length, their superfluous breadth, the costly polishings, the curious carvings and paintings which attract the worshiper's gaze and hinder his attention, and seem to me in some sort a revival of ancient Jewish rites...¹

Not only did Bernard decry the return to Old Testament externalism, but he was even more upset by the aesthetic side of Cluny's

churches, which by their beauty diverted attention from the Lord.

His other objection was the extravagance, the expense at the expense of the poor:

Hence the church is adorned with gemmed crowns of light—nay, with lustres like cartwheels, girt all around with lamps, but no less brilliant with precious stones that stud them. Moreover, we see candelabra standing like trees of massive bronze fashioned with marvellous subtlety of art, and glistening no less brightly with gems than with the lights they carry. What, think you, is the purpose of all this? The compunction of penitents or the admiration of beholders? O vanity of vanities, yet no more vain than insane! The church is resplendent in her walls, beggarly in her poor; she clothes her stones in gold, and leaves her sons naked; the rich man's eye is fed at the expense of the indigent. The curious found their delight here, yet the needy found no relief.²

Such costly outlay cannot be reconciled with the misery of people. How can a monument of injustice house an altar to the praise of the God of justice?

Francis's Contribution

IN THE twelfth century the new movements were eremitical and

¹Bernard of Clairvaux, *Apologia*, viii-xiii. Trans. G. G. Coulton, *Life in the Middle Ages* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1930-1954), IV, 169-74, *passim*.

²*Ibid.*



singleminded devotion to worship. He advised all the faithful, e.g., that “we must love God . . . and adore him with a pure heart and mind, because this is what he seeks above all else. . . .”⁴ In the same way he exhorted the friar priests

to be free from all earthly affection when they say Mass and offer singlemindedly and with reverence the true sacrifice of the most holy Body and Blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, with a holy and pure intention, not for any earthly gain or through human respect or love for any human being, “not serving to the eye as pleasers of men” (Eph. 6:6).⁵

This purity or singleminded devotion was prepared by poverty, which eliminated self-glorification and arose from interiority—i.e., from an obedience to the Word from the heart at personal cost. Hence Francis inserted these words in his office of the Passion: “Prepare your hearts and take up his holy cross. Live by his holy commandments to the last.”⁶ He insisted on this costly discipleship as the necessary ethical dimension of cult.

The whole Franciscan community was committed to worship and saw its ministry as calling

upon all men to glorify God. In his first Rule, Francis advises his preachers to call men to praise the Lord: “Whenever they see fit my friars may exhort the people to praise God with words like these: Fear him and honour him, praise him and bless him, thank and adore him. . . .”⁷ The same Rule contains a Franciscan manifesto which declares the friars’ commitment:

We Friars Minor . . . humbly beg and implore everyone to persevere in the true faith and in a life of penance. . . . At all times and seasons, in every country and place, every day and all day, we must have a true and humble faith, and keep him in our hearts, where we must love, honour, adore, serve, praise and bless, glorify and acclaim, magnify and thank, the most high supreme and eternal God.⁸

Thus it is evident that from the very beginning the Franciscan intention was to “spiritualize worship.” As the friars moved from town to town, they concerned themselves with the cleanliness of churches, with reverence for word and sacrament and priest, and with discipleship as the substance behind worship in spirit and truth.

⁴Letter to All the Faithful; *Omnibus*, p. 94.

⁵Letter to a General Chapter; *Omnibus*, p. 104.

⁶Office of the Passion; *Omnibus*, p. 147.

⁷1 Rule, 21; *Omnibus*, pp. 46-47.

⁸1 Rule, 23; *Omnibus*, pp. 51-52.

with a sure foundation in Christ, in the Jesus of faith and the Jesus of history.

As Francis learned to walk in the footsteps of the Suffering Servant and gave himself to discipleship, he and his followers worshipped in poor churches and lived in them. “We were only too glad to find shelter in abandoned churches.”³ His concern was with the quality of worship, which did not depend on the beauty of the church but on the disposition of the heart.

Accordingly Francis’s whole endeavor was purity: to bring

apostolic. They were a more naked spirituality, less involved in institutions, already trying to shake themselves loose from the Constantinian era. Within this framework Francis received the directive, “Rebuild my Church” at St. Damian’s.

His first response was masonry and he accordingly repaired four churches. This was, of course, an inadequate response. The crumbling Lateran of Innocent’s dream symbolized a Church given to much building but to neglecting the building up of the People of God by providing them

³Francis of Assisi, Testament; *Omnibus*, p. 68.

Worship and the Secular Age

FRANCIS'S sublime project fit in well with Christendom. That ideal was the Christian *Pax Romana* in a society ruled by God and God's agents—King and Priest. In that Christian order religion embraced all aspects of human activity. This world, in that perspective, pointed to another; and man was a pilgrim, on the way to the true fatherland. In such a mental environment Francis made sense: his yearning for God—to be with Him and to glorify Him.

But how acceptable is this in a secularized society? With the separation of State and Church, science, art, philosophy, economics, and morality have been emancipated from their religious origins. No particular sphere of existence is sacred. Nature is no longer perceived as filled with the divine Presence. People go along without God; they are men and women "come of age." This post-Christian world is bent on humanization, not adoration. What can the medieval Francis have to say to contemporary man, whose consciousness is this-worldly? I would say the following:

1. Intentional Christianity is in order. So many, like Francis, were born and raised Catholics; they are conventional Catholics. But now that membership in the Catholic Church is no longer

popular or customary but one of several options, they must want to be Catholics; they must become intentional Catholics.

2. Believers must become servants. There are many who hear God's word, but not many who obey it; there are many believers but few disciples and servants; many churchgoers but a limited number of followers of Christ. Only to the extent that Catholics live by the word as the only norm (and this is the whole point of the Letter to All the Faithful), shall "his will be done on earth as it is in heaven" and shall "his name be hallowed."

3. There has to be a lessening of preoccupation with church buildings. No matter how beautiful the church building, ultimately the people of God are the Church. Even a "good liturgy" is only an expression of faith. Unless one brings to it a living faith (by which Francis meant purity of heart and discipleship) the worship is empty. People have to be called to community and to a fidelity to the New Covenant. Only in this way is the Church, the "koinonia," built up.

4. Catholics have to become witnesses of eschatological hope who live here as pilgrims and are eager to join the angels and the saints in the heavenly Temple,

where there will be "no temple in the city, for its temple is the Lord God the Almighty and the Lamb" (Rev. 21:22). Worship will have been spiritualized.

In October of 1971 I was visiting Assisi and had the privilege of entering the Basilica of Saint Francis on his feastday. The moment I entered the sacred precincts I fell ill. Perhaps I was subconsciously disturbed. Elias,

after all, had built a magnificent church, an architectural marvel, but contrary to the wishes of Saint Francis, who in his Testament warned his friars "not to accept churches," much less build them, "unless they [were] in harmony with poverty." Francis had hoped to put an end to the Constantinian era and to help spiritualize worship. Perhaps we can move in that direction and interiorize cult.

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1982: Franciscan Year in America

WAYNE HELLMANN, O.F.M.CONV.

THE IMAGINATION and dream of Franciscans of every sort, shape, and color has been captured by the suggestion to hold a national celebration of the birth of Saint Francis. In the *New York Daily News* and in many sectors of the Catholic press articles have appeared which show the broad appeal this project has in the hearts of many Americans. The spark to ignite America into a Franciscan celebration has been flashed. All that yet needs to be supplied is a little fuel in the form of support and endorsement by those Franciscans in positions of authority and service.

To put the matter somewhat less positively, the obstacle blocking further progress toward this project's realization is the lack of any organized endorsement from the ministers provincial. In the United States, unlike in other countries of Europe and South America, there is no unified leadership in the

Franciscan movement. There is neither a conference nor a federation for the direction of Franciscan life in this country. The fledgling National Franciscan Communications Conference is the first really common endeavor that calls together Franciscans of all three orders and branches. For some time, true, Franciscan vocation directors have been meeting; but, though the gatherings support mutual interests and concerns, neither the Communications Office nor the vocation meetings serves as a forum for the formation and direction of Franciscan leadership. Thus, the majority of American Franciscans who desire a national celebration of Francis's birth in 1982 have no one to whom they can turn.

A National Franciscan Conference

SOME FORM of Franciscan Leadership Conference is needed to

The questionnaire published in our pages last month resulted primarily from Father Wayne Hellmann's plea (first made in an address to nearly a thousand Franciscans in St. Louis, April 1976, and later published in our July-August issue of that year) for a national or worldwide congress in 1980 to celebrate the 800th anniversary of St. Francis's birth. In this second article of our present series on Franciscan Unity, Father Wayne offers reflections on the developments of the last two years and further suggestions for the future. The author is Associate Professor in the Department of Theological Studies at St. Louis University and also serves as Guardian for the formation community at St. Bonaventure Friary in St. Louis.

serve all the Franciscans of various shapes and shades. If a conference representing the three orders of Franciscans were alive and vital, the planning and the execution of a national celebration in 1982 would be simple and easy. This is not the case. The forces and the spiritual energy of the three orders presently dissipate. The three orders have little impact upon one another, and together as a Franciscan presence they are hardly noticed by our hierarchy or by our age and society. When one reflects upon the number of Franciscans, the spiritual dynamism and vision of many of them, and their desire for a deeper unity, there is cause to weep when nothing is done.

The present dispersion is contrary not only to the present desire but also to the Franciscan tradition. The desire for a deeper unity among all Franciscan brothers and sisters is deep at the root of the Franciscan experience. The radical witness of Franciscans rests so much in their fraternity. Unlike the previous monastic experience, Francis initiated a new vision, in which each community was no longer autonomous but there was rather a single brotherhood—sisterhood—in which all members, wherever they were or whatever work they did, were to treat one another as members of the same family. A national Fran-

ciscan Leadership Conference would help make the one family of all Franciscan brothers and sisters more visible. The credibility of the Franciscan vocation to rebuild the Church into a deeper communion and fraternity would be increased and multiplied.

As the friars, who later called themselves the 800th Anniversary Committee, began to meet, they concentrated their attention on their own First Order. This was a practically necessary development, of course, given the limitations of time, energy, and other resources. Several things became immediately clear. First of all, there is no national forum in which their goals could be worked out and attained. Secondly, they saw that of all the three orders it is the First Order that gives the poorest witness of unity among the brothers.

The Third Order Secular has already surpassed the division that exists among the First Order friars. The Third Order of religious women who make up the various modern communities has already formed the Franciscan Federation of Religious Women. The Second Order has a thread of unity in its own American history. All Poor Clare monasteries in the United States trace their history to the first monastery established in Cleveland. Although there presently exist among them more than one federation, they are

miles ahead of the First Order on the road toward cooperation and sharing of resources. The friars who began to plan for the 1982 celebration thus concluded that they should begin at home, within their own First Order. Their intention was not to exclude the possibility that something be done in common by all three orders, but it did not seem proper that First Order friars call all Franciscans to some corporate venture when they themselves give the worst example. They believed that a celebration of Franciscan life in 1982 would offer more to the Church and the next generation of Franciscans if each of the three orders would take a look into the mirror for itself.

An important step in this direction was taken last year. For the first time in the history of the First Order in the United States a document formed by American friars of all three branches of the First Order was sent to each American friar. The event was small in itself, but it has great significance. Every province, commissariat, vicariate, and custody cooperated. This is an indication that cooperation on the national level is indeed possible. The majority of friars responded, thus giving a clear signal to the ministers provincial: bring the project of a national celebration to an actuality, and have no fear to take bold steps toward coopera-

tion and unity in some form.

After the questionnaire results were tabulated, a letter was written to all the ministers provincial by the 800th Anniversary Committee. The first suggestion was that the ministers provincial form a national conference. Three different conferences do exist, but the three have never met together. This is so unlike the example of the ministers provincial of Europe and South America, who meet regularly. In America there has never been any formal cooperation or planning on a national level for the development of the First Order in the United States. All decisions affecting planning, apostolates, education, investment of men and money have been made independently and without any serious mutual consultation. One fears to fathom the waste of manpower, money, and opportunity for effective impact on the American Church.

The most immediate concern of the 800th Anniversary Committee was to find someone to whom they could turn to carry out the friars' desire for a national celebration. This is why the first suggestion flowing from the questionnaire results is that the ministers form a conference. The first official act of that conference should be to establish an "ad hoc" committee of two provincials from each branch of the First Order which would then authorize and approve a national

celebration of First Order friars. This same conference could then also serve as an instrument of official communication with the Second and Third Orders. Out of this communication could develop a Franciscan Leadership Conference which would represent and serve all Franciscans.

Time to Plan

IT IS NOW 1979. It will soon be a year since the questionnaire was sent out. As it is already late, it might be better that each of the three conferences of ministers provincial appoint two of its members to form an inter-jurisdictional 800th Anniversary Committee to authorize the plan-

ning and the expenses for the 1982 celebration. These six ministers could become the liaison committee between the three conferences of the OFMs, the Capuchins, and the Conventuals until such time that there is one conference of Franciscan ministers provincial. If this celebration is to happen in 1982, concrete planning must begin immediately. Otherwise the project will die, and the opportunity will be lost to the present generation of friars.

So one hopes that the planning to implement the desires of the friars will indeed begin. To plan well, the committee should touch on all areas of Franciscan life,



from the ascetical and scholarly to the apostolic and pastoral. The needs for planning should determine the most urgent research and writing. The few scattered Franciscan scholars in the United States should be contacted to seek their cooperation, so that by 1982 there could be a series of studies and translations available and dedicated to the celebration of Francis's birth. We can hope, e.g., that by then there would be a new translation of Francis's writings from K. Esser's critical edition with introduction and commentaries. Translations of important mystical and spiritual works by Saint Bonaventure and a new Omnibus of the writings of Saint Clare are other projects yet to be completed. There are others who could write a compendium or even a synthesis of Franciscan spirituality. To enhance liturgical celebration of Franciscan events and saints, we must see that a companion volume to the Franciscan lectionary and sacramentary is written; and Franciscan musicians should be encouraged to compose both liturgical and other music.

All of these projects could be published and disseminated through the celebration in 1982. Artists in all the different media should be called forth and supported. The celebration should feature an art display of works created by Franciscans or according to a Franciscan theme.

One or two major works of art that directly present Francis should be commissioned and financed. A part of the preparation should increase support given to the Franciscan Communications Center in California so that Francis's voice may be heard in the mass media. All of America should be brought to hear that 1982 is a Franciscan year, so that the Poverello's gospel message may be communicated to the American people in a new way.

This may indeed sound like a lot, but the resources are already present and available. They are simply not mobilized. It is possible to direct the friars' energies and vision toward a national celebration of Francis's birth in 1982. The friars have already expressed their willingness to engage in such a celebration, and it now remains for the ministers provincial to join together so as to authorize and support the venture the friars have requested.

Beyond 1982

THE MINISTERS provincial should not, however, stop there. They should rather follow the example of the ministers general and begin to coordinate the various talents, energies, and apostolates of the friars. This is a part of their ministry. Each minister provincial is responsible not only for the friars in his own province but also—to the extent that he

shares in this office of ministry on that level within the order—for all the friars and the entire Order, that is, the whole First Order. The minister provincial, in other words, has in the Order an office analogous to that of the bishop in the Church. It is certainly in the spirit of Vatican II that the ministers have a national conference to help them become aware of the various needs of the Order in the United States and to enable them to minister to the whole Order, beyond provinces and jurisdictions. There are many areas of Franciscan life that need immediate attention and action if the Order is to give America a real transfiguration.

The first area of concern is our own tradition and the nature of our own life. It is a sad commentary on Franciscan life that we together cannot adequately fund, staff, and maintain a vital center for Franciscan research, study, culture, art, and formation. The Franciscan Institute struggles, and the burden must be carried by only a few. A fund should be established to award scholarships to students and grants to professors. Those called to give their life and energies to the pursuit of drawing life from our untapped resources are the ones who offer spirit and life to the Order, to the Church, and to the world.

In the area of publication on a

popular level THE CORD barely survives. It is all we have. More support from all the provinces is certainly due in order to build on what we already have and to continue to improve its quality.

Friars are rarely encouraged to write for publication. Thus the Franciscans—the largest group of religious in the United States—are forced to turn to Jesuit, Cistercian, or Carmelite publications to nourish their spiritual life. This need not be the case, as the Order has the resources; but the leadership, again, provides little support and direction.

Vocation directors have been meeting for some time. They have been perhaps the most forward looking group of friars. They deserve more support and funds. Costs of local and independent printing of vocation material are prohibitive. If this were centralized the best artists, writers, and theologians could be utilized, and the dollars would be used more wisely.

In the area of dollars, thousands are merely thrown away into the hands of big and rich business though our present method of insurance. Most agree that we do need insurance to care for sick and aging friars; but would not the First Order be big enough to insure itself if there were one central insurance fund for friars—or better, for all Franciscans? Would this not be more in a spirit of trust and poverty than our

present method of making the rich richer through high premiums? The Franciscan Communications Center in California is presently subsidized only by the English Speaking Conference of the Friars Minor. This is hardly an example of justice. All Franciscans reap the benefits and the publicity of their labor, and all should share in the burden. This burden should be considered, moreover, both in terms of financial support and in terms of manpower. How many ministers provincial would consider encouraging a friar gifted with these kinds of talents to offer his services to the Communications Center? How many provinces in the First Order give Franciscan Communications a place in their budget?

If all the ministers provincial were to form an American Franciscan Conference and begin to direct and coordinate the manifold resources that are now so dispersed, scattered, and hidden under the baskets of myopic vision, the Franciscan presence and contribution to the Church would increase a hundredfold. This would be true nationally, but more importantly their action would inspire a greater cooperation and unity among friars and other Franciscans at the local level and thereby give witness in the local Church. Some of the local Churches in our country

(Chicago, New York, St. Louis, Los Angeles, etc.) can number several thousand Franciscans, but hardly anyone— including the local Ordinary, is ever aware of it. St. Louis, for example, is full of Franciscans, but there is no Franciscan presence evident in the life of the local Church. Gatherings or small chapters of the friars of a given province that cross a broad area of the country may be deep experiences of Franciscan life for the friars, but they give little witness to the local Church. Franciscan fraternity will never be a witness or a dynamic grace within the local Church unless it is seen and felt by the people who make up that Church. This means that the fraternity of all Franciscans of the First, Second, and Third Orders must become visible in the local Church. The unity and cooperation among Franciscans in a given area is just as important as their union and cooperation with the members of their own province that embraces large areas of the country. Every diocese should have its own local chapter of the Franciscan Leadership Conference representing all the Franciscans within that local Church. If each major American city had such a local Franciscan Leadership Conference, the American Church and the whole American scene might be different. And of course this local endeavor would also help sup-

port the Franciscan Leadership Conference on the national level.

Rebirth of a Movement

A FRANCISCAN Leadership Conference on both the national and local levels would help Franciscans become a vital movement in the Church. This is the very reason that there are three orders of Franciscans. Saint Francis's life and vision are for all Christians who seek to live the gospel. To be a movement rather than a group of stable and isolated religious orders, they must foster the emergence of some form of dynamic leadership. Franciscans in America have yet to come out of their shell, and the most effective way to help them do so is to establish as soon as possible this proposed Franciscan Leadership Conference.

Finally, this should be accomplished before Christmas of 1979.

If the ministers provincial of the First Order begin to take the lead in showing communion with and concern for the whole First

Order, they will indeed be following the recent example of the ministers general. This could bear fruit for all Franciscans. Perhaps Thomas of Celano's observation interpreting the beginnings of the Franciscan movement could again be realized, and 1982 could become the year of Franciscan rebirth:

Many of the people, both noble and ignoble, cleric and lay, impelled by divine inspiration began to come to Saint Francis, wanting to carry on the battle constantly under his discipline and under his leadership. All of these the holy man of God, like a plenteous river of heavenly grace, watered with streams of gifts; he enriched the field of their hearts with flowers of virtue, for he was an excellent craftsman; and, according to his plan, rule, and teaching, proclaimed before all, the Church is being renewed in both sexes, and the threefold army of those to be served is triumphing. To all he gave a norm of life, and he showed in truth the way of salvation in every walk of life [1 Celano 37].



Anima Christi

MOTHER MARY FRANCIS, P.C.C.

FOR SOME time I have had it in mind to reflect with you, dear sisters, on that profoundly evocative prayer, "Anima Christi," phrase by phrase, petition by petition. So, when that particular hymn was chosen for the first evening of our departed sister's memorial services after the funeral, I was very struck by God's showing me by this delicate touch that the hour had come.

It is a favorite prayer of mine, one I have prayed daily since the age of thirteen, as a sophomore in high school. I discovered myself to be in very good company when I learned that Pope Pius XII also prayed the "Anima Christi" each morning after Communion! But I take this prayer as a chapter theme not because it is a devotion of mine, but because there is such a wealth of theology and devotion in it for the enrichment of our thought and the deepening of our understanding of Christology. I think that as contemplatives most of us have a rather

small stock of vocal prayers outside the Divine Office. And probably again for most of us as we grow older the stock, if anything, further decreases as we become more and more absorbed in the liturgical prayer of the Church which blends into our most private prayer so as to leave no longer any sign of boundary. Liturgical communal prayer and the deepest private prayer flow in and out of each other. And we develop what I call certain "code expressions" in our very private life of love with God. Perhaps little aspirations, or fragments of aspirations. You know my own. It is not to propose the adding of a vocal prayer to your own elected store that I want to reflect with you on the "Anima Christi," but to plunder with you its immense riches which each one can invest as God leads her.

What do we mean by "anima Christi"? What idea are we conveying when we speak of the "soul of Christ"? Although we

would not articulate it even to ourselves in words so crude, is it not true, dear sisters, that we tend to lapse into some kind of vague quasi-concept of the soul of Christ as being somehow the Divinity infused into a human body? This is not the soul of Christ. His was a created human soul.

In considering this, we enter into a realm of great mystery. We are speaking of a divine Person, the Son of God. And we readily accept in faith a fact which of course we can never of ourselves comprehend, that this divine Person had a created human body which began life in the womb of the Virgin Mary solely by the overshadowing of the Holy Spirit and without intervention of man. We follow the human growth of the Son of God through the Scriptures, as Jesus is born, learns to walk and to speak, questions, comprehends, matures, passes through all the phases of human growth to full manhood, and dies a human death after enduring human suffering and human temptation. This divine Person is God; yet this body was created. So, too, was this human soul.

"Anima" is the Latin root of how many English words! We speak of a person as being animated. We say, "She has such an animated countenance," and everyone knows what we mean. Her face is very much "alive." Slang has something to tell us

when it offers the expression, "a dead pan." We know what that means, too. An animated person does not have a dead face, but a face full of life. We speak of a person's animated way of speaking, of her animated gait, her animated gestures. And by all of these we mean: Life! If we are trying to help a person in her reading aloud or directing a person in a play, we might have occasion to say: "Dear sister, show more animation!" Be more alive! And we speak of inanimate creation which is literally creation without the vital life principle. Rocks and stones are part of the inanimate creation of God. Plants already enter into animate creation which involves the life principle of beginning, growth, death. And animals (tempting to digress on the noun here!) testify by their very name that they are a higher part of animate creation. Then we ascend to man with his exalted created life-principle given to him by the creating Father, given to each one of us, given to Christ. It is this created soul of Christ to which we cry out: "Make me holy! Sanctify me!" "Anima Christi, sanctifica me." In him is the source of life, of the animation which makes it possible for us to be completely alive in holiness.

Each of us has her own created animating principle, her own soul created by the Father. Unlike Christ, we are in need of redemp-

Mother Mary Francis, P.C.C., Abbess of the Poor Clare Monastery of Our Lady of Guadalupe in Roswell, New Mexico, is well known to our readers as the author of numerous books of spiritual conferences, including the popular Blessed Are You, and poetry, including the recent, well received Variations on a Theme. The present article is the first in a series of twelve conferences on the prayer, Anima Christi, originally given at chapter to the Poor Clare Nuns in Roswell. To preserve the spontaneity of the spoken conferences, the barest minimum of editing has been done on the transcriptions.

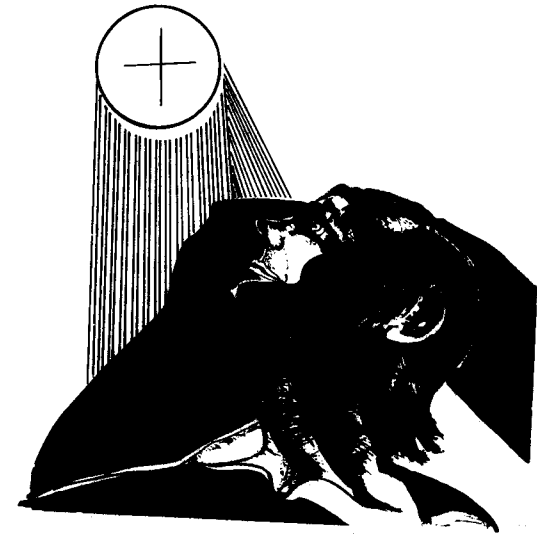
tion, of continual sanctification of our spirit. But the vital life principle, the animating principle, is like unto Christ's soul in being the creation of the Father and in having the same ministering faculties: memory, imagination, intellect, will. And in being served by the senses.

Now, dearest sisters, as we know only too well, our vital animating principle, our soul, is often ill served by its ministering, subservient faculties. Christ's soul was all-perfect, and its ministering faculties served it perfectly. It is to the soul of Christ that we must, therefore look for our sanctification. We shall not find it in our own animating principle so wounded by original sin and so weakened again and again by actual sin. In Christ's soul, never subject to original sin, never damaged in the slightest way by actual sin but "like unto us in all things save sin" (Heb. 4:15), we have that pure force of the one animating principle in which we can be made holy.

Now let us look at some of these ministering faculties of Christ's soul. He had a memory, and he made human decisions about how to use his memory. We need strength to make right decisions, a strength not to be found in our weakened life principle but only in the soul of Christ. How many incidents in the Lord's life we could point to

here as showing us the choices he made about how to use his memory! Let us take just one or two.

You know so well the Gospel incident of the ten lepers made clean, but only one returning to thank Christ. You know it as a favorite reflection of mine because of all that it reveals of the human heart of Christ and the human soul of Christ. He let us know that he was hurt by ingratitude. "Were not ten made clean? Where are the nine? Only this stranger has returned to thank me" (Lk. 17:17). We can say, dear sisters, that Christ's memory was assaulted by the sorrow evoked in him by the ingratitude of the nine. But he chose not to "remember" after that one revelatory cry of his human heart which should be enough to break the ungrateful hearts of us all. He let us know how he felt, and the struggle with the hurt of his human heart; but then he made a human decision not to "remember" this in the sense that he would be very slow to grant his favors again. Or, to put it in the most ordinary language, that he would really think twice before he worked another miracle for this ungrateful mass of mankind. Instead, he chose to remember that one was grateful. We need to remember that a human Jesus suffered many temptations and needed to make human resistance



and human choices. It was not just a matter of the initial three "classic" temptations (Lk. 4:13).

We find decisions like that quite difficult sometimes, don't we? It is so easy to remember the hurt, the misunderstanding, and so tempting to rehearse to ourselves these ingratitude. Christ elected to remember what would enable him to go on doing good, so that his memory did not enfeeble his soul, but served it. Perhaps this is example enough, except that I cannot quite go on without some advertence to dear Saint Peter. When Jesus, after his resurrection, asked the famous triple question, was he not telling us what he would choose to remember about Peter? Wasn't he giving his poor, weak, but loving child, Peter, the opportun-

ity to present him with what he would remember? Jesus could have remembered only the denials. He chose to remember the love, and gave us our first pope.

Then there is another ministering faculty to the soul of Christ: his human imagination. We must be careful never to think of the imagination as a kind of perverted faculty of the soul. True, Saint Teresa of Avila calls the imagination "that crazy woman in the house." We know what she means. And certainly if we allow the imagination to wander about undirected, it can be just like that: a crazed woman wandering in the house of our life. But the imagination, *per se*, is a glorious faculty. It is our inbuilt TV created by God long before man ever thought

of throwing images on a screen. Man is always so far behind God! So, yes, the imagination is a marvelous creation. But we cannot allow it to overpower the soul. We must bring it into subservience, not as a chained chattel of the soul, but as a good servant.

Imagination is particularly strong in some persons, and the suffering it can cause to them can likewise be a channel of suffering to others in whom it is less strong. This still does not imply that there is anything wrong, anything base, about imagination. When I was a postulant, we read an article about the bombing of a convent in a certain country. The chaplain was trying to evacuate the nuns, with chaos all about him. The bricks were falling, the glass was flying. Would he make it? Could he save the nuns? And the writer said, with a very nice literary turn, "It was certainly not a good hour in which to have a strong imagination. And unfortunately the chaplain was a poet!" Well, dear sisters, Christ also was a poet, the like of whom we shall never hear again. And so his imagination, being perfect, presented to him possibilities in a fuller color than any of ours ever will. In the Garden of Gethsemane, what his imagination presented to him of the sufferings to come could have been completely overpowering except that the soul of Christ made of that imagination a

servant to itself and kept it in dignified subservience, kept it in its right place of contributing servant. The fuller color screen of what is coming, what may be, what the physical sufferings will feel like, look like, the "uselessness" of it all for how many souls . . . this had to be on the full screen of Christ's all-perfect imagination. And keeping that imagination what it is created to be, the good servant of the human soul, was part of his saying: "Not my will but thine be done" (Lk. 22:42).

Now, our weakened and damaged soul, though so beautiful and glorious and full of potential for eternal perfection, must find its strength to actuate its potential not in itself but in Christ. The apostle says: "Let this mind be in you which was in Christ Jesus" (Phil. 2:5). It is not that we abdicate our own principle of soul, our own mind, but that the mind of Christ takes possession of our own. So that again the apostle testifies to his own humanity being perfected in the soul of Christ, of having made the animating principle of his own life that of the soul of Christ: "I live now, not I, but Christ lives in me" (Gal. 2:20). This is perfect human fulfillment—that Christ has taken me over, that the soul of Christ has sanctified me, that the perfect and unblemished animating principle of the created Christ becomes my own.

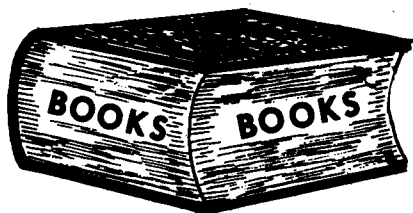
Therefore, dear sisters, when we speak of an animated person, in the loftiest spiritual sense we would mean a Christlike person. The more Christlike we are, the more animated we are in the very literal, basic, etymological sense of the word. We are progressively "dead" as we do not live in Christ. To be animated in this exalted sense is to be Christlike; to be more animated is to be more Christlike; to be totally animated is to "live now, not I, but Christ in me."

When the apostle says, "Let this mind be in you which was in Christ Jesus," what does he tell us that mind was? Does he present us with some dizzying galaxies of speculation? No. Does he tell us of things that belong in the third heaven, as he said in another place, and not to be understood in the language of

men? No. What is the mind of Christ? It is to be totally emptied out in the service of the Father. This was the decision of our Lord. "Being made in the likeness of God . . . but emptied himself, taking the form of a servant" (Phil. 2:6-7). He poured himself out. That is what the Scriptures tell us is the mind of Christ, the soul of Christ, the principle of the human life of Christ. Thus, when we pray, "Anima Christi, sanctifica me," we are making a very bold prayer, a tremendously exacting prayer. We are saying that we want to be emptied out, to experience our own kenosis as he experienced his, totally given, totally spent. So, let us remember what a bold and beautifully dangerous prayer we are beginning: "Soul of Christ, sanctify me." It will not be painless. No passion ever was.

God loved the world so much that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not be lost, but may have eternal life.

(John 3:16)



Strannik: The Call to Pilgrimage for Western Man. By Catherine de Hueck Doherty. Notre Dame, IN: Ave Maria Press, 1978. Pp. 84. Paper, \$2.25.

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

Those who have not read *Poustinia* and *Sobornost* will be sent scurrying by *Strannik* to those earlier works in this trilogy of reflections on Eastern spirituality for the West by Catherine de Hueck Doherty. Those who have read them, on the other hand, may find *Strannik* something of a disappointment. Not only is it a brief 84 pages; but ten of those pages are given to a reprint of her poem, "Journey Inward," which already appears as Chapter 8 in *Sobornost*. While the reprint of the "little mandate" on p. 45 is also a repetition, she does give more of its history and thus provides more insight into her mystical experience.

While the author tells us about external pilgrimages such as she herself experienced as a child and later as a "refugee" in Canada after being driven from her beloved Russia, the pilgrimages she is writing about are principally interior. She writes: "But it is another thing to pilgrimage

within oneself to meet the God that dwells within, and having met him to understand that from that moment the pilgrim does not belong to himself at all."

In the first chapter, "Remembrance of Paradise," the author finds the hunger for pilgrimage goes back to Adam and Eve after the Fall. Pilgrimage received its perfect fulfillment in "Jesus Christ the great Pilgrim who came from heaven down to earth and went from earth back to heaven." Since then every Christian has some desire to pilgrimage. In this brief treatise she leads the reader down the inner road of poverty and humility; she walks with him down the road of fasting and self discipline and obedience to the will of God. All is done in an orderly fashion; and yet she herself alludes to the fact that her mystical experience is far greater than she can put into words. Still, in chapters such as "The Soles of My Feet Were Bloody," "Pilgrimage to the Heart of Men," "Pilgrimage in the Resurrected Christ," she sees the life of the pilgrim as truly blessed and evangelical, for "he constantly reproduces in his life the Incarnation, the preaching, the suffering, the death and the resurrection of the Lord."

If you want to touch God more closely, then you have to become a pilgrim; and this book, *Strannik*, may help you understand what that means to one pilgrim on her long journey to God.

Christian Anthropology: A Meaning for Human Life. By John F. O'Grady. Ramsey, NJ: Paulist

Press, 1976. Pp. viii-231. Paper, \$4.95.

Reviewed by Dr. Robert E. Donovan, Assistant Professor of Theology at St. Bonaventure University.

As is obvious from an overview of religious as well as secular literature, the question of the meaning of human life, of what it means to be a healthy human person, is in the forefront. The old optimistic certitudes produced by the rationality of Western Christianity have fallen before a world war, the destruction of European Jewry, and the atom bomb. The romantic reaction of the sixties is now recognized as rather exaggerated, but as pointing in the right direction. It has become obvious that being a full and open human person is primary. Anything that takes away from human growth is to be deplored. Anything that adds to it is to be applauded.

So, John O'Grady is to be applauded in his attempt to synthesize the old Western rationalistic tradition with much of the new or recent Western rationalistic tradition. It is a well done synthesis. I could find very little fault with his presentation. All the big names are present: Plato, Aristotle, Augustine, Aquinas, Rahner, *et al.*; and yet the work is not cluttered by too many citations. It reads rather well.

From a systematic and historical perspective, which is that of the author, it is a success. Father Grady, a former seminary professor, begins his theological manual not with God, One and Three, but with man, the *image* of God. He then proceeds to discuss man in his relationship with God. He is very quick to point

out the problems that much of the old Western rationalistic theology has in speaking to man as seen through the eyes of evolution and psychology. There is a masterful handling of the idea of predestination (from God's side) and sin (again from God's side). In this and other chapters Father O'Grady succinctly presents the old and the new. He roots his understanding of the new in recent studies into the meaning of the Scriptures. So for him "predestination and election are rooted in the eternity of God . . . [and] this adds to man's value and dignity" (p. 35).

Going on to the question of man's being ordered to God, (ch. 3), O'Grady again gives an insightful presentation of the old and the new. He traces very vividly the passage from the answer being found in pure human nature to its being situated in the supernatural existential. This brief treatment of the question is the best I've seen. I recommend it for those interested.

Having discussed man as the image of God, O'Grady now turns his attention to man as creature, as needing others, as trinity (Body, Soul, Spirit), and as sexed. Then he begins to approach man as I know him and am concerned with him—the man who works for a living, tries to be creative, and—best of all—celebrates life. The chapter on man as celebrator is the best and most real in the book. The author himself seems to think so too, since it takes up a disproportionate amount of space in the conclusion. As he says there, "If we are ever to become what we are called to be, we need fantasy in every aspect of our lives: How things might be!" (p. 215). I would have like to see

how the book would have come out if he had started there.

All through the chapters before those on man as I know him, I was impressed with O'Grady's scholarship, style, and organization. It is a great synthesis of the material to be found in the old theology manuals; and it is also, as I was forced to conclude, a new theology manual. As such it is excellent and could be of great use in graduate or seminary courses. For most everyone else it will be too concise and, alas, not meaningful until the later chapters. I have to know myself first and then see God—not the other way around. And so does Christian Anthropology, if it is going to speak to the man of today.

The Soul's Journey into God; The Tree of Life; The Life of Francis. By St. Bonaventure. Edited by Ewert Cousins; preface by Ignatius Brady, O.F.M. New York: Paulist Press, 1978. Pp. xx-353, incl. index. Cloth, \$9.95; paper, \$6.95.

Showings. By Julian of Norwich. Translation & introduction by Edmund Colledge, O.S.A., and James Walsh, S.J.; preface by Jean Leclercq, O.S.B. New York: Paulist Press, 1978. Pp. x-369, incl. index. Cloth, \$9.95; paper, \$6.95.

Reviewed by Father Vianney M. Devlin, O.F.M., Ph.D. (English, University of London), Associate Professor of English at Siena College

Bonaventure was 47 years dead and not yet declared a Saint and Doctor of the Universal Church when Dante placed him among the Teachers of Wisdom in his Heaven of

the Sun in the great *Paradiso* of his *Divine Comedy*. Before he meets Bonaventure, however, Dante listens to a magnificent praise of Saint Francis of Assisi placed upon the lips of Thomas Aquinas. In his portrayal of the sweet, Christlike figure of Francis, Dante follows in the main *Legenda major Beati Francisci* which Bonaventure composed sometime between 1260 and 1263 and which, together with *The Soul's Journey into God* and *The Tree of Life*, all admirably translated by Ewert Cousins, are included in The Classics of Western Spirituality series published by the Paulist Press.

Dr. Cousins's translations were made from the original Quaracchi critical text for *The Soul's Journey* and *The Tree of Life*, with footnotes for the former checked against the new printing in *Opera theologica selecta*. His translation of the major biography of Saint Francis was made from the critical text in the *Analecta franciscana*. I mention this critical apparatus to indicate the high quality of scholarship attendant upon this fine series of classical texts of Western Spirituality now well underway by the Paulist Press. Readers need have no fear of whimsical or random selection of these texts. Scholars and educated laymen are served well, and interested "common" readers are assured of substantial fare in both volumes under consideration here.

In a succinct introduction, Dr. Cousins sets forth his criteria for selecting the three Bonaventurian texts: "(1) works that clearly qualify as such by their acceptance and influence; (2) works which taken together present an integral picture of

the essence of Franciscan spirituality as Bonaventure perceived it" (p. 12). Furthermore, Dr. Cousins points out the benefits to be derived from a reading of these particular three in conjunction: "*The Life of Saint Francis* parallels *The Tree of Life* in its focus on the concrete historical details of a human life. *The Life of Saint Francis* and *The Tree of Life* are treatises on the life of Christian virtue which leads ultimately to the spiritual ascent of *The Soul's Journey*." And so by presenting in one volume these three Bonaventurian texts he hopes "To give a comprehensive picture of Franciscan spirituality according to Bonaventure" (p. 15).

Acknowledging that Bonaventure's highly complex Latin presents special difficulties to the translator, Dr. Cousins has attempted to maintain "the rhythmically balanced phrases and clusters of symbols whose meaning is enhanced by the subtle relations suggested by their rhetorical structure" (p. 47) by breaking the text into sense lines, thereby retaining the original sentence structure and producing an English version that is readable and meditative. This is a handsome and handy volume and highly recommended to readers of THE CORD. A hard bound edition is available for libraries investing in the entire series—a worthwhile investment!

The late Pope John Paul I is reported to have surprised his hearers when during his regular Sunday Angelus blessing in St. Peter's Square he said that God is Father and "even more is Mother, who does not want to harm us." The phrase would have appealed to

the fourteenth-century English mystic, Julian of Norwich, who develops the theme in the 58th chapter of her Revelations. In his preface to this edition, Dom Jean Leclercq states: "Julian . . . did not invent the theme. What makes her contribution original . . . is the theological precision with which she applies this symbolism to the Trinitarian interrelationships" (p. 9). And in their perceptive introduction, Fathers Colledge and Walsh elaborate upon that contribution to Western spirituality. Most readers, however, will wish they had spent more time developing the richness of this aspect of Julian's theology than they have done, and somewhat less (assuming the space requirements were normative) in discussing sources and the similarities of Julian's writings to other masters of spirituality.

The editors are careful to point out that "Julian's book is by far the most profound and difficult of all medieval English spiritual writings . . . Julian is hard going. In her own times there seem to have been few willing to attempt it" (p. 32). This difficulty, together with the textual problems associated with the manuscript, have perhaps too long kept contemporary readers from attempting to come to grips with this fascinating 14th-century woman's thought. She is often considered a master of rhetorical art deserving favorable comparison with her own contemporary, Geoffrey Chaucer.

Difficult though she may be, Julian has some memorable and haunting phrases with which more of us ought to be familiar. In chapter four of the short text, e.g., we read: "I saw that he is to us everything which is good

Life and Death

What, Lord is life, but a series of at times chaotic deaths
To become new life for someone else in an unending chain?
Sometimes, death becomes the reason for life;

Or again, life becomes the reason for death.

He made all things new again, through death and rising,
And the sequence of life and death are ever the same:

Creation—disintegration—creation,

As our life gives life to another, for the glory of God.
How truly gifted are we to see and to believe!

Sister Carolyn Wilson, O.S.F.

and comforting for our help. He is our clothing, for he is that love which wraps and enfolds us, embraces us and guides us, surrounds us for his love...” And from the same chapter: “And in this he showed me something small, no bigger than a hazelnut, lying in the palm of my hand, and I perceived that it was as round as any ball. I looked at it and thought: What can this be? And I was given this general answer: It is everything which is made. I was amazed that it could last, for I thought that it was so little that it could suddenly fall into nothing. And I was answered in my understanding. It lasts and always will, because God loves it; and thus everything has been through the love of God” (p. 130).

Just as Bonaventure found an especial consecration within the poetic text of Dante’s artistic reation, so also Julian has found it within the poetic text of T.S. Eliot’s *Four Quartets*, considered by some critics to be the greatest religious poem of the twentieth century. In the third

section of “Little Gidding,” Eliot quotes Julian almost verbatim:

Sin is Behovely, but
All shall be well, and
All manner of thing shall
be well.

Thank you, Paulist Press, not only for providing us with readable, scholarly classics of Western spirituality, but also for reminding us that such masters of the spiritual life can inspire and enrich poets, whether in the fourteenth or in the twentieth century!

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Reviewed by Mother Mary Francis, P.C.C., well known author of several volumes of poetry and conferences for religious and Abbess of the Poor Clare Monastery of Our Lady of Guadalupe, Roswell, NM.

It is always distressing when one must make the sorry comment that a poet’s early works are much better than his later ones, that a lecturer was much more effective when he began than when he concluded his remarks. So it is nothing but a pleasure to report that Father William Meninger in these six conferences gets much better as he goes on. It would be a pity if anyone closed shop on listening after the first tape which is so inferior to the others, for better and better is to follow as Father William becomes more himself (the “himself” whom this reviewer is privileged to know as a simple, prayerful, clear-minded monk). The first conference’s disengaging caustic references to the Supreme Pontiff, the hierarchy and superiors in general, along with the self-conscious slang and painful “those guys” references to the apostles, happily do not appear again. What does appear is an increasingly helpful and eminently sincere effort to help us listen to what God is saying to us in the Scriptures and to pray in the contemplative manner to which all are in some measure called and fashioned by God to pray.

It is nowhere announced to whom these conferences are given, but apparently they were recorded “live”

when delivered to a group of diocesan priests on retreat at beautiful Spencer Abbey. One may find some of the “assists” to prayer in regard to physical relaxation a bit contrived, but maybe one not exposed to the high-powered demands of modern parish life is not equipped to pass judgment on methods which might be simple and effective aids to some where they would have to be artificial in the cloister. What is important is that Father William guides us in prayer as one who is familiar with and practised in the ways of which he speaks. He has obviously often been where he is inviting us to come. And he disposes of the more usual so-called difficulties in prayer with a freshness and simplicity that is altogether touching. For example, regarding distractions in this contemplative form of prayer, the speaker says with the authority of one who himself has long listened and learned in prayer: One hundred distractions! What to do? Return to your prayer. And you will have made one hundred acts of love.”

Father William’s program of not reading the Scriptures so much as listening and then responding is presented in the first two conferences with clear examples, some of them offered in confidence out of his own life. But it is the final tape on contemplative prayer which is, in this reviewer’s opinion, Father’s best achievement. “Grow old along with me, the best is yet to be!” says Browning in *Rabbi ben Ezra*. Listen to these tapes and know that the best is yet to be—at the end where the truest poets and the best lecturers bring us the finest fruits of their

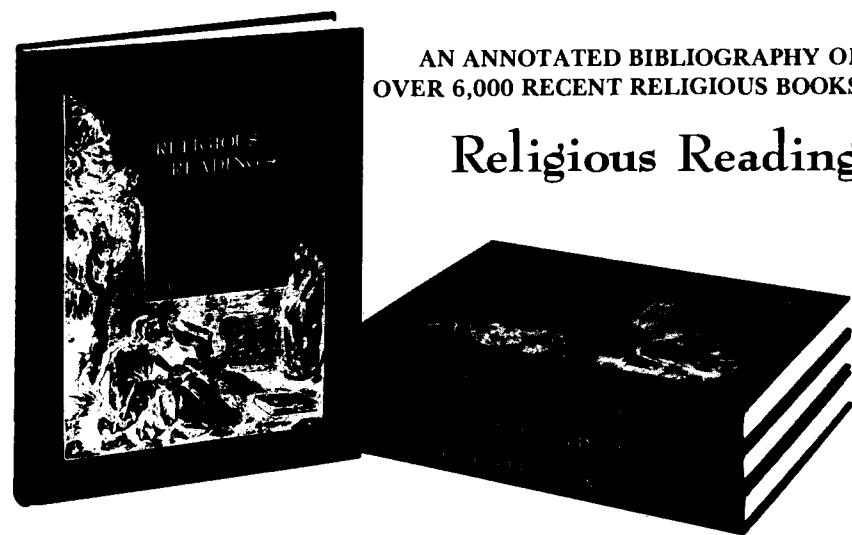
maturity.

There are also two tapes by Dom Thomas Keating, abbot of the monks of St. Joseph's Cistercian Abbey. Father Abbot gives a history of contemplative prayer through the centuries in the Church. It could be called, "The rise and fall of contemplative prayer." Happily, there is apparent in our days a new resurrection as the speaker points out. Dom Thomas manages to make of what could have been presented as

text-book history, an engaging presentation which is itself an invitation to prayer, a guide, and an inspiration. So simply, sweetly, and humbly are these two talks given that one might be almost unaware of the remarkable scholarship evident in them on after-consideration. Learning sits very lightly upon this lovable abbot. We are very comfortable with him. And the history teacher is simultaneously the spiritual director—and such a good one.

BOOKS RECEIVED

- Costanzo, Joseph F., S.J., *The Historical Credibility of Hans Kung: An Inquiry and Commentary*. North Quincy, MA: The Christopher Publishing House, 1978. Pp. 383, including indices. Cloth, \$12.95.
- Kraft, William, F., *Normal Modes of Madness: Hurdles in the Path to Growth*. Staten Island, NY: Alba House, 1978. Pp. x-177, including bibliography. Paper, \$4.95.
- McNally, Thomas, C.S.C., and William G. Storey, D.M.S., eds., *Lord, Hear Our Prayer: A Collection of Traditional and Contemporary Prayers*. Notre Dame, IN: Ave Maria Press, 1978. Pp. vi-366, including index. Leatherette, \$4.95.
- Fulley, Walter J., *Called to Teach: A Spiritual Guide for Teachers and Aides*. Staten Island, NY: Alba House, 1978. Pp. viii-121. Paper, \$3.95.
- Twigg, Sister Blanche, M.H.S.H., *God Calls a People: A Journey through the Old Testament*. Cincinnati: St. Anthony Messenger Press, 1978. Pp. vi-169. Paper, \$2.50.



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For each book, the following information is given: author, title, publisher, price, binding (hardcover or paperback), date of original publication if the book is a reprint, and name of the series in which the book appears. Each annotation is 75-100 words in length and is provided by the publisher of the book. Author, title and publisher indices contribute to the usefulness of this reference work. Subscriptions available. \$15.00 per volume.

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