## THE FRANCISCAN STUDIES M.A. PROGRAM AT THE FRANCISCAN INSTITUTE ST. BONAVENTURE UNIVERSITY

#### **COURSES OFFERED IN SUMMER, 1980**

All Courses meet daily, Monday through Friday in Plassmann Hall, except as noted.

FI 500	٠	Bibliogr	aphy
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1 cr. hr., Fr. Conrad Harkins, O.F.M., Ph.D.: TTh 8:30-9:40, Room 108. This course is required of all new degree candidates. It must be taken in the first summer session attended

## FI 501 Sources for Franciscan Studies I

3 cr. hrs., Fr. Regis Armstrong, O.F.M. Cap., Ph.D.: 9:45-10:55, Room 201.

## FI 502 Sources for Franciscan Studies II

3 cr. hrs., Fr. Wayne Hellmann, O.F.M. Conv., D.Th.: 11:00-12:10, Room 301. This course is a prerequisite for FI 504.

## FI 504 Life of St. Francis

3 cr. hrs., Fr. Conrad Harkins, O.F.M., Ph.D.: 11:00-12:10, Room 201. Prerequisite: FI 502

#### FI 506 Survey of Franciscan History

3 cr. hrs., Fr. Lawrence Landini, O.F.M., H.E.D.: 8:30-9:40, Room 301.

## FI 508 History of Franciscan Thought

3 cr. hrs., Fr. Joachim Giermek, O.F.M. Conv., S.T.L., M.A.: 1:00-2:10, Room 300.

#### FI 511 Medieval Latin

2 cr. hrs., Dr. Malcolm Wallace, Ph.D.: by special arrangement.

#### FI 531 Women and the Franciscan Ideal

2 cr. hrs., Sr. Mary McCarrick, O.S.F., M.A.: MWThF 8:30-9:40, Room 201.

## FI 533 Theology of History and the Franciscan Movement

2 cr. hrs., Fr. George Marcil, O.F.M., Ph.D.: MTThF 1:00-2:10, Room 301.

#### FI 550 History of Franciscan Spirituality

3 cr. hrs., Fr. Cyprian Lynch, O.F.M., M.A.: 9:45-10:55, Room 301.

## FI 552 Franciscan Contribution to Justice and Peace

2 cr. hrs., Fr. Sergius Wroblewski, O.F.M., S.T.L.: MTThF 9:45-10:55, Room 302.

## FI 562 The Religious Community and the Healing Ministry

2 cr. hrs., Fr. Maury Smith, O.F.M., D.Min.: MThF 1:00-2:30 (90-minute class time), Room 302.

This course is limited to fifteen students.

## FI 563 Theological Principles and Techniques of Spiritual Direction

2 cr. hrs., Fr. Peter Damien Wilcox, O.F.M. Cap., S.T.L., S.T.D.: MTWF 11:00-12:10. Room 303.

### FI 571 Practicum in Spiritual Direction

1 cr. hr., Staff: by special arrangement.

#### PRE-REGISTRATION

A PRE-REGISTRATION procedure is in effect which will enable a student to indicate a choice of courses and make dormitory reservation by mail. This will enable the student to accomplish registration on June 23rd with a minumum of time.

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

#### **CALENDAR**

Registration Classes Begin Modern Language Exam Final Exams Monday, June 23 Tuesday, June 24 Friday, July 1 Friday, August

#### FEES

Tuition per gràduate hour: \$85.0
Room and Board: \$330.0
Fees subject to change; individual courses subject to cancellation because of insufficient enrollment.



May, 1980

Vol. 30. No.

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THE CORD (ISSN 0010-8685) (USPS 563-640) is a review devoted to Franciscan spirituality and published monthly with the July and August issues combined, by The Franciscan Institute at St. Bonaventure University, St. Bonaventure, N.Y. 14778. Subscription rates: \$7.00 a year; 70 cents a copy. Second class postage paid at St. Bonaventure, N.Y. 14778, and at additional mailing offices. Please address all subscriptions and business correspondence to our Business Manager Father Bernard R. Creighton, O.F.M., at the Franciscan Institute, St. Bonaventure, N.Y. 14778. Manuscripts, Books for Review, and Editorial Correspondence should be sent to the Editor, Father Michael D. Meilach, O.F.M., or Associate Editor, Father Julian A. Davies, O.F.M., at our Editorial Office, Siena College Friary, Loudonville, N.Y. 12211.



## The Social Gospel

Committee on Peace and Justice. Like thirty or so others of various ages, locations, and general mind-sets, I had been invited to hear a speaker and discuss how peace and justice concerns might be made relevant at the level of the local community. Each of us resolved to try to get our priest preachers to preach on social justice the last weekend in April, as one definite concrete step.

Besides being a fraternal success, the meeting brought home to me again that the Gospel of Jesus Christ has a social dimension. If we are unaware of the general thrust of the Church's social views from Rerum Novarum to Redemptor Hominis, we are lacking in knowledge of the Faith as surely as we would be if we had no idea of Mary's role in our religion. Informing ourselves in obviously the first step toward participating in the social action concerns of the Church. Every friary and convent library ought to have papal materials, commentaries, and relevant books readily available. Praying for the social needs of our community, nation, and world, is obviously another step within our immediate reach. (the present Liturgy of the Hours does occasionally insert general petitions for justice or peace, and from time to time we can mention particular needs in the "General Intercessions" section of the Office and the Mass.)

For some active participation in programs designed to achieve social justice—e.g., demonstrations or boycotts—may be a viable option. I have some reservations, however, in this regard. Our participation must be an informed one, so that what we do is not a manifestation of "second-hand" moral indignation, but an expression of a concern that is really personal. It ought to go without saying that in itself and in the light of the connection of justice and peace, social action must not spring from or issue in personal anger, violence to the person of others (by word or deed) or destructiveness. Jesus did, of course, drive the buyers and sellers out of the Temple; so it is not inconceivable that we be inspired to imitate the Master on some occasion. But it is not likely.

One final thought: charity, it is said, begins at home. A fortiori, justice starts there too. We give justice and peace a bad name when we preach peace in the world and make war in the friary or convent; when we neglect our work to do someone else's. And since Jesus said our justice must be deeper than that of Scribes and Pharisees, it behooves all of us to work at being fair in our judgments of one another. In this regard, it is true you can never be accused of being a hypocrite if you don't get into justice and peace concerns, but perhaps you can't be accused of being Christian either.

De Julian Davis ofm

## The Mystery

The all-seeing Eye of God
wept blind tears into my heart;
The all-powerful Voice of God
spoke in silence to my heart;
The all-effulgent Light of God
spread darkness in my heart.
In my blindness,
/ perceived;
Unhearing,
/ was attentive;
In darkness
/ sought.

And seeking I was found; Darkness became my light; Silence, a universal sound; Blindness, the watchful eve.

I continue searching—
And yet I am always found—

O mystery!

Sister Catherine Jenkins, O.S.C.

# Franciscan Life and the Evangelical Counsels

ERIC DOYLE, O.F.M.

TIS customary in the Church to L speak of the various orders and congregations as constituting a uniform category which is distinct from the "laity" and the priesthood. This is an acceptable canonical arrangement because there is a theology of religious life as such; there can be a legal approach to the "vows" because there is a theology of the evangelical counsels. The theology of religious life emphasizes such common elements as the "taking of three vows" by religious, and then proceeds to explain their theological intelligibility; canon law draws out the common legal obligations involved in them and elucidates the "rights" they confer.

People in the Church, however, do not actually become "religious." They become part of already existing groups of men and women which have a specific identity and are committed to a particular life-style. Out of this experience, I would contend, the theology of religious life as such emerges, and from this, in its

turn, the canon law for religious comes into existence. To put it another way: the charism or genius of the particular orders and congregations has priority. This makes possible theological reflection on common elements, and from this is derived the general canonical approach.

predominance until relatively recently of the canonical approach made it difficult, I think, to give sufficient attention to the distinctive character of the various orders and congregations in the Church. Yet their distinctiveness is crucial and of prior importance evangelically, ecclesiologically, and theologically. The Church is in Christ, and its various groups and individuals members manifest distinct aspects of the whole Christ.

In respect of this priority there is little to be gained from beginning with "the religious state" or "the religious life" as such, especially in formation programs. What needs to be stressed from the outset is that among the

Father Eric Doyle, O.F.M., who teaches at the Franciscan Study Centre in Canterbury, includes among his contributions to Franciscan scholarship a book published last year by George Allen & Unwin, treating of ecology in light of the Canticle of Brother Sun.

People of God there are groups of men and women living out their lives under the guidance of some aspect of gospel teaching, according to a quite specific love and understanding of the obedient, poor, and celibate Christ; and this love and understanding specify and mould what are called "the evangelical counsels."

Therefore, there are not three abstract vows which reduce religious to a uniform group, so that we are forced to search for what might be, for instance, the distinctive Franciscan spirit, at some other level or in some other area. On the contrary, there is first of all a spirit, an attitude, an

outlook, born of an insight inspired by God's Spirit, which determines concretely all the elements that go to make up a way of life and which qualifies its every structure. According to this approach, for example, there is no reason why the poverty professed by one order should be the same as that professed by another.

What I want to attempt in the following reflections is to highlight the distinctive feature of St. Francis's gospel vocation and then to examine how this situates precisely our Order's understanding of "the evangelical counsels." I am concerned directly with the First Order, but what follows applies to all Franciscans.

## On Being a Friar Minor

THE WORDS friar minor are not our title; they describe ideally our authentic existence. The little brother who belongs to the group that owes its origin to the insight and inspiration of Francis of Assisi, follows a life which is itself a "rule," observing the gospel. He lives in obedience, without ownership, and in chastity; he proclaims peace, eats what is set before him, prays, works, takes care of the sick as he would life to be cared for himself, announces the gospel. and goes serenely among those who do not know the Lord Iesus Christ; he guides his life also by the Rule of 1221, the Testament, the Rule for Hermitages (it mat-

ters little from this point of view that these were never "approved"), the Canticle of Brother Sun, and the teaching of St. Francis in his other writings.

The son of Pietro Bernadone was Friar Francis from the moment of his conversion—that is, from the reorientation of his life that marked the starting point of his inner integration and liberation. That process reached its summit on La Verna and was sealed irrevocably by Sister Bodily Death. Never was Francis more a friar minor than in the experience of his stigmatization. At that moment he emptied himself, surrendered his humanity, to be divinized by grace.

ST. FRANCIS'S understanding of brotherhood or friarship was derived uniquely from Jesus Christ, the Elder Brother of the human race. The Christian gospel introduced humanity to a unique concept of brotherhood. Expressed in its most radical and simple terms this is brotherhood-without-boundaries. We have a Father in heaven, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, and Jesus is the first of many brethren, and

we share, each in his own way, in their Spirit. Christianity proclaims unambiguously that God is God-with-us. Brotherhood for Francis was human, animal, mineral, and cosmic; for it embraced not only Brother Leo and Sister Clare, but also Sister Crested Lark, Brother Fire, Sister Water, and Sisters Moon and Stars. In a word, it was literally universal.

## The Poor Friar Jesus Christ

FRIAR IESUS was not born in Ierusalem, Athens, or Rome. If we take what it means to be a human being in purely ontological terms, we can make the following reflection. Had Iesus been born into some influential religious group in Israel, or emerged out of the great philosophical tradition of Greece, or identified himself with the powerful political machinery of the Roman Empire, it would still have been true to call him "humble." For had he come as High Priest, learned philosopher, or even as emperor, we would still have been able to say: 'Though he was in the form of God [he] did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but [he] emptied himself, taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men." In the enfleshment of the Word, God became other, and for God to become other, is necessarily to become less than himself. He who is, is made he who becomes; the infinite is made finite; the immortal, mortal; the eternal, temporal,

Thomas of Celano tells us that Francis loved and revered Mary because she made "the Lord of Majesty our brother." Whatever group or category might have been the locus of the incarnation of the Word, he would still have been ontologically a creature and a brother to humanity. The majesty of God to be God, to be his own inner ontological perfection. Had he come, then, as king and been born in Herod's palace, it

would still have been possible to celebrate Christmas in some sense, and contemplate in sheer admiration with Francis this feast "on which God, having become a tiny infant, clung to human breasts."<sup>3</sup>

But the staggering fact of the Incarnation is its ordinariness, one might say without offense, its commonplace circumstance. This has to be considered in its full historical significance, for God became a man in history. A human being can never be understood satisfactorily as an ontological reality in the abstract. A man or woman is always an ontological reality in history.

Had Jesus been born into an important pharisaic group, or been connected in some way with a philosophical school, or been identified with the imperial power, his mission would have to have started by his challenging the very existence of the immediate group to which he belonged. Otherwise he would have been one with the sin of the world. For it is by institutionalizing religion, truth, and authority (= Jerusalem, Athens, Rome) that the powers of this world. born of the sin of the world, have their influence, construct idols, and exercise their oppression. It is therefore a priori improbable that Jesus would identify himself in any way with

the powers of this world. He came because God loved the world and willed to deliver it from the power of evil.

Whether Jesus was poor in the sense of professing "absolute poverty," of being totally without ownership, we may leave among the conundrums of the late 13th and early 14th centuries; whether Francis himself was entirely correct "objectively" in considering Jesus to have been utterly poor. need not detain us. The fact is that Jesus cannot be counted among the rich of this world, nor can he be said to have had political power or philosophical status; nor was he in the worldly sense a "religioius leader." 🧓

The incarnation of the Word. therefore, in this context, is a revelation at two levels. First, it is the sacrament of God's humility; the Word emptied himself, he left everything; that is, he became a creature. Secondly, it reveals that in order to be fully and authentically human a person must be poor; that is, devoid of economic, philosophical, political, and religious power. His material poverty in that sense is a sacrament of his total dedication and surrender to God and the symbol of his true humanity. This poverty let his to the final surrender in death as John's Gospel beautifully records it: "For this reason the Father loves me.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup>Phil. 2:6-7 (RSV).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup>2 Celano 198; Omnibus, p. 521.

<sup>32</sup> Celano 199; ibid.

because I lay down my life, that I may take it again. No one takes it from me, but I lay it down of my own accord" (10:17-18). Thus it can legitimately be said of Iesus: though he was in the form of humankind, he did not count equality with humankind a thing to be grasped, but he emptied himself, being born to eternal life in the likeness of God. And so the circle of the movement is completed in the Resurrection, wherein his humanity was divinized and therefore totally humanized. Without poverty as described here this would not have been possible.

Though without political power. Iesus was full of authority: without economic power, he possessed a treasure that not all the riches of the world can buy; without philosophical power, he had true wisdom; without religious power, he was the holiest and most integrated man ever to have lived. That Iesus had the security of a carpenter's life and the standard of living this provided, in no way militates against his poverty, nor indeed the fact that Iudas kept a common purse for him and the Apostles. Thus, like Friar Jesus, Francis was dispossessed; yet the world was his.

## St. Bonaventure on Being a Friar Minor

SPEAKING ABOUT our way of life in his beautiful fifth sermon on St. Francis, St. Bonaventure explains that just as the Christian learns from Christ to be meek and humble, so the Franciscan learns from Francis to be a friar minor. Meekness is the virtue which rules and guides all our relationships with our brethren. It is to be a brother or a friar to them. Humility is the virtue that rules and guides our entire relationship with God. We are his creatures; we are brothers and sisters in Christ and so also sons and daughters of the Father; and we are dwelling places of the Spirit. Humility recognizes and accepts those truths. To be humble is to be little or minor. To be meek and humble, therefore, is to be a friar minor. And Bonaventure concludes his thoughts on this with the profound reflection: "In this is contained the compendium of evangelical law and the teaching of St. Francis."

With this firmly fixed in our minds, we can now turn to the "evangelical counsels." I am concerned here with their positive

4St. Bonaventure, Opera Omnia IX (Quaracchi, 1901), col. 594a: "... esse ergo mitem et humilem corde, hoc est esse vere fratrem minorem... et in his consistit summa evangelicae legis et doctrinae beati Francisci."

meaning. We have heard sufficient of their negative side—the renunciation involved in professing them. Every choice entails of necessity some form of sacrifice.

## The "Evangelical Counsels"

1. By living in obedience... It is to be noted at once that St. Francis mentions obedience first: our rule and life is to observe the gospel by living in obedience. I know that the Decree on the up-to-date renewal of religious life, Perfectae caritatis, of Vatican II places chastity first.5 But this is just another example of how unsatisfactory, albeit at times necessary, it is to treat "religious life" in general terms. If we are to search for the specific charism of our origins, we must accept the charism as we find it and not foist onto it an alien interpretation nor squeeze it into a priori categories. Of course we have to bring it up to date where that is required and appropriate, but this is never at the price of sacrificing what is a permanent acquisition by the Church in the grace of origins.

To understand the meaning of obedience for St. Francis we have to begin with two of his most original and characteristic ut-



terances. First, Celano tells us that he taught the friars that the Holy Spirit is the Minister General of the Order who "rests equally upon the poor and the simple."6 And secondly, he writes explicitly in "The Praises of the Virtues" that obedience subjects us not only to men "but to all the beasts as well and to the wild animals."7 These texts create the atmosphere in which a Franciscan enters into the meaning of evangelical obedience A friar minor professes to listen to the Word spoken in creation and to the Word uttered in the re-creation: Christ Jesus, and to respond total-

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup>Vatican Council II, The Conciliar and Post Conciliar Documents, ed. Austin Flannery, O.P. (Worse., England: Fowler Wright; Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 1975), pp. 612, 617.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup>2 Celano 193; Omnibus, p. 517.

<sup>70</sup>mnibus, p. 134.

ly to what he hears. A theology of obedience resolves itself into a theology of the Word. In creating the universe, God spoke a word about himself, and because it cannot exist without him, he is always creating, sustaining, and conserving by his word the being and becoming of all creatures. The universe as a totality and every being in it speak a word about God. Francis in total and authentic obedience always heard the word in creatures and responded to what he heard. They whispered to him: 'We are creatures like you; we are your brethren, and we reflect Another's loveliness." And obediently he replied: "Brother, Sister." And so it was that he composed the Canticle of Brother Sun.

The Holy Spirit continues in us and in all creation the work of re-creation begun in Christ. Christ is the New Adam, and in him is the new creation. The Holy Spirit came upon Mary, and it is the Holy Spirit who renews the face of the earth. His work is to bring back to our minds all that Christ said. And because Christ is what he proclaimed: liberation and holiness, the Holy Spirit makes present who Christ is, and so we are made to be in Christ. The Church has an active and living memory of Christ because of the Holy Spirit cannot let her forget her Lord and Liberator. The Holy Spirit knows the secrets of God, and he discloses them as he wills.

Francis's "vow" of obedience began at the moment of his conversion, and he responded unhesitatingly to the inspired Word up to the end. Similarly, our own public profession of obedience is itself an act of obedience to the highest and most sublime authority; that of God's Word spoken to us in the Holy Spirit. The only barrier to this is selfishness or self-seeking, and so the friars have to remember that "they have renounced their own wills for God's sake" and "they should desire above all things to have the Spirit of the Lord and his holy grace."8 This does not mean that they divest themselves of free will— that is simply not possible. Much less should the former text be construed as a defense of "blind obedience" or as a support for the once widespread, though weird, theory of "hot-line" authority, as service, but it loses nothing for being repeated. By thus understanding it. he was in fact summarizing one of the clearest messages that comes from St. Mark's Gospel: namely, that true greatness consists in service of others. Christ Jesus was the Servant, the Suffering Servant of us all.

2. Without property ... As the Word did not consider the divinity something to be held onto, so Francis did not consider his humanity a thing to be grasped. Nothing belongs more to the Word, there is nothing more his own, than the divine nature; and there is nothing more our own than human nature. Yet it is this that must be surrendered if we are to be divinized. By recognizing God's sovereign rights over us as our Creator-Father, we are led to hand over to him our very being. By stripping himself naked in public Francis symbolized his total surrender to God. His material poverty was the permanent sacrament of his self-donation to God. It was not therefore an end in itself, but the outward sign of a spiritual reality: his relationship with God. There is no way to

proclaim more radically that we belong to God. In dispossessing himself of self Francis had literally nothing to lose, and so fears fell away and true and lasting peace pervaded his life.

His material poverty manifested also his profound love of creation. Creatures not only belonged to God; they were intimately related to Francis as his sisters and brothers. He could not call any sister or brotherwhether human, animal, or mineral-his possession, for that would have been to oppress and enslave them. He loved his fellow creatures as and for themselves; and his love, like God's, was an authentic letting-be. The inner meaning of poverty and its visible sacrament, material poverty, emerge from the core of being a friar minor.

A life of material poverty and total simplicity raises problems for a friar minor today in respect of the Order's visible structure. While I cannot enter into any detailed discussion of these problems here, I would like to make one or two comments about material poverty because it is a vital ingredient of the Franciscan charism.

There have been enormous economic and social changes over the centuries since St. Francis's time, and our world, in particular, is a vastly complex and in many ways terrifying eco-

Taking his notion of authority together with his extraordinary respect for the indiviaual person, we can appreciate how friar minor qualifies obedience. We are to search for God's will and listen to his Word together. We have a literally fraternal responsibility to the Word. We meet that responsibility by listening to the Word when we gather to celebrate the Eucharist and by coming together in chapters to hear what the Spirit is saying to our ecclesiola—the little church of our local fraternity within the great Ekklesia of God.

<sup>\*</sup>See the Latin text in Opuscula S.P.F. Assistensis, ed. K. Esser, O.F.M. (Grottaferrata: Collegio S. Bonaventura, 1978), pp. 235-36.

nomic system. These make it quite impossible for us to reproduce literally what St. Francis did. But we cannot be excused from striving at least gradually to release ourselves from the total security which life in the Order affords us today.

Moreover, while doing our utmost to embrace material poverty, as circumstances can be changed and will allow, and thus identifying ourselves with the real poor, we must not forget that the poor are our brothers and sisters. This unalterable truth demands that we work tirelessly by all the means available to us to establish social justice. The Dignity of our brethren the poor makes it imperative that injustice be abolished, so that they may reach the standard of living where they too may freely embrace the poverty that liberates. It would be tragic for them to turn simply into idolaters of wealth. But to arrive at the poverty that liberates requires the elimination of the poverty that oppresses. The profession of evangelical poverty by a friar minor necessarily entails unqualified commitment to social iustice.

In chastity. To profess evangelical chastity or celibacy as a friar minor is to profess universal fraternal love. It is a way of loving. When a man becomes a

friar minor he proclaims not only that all men and women without distinction are his brothers and sisters, but also that the badger and the otter are his brothers and the swallows his sisters. In a word, he proclaims that creation is a brotherhood and the universe is his friary. He is committed to announcing peace and working to establish it between individuals and where possible among the nations of the earth. Besides this, in accordance with the original charism of St. Francis and the signs of the times as we journey towards the beginning of the third millennium, he accepts responsibility for respecting and loving the environment. A friar minor by his very calling is a friend of the earth because as a follower of St. Francis, he knows it to be at once his sister and his mother: "Be praised, my Lord, through our Sister Mother Earth."9

The profession of universal fraternal love is meant to have its most telling symbol in the life of the local fraternity. We came together not because we have the same background, not because we have the same gifts, not because we are physically attracted \* to one another, but because God brought us together in Christ under the inspiration of the life and teaching of St. Francis. We live together with Friar Christ in our midst. Our love has its source

in our wills; we love one another because it is right to do so. God loves without distinction and without making comparisons. By professing universal fraternal love we pledge ourselves to the selfsame love. I do not mean to exclude natural attractions. What I am urging is that they cannot rule our community lives, for that would lead inexorably to injustice. And where there is injustice. there can be neither love nor peace.

The local fraternity is where the individual friar minor should grow in his uniqueness, for true union always differentiates. And it is there that he is to be led into

ever more intimate union with the Trinitarian life of God through ever more authentic communion communion with his friars. Life in the local fraternity should aid him to reach that fine balance between animus and anima. between the masculine and feminine components of his nature which St. Francis himself attained so successfully and attractively. Brother Pacificus, it will be remembered, once addressed Francis as "dearest mother."10 Finally, fraternal life should nurture and encourage friendships both inside and outside the local fraternity for its own enrichment and edification.

## Concluding Remark

THE AUTHENTICALLY Franciscan because it concerns our very approach to the evangelical identity. Its relevance to formacounsels which I have been considering is of paramount importance for the future of our Order

tion programs requires no comment.

## Sine Proprio

One space stark with morning invites blue. butterfly:

"Drift in, out; color me at will."

Sister Antoinette Kennedy, O.S.F.

<sup>102</sup> Celano 137; Omnibus, p. 473.

Hbid., pp. 85, 88.

# Mother Maddalena Bentivoglio, O.S.C. Foundress of the Poor Clares in the United States

SISTERS FRANCES ANN AND M. ELLEN, O.S.C.

Part III: Out of Keeping with the Spirit of Our Country

Your way of living "is not in keeping with the spirit of our country." How many times did Mother Maddalena hear those words addressed to her as she and her sister. Mother Constance. attempted to found the Order of St. Clare of strict observance in the United States. Yet, if one were to examine the Rule and Constitutions of the Third Order of St. Francis-indeed, that very order which Mother Ignatius Haves was at that time founding in Belle Prairie, one would see the rather rigid rule of a type of enclosure for even the active sisters (which was almost disastrous in Belle Prairie),1 and some very specialized European customs which had come from earlier days. Many of these customs prevailed until after Vatican II, when it was suggested

that the communities of sisters rethink such customs and legalisms for the sake of the Kingdom.

To all appearances, however, the teaching sisters were doing something: something visible to those who watched, whereas those enclosed behind a wall seemed to live a useless life-style and aroused suspicion in the minds of affluent Americans. This was the mentality which greeted Mother Maddalena upon her entrance to the United States.

At the beginning of her chronicle of the history of the Order in the U.S., Mother Maddalena apologizes for not having written it soonner, even though it was a duty encumbent upon her as the foundress and abbess:

we have till the present omitted to do so, fearing there could be any vain personal gratification in the good that has been accomplished.... We are encouraged in this purpose of commencing the history by the fact that God is not opposed to the wonderful things which he has performed amongst His creatures by means of His grace. It was our Lord who exhorted his first servants the Apostles and Disciples not to hide their light.<sup>2</sup>

When one reads her account of their poor reception, their constant dismay at being accepted and then rejected, and the unfavorable circumstances under which they were forced to live, one wonders that Mother Maddalena could be concerned about "vain personal gratification" or could, indeed, call things which happened to them "wonderful."

Mother Maddalena does not plunge immediately into the history by telling of their departure for the 'U.S.; rather she gives a bit of the history of Rome itself and dwells at great length on the stories of the martyrs in the Coliseum, which she enjoyed as a child. From this background of the persecution which served as a strengthening agent for Christianity, she develops the concept of the holiness of the early Poor Clares as though musing on the possibility that her style of life has followed a similar pattern. although not in a coliseum. It is certainly true that the wiles of

men can often be more devastating than the jaws of a wild beast or the sharp blade of a sword.

Obviously when Mother Maddalena entered the convent of San Lorenzo following the example of her sister Constance, neither one of them ever thought again to be traveling about the countryside, much less traveling over an ocean. Almost to her dying day she would find herself uprooted, constantly searching farther and farther into the will of God. Much of what she actually accomplished she never knew; only those who have come after her have reaped the benefits.

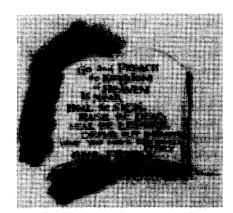
In 1874, Mother Ignatius Haves was visiting Rome from the U.S. to endeavor to take back with her some of the religious who had been suppressed and to try to persuade some priests to take on the missionary country. Her success was very minimal, however. and when at last she visited the Poor Clare Mlnastery the thought came that she could take some Poor Clare nuns with her and they could be a "powerhouse of blessings" for the Third Order community in Belle Prairie. Thus she pleaded with His Holiness:

Most Holy Father, Mother Ignatius Hayes, a Sister of the Third Order of St. Francis, of the Immaculate Conception

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup>For more information on Belle Prairie, see Sister Mary Assumpta Ahles, O.S.F., *Under the Shadow of His Wings* (St. Paul: N. Central Publishing Co., 1977), reviewed in last October's issue of this periodical, pp. 281-84.

Sisters Frances Ann, O.S.C., and Mary Ellen, O.S.C., are members of the Poor Clare Community at Lowell, Massachusetts.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup>Mother M. Maddalena, A Chronicle of Events of Our Holy Order (unpublished), pp. 1-2.



Convent in the diocese of St. Paul, Minnesota, United States of America, prostrate at the feet of Your Holiness, begs most humbly that you kindly give permission to the Order of Poor Clares to found a House in the State of Minnesota in North America.<sup>3</sup>

And so it was. His Holiness selected the two Bentivoglio sisters to accept the challenge. Although he had approved of the move, it seems he still had some reservations, for in his exhortation to them he stated: "There are pagans, and worse than pagans insofar as it is not known whether they are baptized or Turks...." He spoke further of the value system prevalent in America, where so many were interested only in material things. He warned them not to look for asceticism, but to try to be an example and a "silent sermon,

which, 'accompanied by prayer and union with God, will make known to many that true happiness is not to be found in things temporal and material." "4 Later, Pius IX confided to Mother Caesarie de Bouchard: "I hesitated to send to America these two good religious never accustomed to leave their enclosure. but vanquished at last by the urgent solicitations of the Americans I have consented after many months of uncertainty. It has taken so long a time until they desire religious of a contemplative order! You. Americans. you contemplate dollar bills! Yet now, we hope all will be well."5

But, before their journey the sisters were given a wonderful tour through their own country. especially the places nearest and dearest to the hearts of Franciscans. They saw and were entertained by many friends and relatives along the way as they traveled to Assisi, Padua, etc. Assisi especially remained in the memory of Mother Maddalena. for she describes in some detail the wonderful reception they were given, the kindness of the Abbess, and all the relics of St. Clare. She speaks of the great spirit which filled them as they knelt with the Abbess to pray for After a brief stay in Marseilles, where they were again very well received and where they received more education in Poor Clare living, they departed fortified for their task among the "pagans and perhaps Turks"!

The trip was arduous and fraught with the usual illness but, at last, New York was sighted. Upon their arrival, Father Paolino, the appointed director, confided that he had some misgivings about this venture and that he had decided not to go any further with it until he received a response from the Minister in Rome—a response which never came. How could the Sisters. who knew no English, who had been living in enclosure, and who barely knew the woman who brought them-she being an English-American—how could they go contrary to the advice of their director? And so, they bade a very painful farewell to Mother Ignatius Hayes, who returned. heavy of heart, to Belle Prairie minus her "powerhouse of blessings." Her trials, too, were in reality just beginning.

One wonders if the sisters ever mused over the possibility of what might have been, had they followed their first obedience to Belle Prairie. Would the Order of Strict Observance have had a quicker foundation as a unit connected to a Third Order group already established? Would the sisters' lives have been easier in this country which was already immersed in building bigger and better everything, already convinced that visible progress was the only sign of success and already dismissing the reflective. the contemplative, as a waste of time and of life? This situation would, at any rate, only too soon impress itself upon the sisters.

When they sought admittance to his city or his diocese, Cardinal McClosky replied, according to Sister Maddalena, who "heard [it] form his own lips, that he would not receive us, because it was not the spirit of the country, we were not teaching, or else, the ground of this country was not yet worked..."

Saddened, but not defeated, Sister felt the next step was to approach the Archbishop of Philadelphia. Archbishop Wood made them feel very welcome; he gave them the keys to his house on Walnut Street, whereupon they informed the Father General of

St. Clare's blessing on their venture and of how the Abess assumed the role of Clare and placed their cloaks about them, saying: "Yes, dear sisters, our holy mother has heard the prayers..."6

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup>Mary Alice Zarrella, I Will ... God's Will (Evansville, IN: Monastery Press, 1975), p. 8.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., p. 11.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup>Ibid., p. 10.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup>Mother M. Maddalena, Chronicle..., p. 26.

<sup>7</sup>Ibid., p. 49.

their acceptance in Philadelphia and he sent them a sum of money. This joy was, however, to be very short lived. It seems there was a meeting between Archbishop Mc'closky and Archbishop Wood. What transpired at that meeting is not certain—but when the sisters saw Cardinal McClosky leaving the residence of Archbishop Wood they had a strange and fearful presentiment. They were summoned by Archbishop Wood, who told them that Father Paolinus was no longer their director and that they themselves could not stay in his diocese since it was not "the spirit of the people." "The Archbishop very kindly told us to remain in his house on Walnut Street until we would have decided what to do. Fiat voluntas tua."8

But the Philadelphia episode proved to have more far-reaching good effects than bad. The new foundation (now gone) had been mentioned in the Morning Star as a news item and caught the attention of a Tertiary in New Orleans. Sister Maddalena quickly responded to the query and also contacted the Archbishop of New Orleans, who would be in New York soon. He immediately wrote to her and informed her of his great desire to have a convent of Poor Clares since one would have to be really poor to

live in the diocese wrecked in its economy by the Civil War. He wrote:

I think the good Lord has sent you to America to be the cornerstone of this work. ... The good Archbishop of Philadelphia was no doubt obliged to take into consideration public opinion, which in this country does not understand the efficacy of prayer. You and I will probably be looked upon as lunatics by the world at large ... we shall remember that it is the sublime folly of the Cross which conquered the false and diabolical wisdom of the world.9

One can only imagine how ecstatic both she and Sister Constance must have been over the new sign of enthusiasm from the Hierarchy. Their newly appointed director, however, did not share their enthusiasm since there were no friars in the area for guidance. Upon receiving a reassuring letter from the Archbishop, they nevertheless remained firm in their decision, and the two sisters went with their one postulant to New Orleans.

They were all "satisfied and happy" with the provisions made for them; but to live the enclosure was another thing. The lack of spiritual guidance also weighed heavily upon them. They longed for the time when some Franciscan Fathers

would be in the area. Before such a time could arrive, though, their director was already seeking other quarters for them, and with or without Mother Maddalena's knowledge Cleveland was ready to receive the Bentivoglio sisters and their two postulants.

Mother Maddalena wrote: "The trumpet has sounded; the drum has beat retreat, and we, the daughters of obedience, are on our guard as soldiers; we must obey our superiors." This was a blow to the good Archbishop and to the benefactors who had worked hard to keep the sisters there. But for the sisters themselves it was once more a ray of hope, possibly of

a more enduring kind. And so they moved once more, packing only their personal belongings.

Since the concept of pilgrimage will be dealt with again in this series, the writer comments here only that the Bentivoglio sisters, who were constantly being accused of attempting something foreign to the spirit of the country, were actually a real part of the country's movement and of its own ongoing settlement. Like Johnny Appleseed before them. they too planted seeds along the way, and each place from which they were extricated has seen a Poor Clare Monastery spring up and remain fine and strong to the present day.

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<sup>10</sup>Ibid., p. 29.

<sup>\*</sup>Ibid., p. 55.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>9</sup>Zarrella, p. 27.

## Evangelizing the Evangelist

RODERIC A. PETRIE, O.F.M.

VEN BEFORE Jesus told the L Apostles to 'go and make disciples of all nations" (Mt. 27:19), we read of him assigning a preaching mission to the Ten Cities. We witness the enthusiasm of these missionaries over the reception of their message. As St. John says, there is something about announcing the Good News that brings joy both to the hearer and to the one who relates it(1 In. 1:4). Somehow the faith of the one who receives affects the faith of the one who gives. Each one of us is called to evangelize by the fact of our baptism; one may hope that the very message itself is enough to urge us to fulfill this mission.

But announcing the Good News, being an evangelist, hardly applies only to foreign parts or to people who have yet to learn about the life, death, and resurrection of God incarnate. Most of us preach the gospel at our doorsteps. St. Francis, in the Rule of 1221 (ch. 16), gives his advice on how to be an evangelist. He speaks about foreign lands, but what he has to say of announcing the

gospel has been the Franciscan tradition (for it is the broad Christian tradition) for every place and for all times. In essence it is that one can be a missionary (evangelist) by assuming the customary role of preaching, and I understand that to embrace all gospel-linked activities, such as teaching and nursing, as well as catechesis. Or, one can simply live the gospel (Christian) life among the people. Here the exemplified Christian life itself evangelizes the non-believing neighbor.

I want to address a phenomenon that can take place in both methods of evangelization but is more likely to surface in the latter: i.e., the evangelization of the one bringing the Good News. The one who preaches the gospel, in whatever way that is done, is often in turn evangelized by those among whom he lives or to whom he ministers. Pope John \* Paul II, during his visit to Mexico in the summer of 1979, spoke of evangelization by the poor. It does seem that recip-

has to say of announcing the rocal evangelization takes place

Father Roderic A. Petrie, O.F.M., former Novice Master of Holy Name

Province, serves the inner-city poor of Philadelphia at a hospice on

when one deals with the very poor and when the lived situation of the one bringing the gospel is such that there is a minimum of separateness from those hearing the Word. This evangelization seems to occur in the following ways and areas.

God tests the faith of the one who would declare that Iesus is present in the poor. The hungry, the naked, and homeless of St. Matthew's Gospel need our ministration, to be sure, and every convinced Christian desires to help, at least by giving, if not himself, the material needs. But we are also called to affirm that this hungry woman, this ill-clad man, is also Jesus. That is quite easy to admit from a distance, but more difficult to affirm of a flesh-andblood "Christ." The one before us might well fail every test that he or she is "the Christ." except the test of faith.

We sometimes look upon our gospel apostolates as establishing the Kingdom, setting up the banner of Christ—an outlook derived from other than Franciscan traditions. The poor teach us that we do not establish the Kingdom, but rather discover it, uncover it, under the debris of their brokenness and the façade of our culture. God is already present, we learn, to each situation, in each person. People instruct us that Jesus is the center of this world—of their world, too.

Although they are perhaps unaware of who Jesus is, he nonetheless stands with them in a breadline or huddles with them around a fire-filled barrel. But often enough they do know him. They speak to him in prayer and invoke his blessing on their benefactors.

The one who preaches faith that it is by faith that we are saved—has his own faith challenged by lack of response from the uninterested and the unbelieving. However, their faith in their own resiliency is a faint but steady echo of faith in a sustaining God. Yet it is the antagonistic, the unloving—ves. the unlovable-who make us plumb what it truly means to love another. Those who hope for nothing and receive nothing beyond a quarter for a euphemistic "cup of coffee" or who seem to have no exit available from their condition, bring us to hope: hope that somehow their lives can be bettered and their sufferings be of value.

By sharing in the lives of the deprived, we come to know what it means to be socially invisible. Taking the last place is an altruistic exhortation until one is matter of factly given the last place in a hospital waiting room. It is the lot of the poor to stand in line, to wait, to be told to go elsewhere, to return in a few days' time. So often the evangelist is excluded from the

Kensington Avenue.

last place, making it difficult to appreciate the humility and truth necessary to accept that place as the one allotted to us by Jesus. The very poor are not deprived of that place. And yet are we less poor? What is it that makes us not poor? A few dollars? Some books we've read? The employment we have? St. Francis used to say: "What a man is before God, that he is and nothing more." What we all are, what we all are before God, are creatures in great need.

The fact of the matter for many of the very poor is that there is no avenue which will of a certainty give them exit. They are constrained by their addictions to chemicals; by their inabilities to cope with life: by economic priorities beyond their control: by social callousness to minorities, the aged, and so on. The gospel-bearer realizes that the poor have God alone. Perhaps no one states the obvious truth of the poor's condition, but one senses that God alone remains true in the face of every false hope and overwhelming weakness. Their lives ask us: "Is God enough for you?" Even with our accumulated wealth and skills and earning power, our good health, and our nets of family or social connections that sustain us, are we less dependent on the One

Who Is? Truly, we can walk away at any time, but will a change of venue alter the decision? In all truth, we have, like the poor, God alone.

When we are faced by an individual whose life has no reasonableness to it; when every effort to reclaim him or redirect her comes to nothing, there is no other way but to surrender that person to the Lord. We learn to surrender to God our own interests, our work, our lives, only after we see that it is so often a matter of course among the poor. It is among them that we best learn the difference between passivity and acquiescence. Perhaps it is in this struggle of surrendering oneself to a God we trust to be good and loving that we learn to pray for guidance, help, and deliverance. Those whose condition seems to be be-



<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup>St. Bonaventure, Legenda Major, VI, 1; Omnibus, p. 671.

And it is easier to pray for deliverance for them and for ourselves, as it becomes increasingly evident that we have a one-ness with the poor. The oneness is in Christ. But distanced from the poor, we find ourselves deluded by the superficial differences into thinking that we are unlike them. It is ever more clear what the Incarnation accomplished when God emptied himself to such an extent as to take on

our wretchedness, the poverty of humanity—out of love. This understanding which the poor bring home to us not only gives us a deepening love for them, our poorer brothers and sisters, but a reverence for all humanity as well.

The poor, knowingly or unknowingly, preach and pare and sinewy gospel. If we, as individuals, are better to fathom the mysteries of the Incarnation, suffering, redemption, and human worth, we need to hear the gospel spoken close at hand. We need to feel the strength of it, smell the odor of it, feel the wrench of it. Religious communities, seeking their roots in the gospel, must allow and encourage their members to make a life among the poor a priority. Merely to serve the poor as one hands out a sandwich at the door and then shuts it on the departing figure, is not enough. The gospel is muted, distorted, through closed doors. The poor would evangelize us: but they are not adept at opening doors that are closed on them. We must do that.

## **COVER AND ILLUSTRATION CREDITS**

The cover and illustrations for our May issue were drawn by Brother Gregory J. Zoltowski, O.F.M., who is now participating in the Post-Novitiate Formation Program at Holy Name College, Washington, D.C.

## Brothers and Sisters in the Lord Jesus:

## **Greetings and Peace**

CY GALLAGHER, O.F.M. CAP.

THE THEME of "Scripture in the Writings of Francis" has been often and fruitfully treated—and it will doubtless continue to provide inspiration for further study and meditation. My intention in this series of short reflections is different: viz., to go behind Francis's texts, as it were, and see them as a scriptural form. I want to do this, however, not in scholarly way or with any attempt at completeness, but rather in the form of a series of unpretentious comparisons.

Please bear, then, with the superficial nature of these comparisons; I do feel that even in this form they can reveal something of the profound similarity between the great limitators of Christ. Paul: "I have full confidence that now as always Christ will be exalted through me, whether I live or die' (Phil. 1:20); Francis: "To the day of my death, I will not cease to teach the brethren by my own good example and actions to follow the way which God has shown me, and which I have taught them by word and example" (Mirror of Perfection—Omnibus, p. 1201).

At the beginning of his Letter to All the Faithful Francis refers to St. John's Gospel: '...! cannot personally visit each one individually," and so "I decided to write you a letter bringing a message with the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, who is the Word of the Father, and of the Holy Spirit, whose words are spirit and

life" (Letter to All the Faithful, 2:3; cf. Jn. 6:64). And at the end of that same letter Francis says:

In that love which is God (cf. 1 Jn. 4:16), I, Brother Francis, the least of your servants and worthy only to kiss your feet, bet and implore all those to whom this letter comes to hear these words of our Lord Jesus Christ in a spirit of humility and love, putting them into practice with all gentleness and observing them perfectly. Those who cannot read should have them read to them often and keep them ever before their eye, by persevering in doing good to the last, because they are spirit and life (87-88; emphasis added).

Francis calls the words of the Scriptures spirit and life. He also calls his own words spirit and life. And far from seeing arrogance in these statements, we should find it complimentary to the Saint's humility and self-awareness that he sees himself as an evangelist to the people of his own world. After all, it is most improbable that even St. Paul saw his own letters as spirit and life for his people.

Even a cursory examination of the lives of Paul and Francis reveals many significant parallel details. Both were suddently converted by a direct intervention of Jesus, speaking to them as individuals in a miraculous manner; to Paul: "Why are you persecuting me?"—to Fran-

Father Cy Gallagher, O.F.M.Cap., is Director of Post-Novitiate Formation for the Capuchin Province of Mid-America. We have adapted his stimulating paper comprising eight comparisons between Letters of Paul and Francis so as to furnish one such comparison in each of our forthcoming issues. Note that for the meditative purposes of this series the technical questions of Pauline authorship have been disregarded and the Letters of the Pauline corpus taken as representing the basic mind-set of the Apostle.



cla: "Rebuild my Church." Both subsequently spent considerable time alone. away from other people, in deserted places. Both returned immediately and directly to the Church in the person of the Vicar of Christ for confirmation of the mission of evangelization and blessing before undertaking it. Both travelled extensively, far away from their own homelands, in order to preach the Good News. Both suffered intensely as a result of missionary activity, including shipwreck. Both had a magnificent and tender concern for the worthy and reverent celebration of the Eucharist. Both felt themselves impelled to write letters to those who had heard them preach. Both began their letters with a characteristic phrase of blessing and prayer-Paul: "Grace and peace to you"; Francis: "Salvation and peace to you."

In the written heritage each Saint has left to the Church we can find additional parallels and common interests. The first comparison I would like to set forth concerns the views of the two on the character of men in leadership positions as set forth in Francis's Letter to Anthony and Paul's Letter to Titus.

In these two short letters, both Paul and Francis are concerned about the fact that those who are chosen to lead others within the faith should be of upright character themselves. It is interesting to note, however, that both authors

are concerned first about the character of the men to whom they are writing, and only then about their students and appointees.

In spite of the translation in the Omnibus of Francis's Letter to Anthony, it is clear from the Latin text that Francis speaks directly and personally to Anthony when he says, "It is pleasing to me that you teach theology to the brothers, so long as you do not extinguish the spirit of prayer and devotedness in this study, as contained in the Rule."1 This is in contrast to the translation in the Omnibus (p. 164), which reads: "... so long as they do not extinguish..." Francis is concerned first about Anthony's own spirit of prayer and devotion; if Anthony maintains that, he will be a teacher after Francis's own heart.

This same concern is evident in Paul as he tells Titus: "... nor may you yourself fail to set them good example. Your teaching must have the integrity of serious, sound words to which no one can take exception" (2:7-8), 'Let no one look down on you" (2:15c). "I want you to lay great weight on the things I have been saying, so that those who have committed themselves to God may be careful to do what is right. This is what is good and advantageous for men. See to it that you abstain from stupid arguments and genealogies, and from all controversies and quarrels about the law. They are useless and have no point. Warn a heretic once and then a second time; after that, have nothing to do with him" (3:8-10).

It is obvious that Francis and Paul, who were first and most deeply concerned about their own imitation of Christ, would challenge those who were to represent them in teaching and supporting the Faith likewise to see first to their own integrity.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup>S. Francisci Epistola ad sanctum Antonium, 2, in *Opuscula S.P.F.* Assisiensis, ed. K. Esser, O.F.M. (Grottaferrata: Collegio S. Bonaventura, 1978), p. 95.

## Religious Life in Hermitages

SISTER FRANCES ANN, O.S.C.

interesting visitors presented themselves at our monastery. The other sisters who had met the group before seemed not to be quite so intrigued as I, and as I soon learned, the Little Brothers of St. Francis, known as the Fraternity of Peace and love, had been visiting the monastery for almost the ten years of their establishment in the area. This time however, two Little Sisters had joined them, and they visited us to ask for our prayers for the success of this new addition to the group. Attired with blue denim habits and a variety of crosses, they had depended upon some kind soul for their transportation to visit us and would now head back to their place of prayer and apostolate on Mission Hill. Before they left, however, I was able to ask a few questions about their rule, their purpose. and their success thus far. Finding their venture an interesting and bold one. I desired to share it with other Franciscans whose hearts surely beat in rhythm with every segment of Franciscan

interesting visitors presented interesting visitors presented this article to pray for guidance and God's blessing upon this zealous group of Francis's up before seemed not to be



When Francis of Assisi wrote the brief Rule for Religious Life in Hermitages, he certainly did not envisage that 800 years later many of his followers would continue to study it and look to it as the answer to perfect Christian living—as a succinct and simple pattern of Gospel life. Yet today, in varied ways, this little Rule is being defined and redefined, as well as lived, by small groups who call Francis their spiritual, father.

For over ten years now this group called the Little Brothers of St. Francis have successfully lived out a modern adaptation of

Sister Frances Ann Thom, O.S.C., is a member of the Poor Clare Community at Lowell, MA. Readers may want to refer to our earlier feature on the Little Brothers of St. Francis, vol. 28 (June, 1978), pp. 185-87.

the Rule in Mission Hill, Massachusetts. Historical continuation of the life-style and the acceptance of the new members is an indication of God's blessing upon this spiritual endeavor. Recently it had a new development which seems even more to emphasize God's willing its growth and continuation: two Little Sisters have asked to be received as a part of this way of life.

Just how did the Little Sisters arrive at Mission Hill? Sister Elizabeth Anne Lee had observed the Brothers' way of life for over three years and felt within herself an overpowering desire to embrace the same type of vocation. Following all the proper procedures with major superiors, and after much discernment, both Sister and the authorities agreed this was, indeed, her vocation.

The Brothers, too, prayed (much as Francis must have done when Clare presented herself to him) for a sign of what to do with Sisters! Where would they live? They must be close enough to observe the life-style and receive guidance, but they must not live in the same quarters. God provided a six-room second floor apartment right next door! The Brothers immediately set to work cleaning, painting, etc., and especially furnishing a chapel for the use of the Sisters. This project. quite costly, was miraculously aided by unexpected benefactors.

On May 1, 1979, two Sisters

arrived at their new convent home: Sisters Elizabeth Anne and Mary Clare. They would appropriately name their convent "The Little Portion," and on May 31st they were officially received into the Third Order of Saint Francis.

The Little Sisters, like the Little Brothers, consider themselves a contemplative community who have as their cloister the noisy streets of the inner city—a desert place where living water is needed in abundance. Their life is an endeavor to discover and rejuvenate the charisms of Francis and the early friars as they were inspired to pray, to move about, and to serve among the poor.

Eucharistic devotion is, of course, at the center of their lives. and each morning finds them beginning with a full schedule of prayer from 6:00 A.M. until 8:45 (around 9:15 until noon, they do apostolic work), and again from 1:00 P.M. until around 4:00. Their prayer life includes the Divine Office in common, meditation, Mass, and a great deal of silence. Recreation is held twice daily. but for the most part silence is required, including the Great Silence from after night prayer until after Mass the next morning. One hour of Eucharistic adoration is held in common daily.

Their apostolic work is street ministry and participation with existing agencies in work for the poor. "Thus we assist at hostels, soup kitchens, detox centers, and other institutions for the lonely, disoriented, and outcasts of society. Occasionally, if we have the means, we will share a hot meal or distribute sandwiches to those on the street. Divine Providence cares for us to prove the value of our ministry in His eyes. From time to time we earn some income from part-time crafts and odd jobs. We are always more than adequately provided for at 'the table of the Lord.'

"Our habit consists of a simple denim dress and veil, a pair of sandals, and a jacket for cold weather. Foregoing the legitimate pleasures of TV, radio, etc., for the facility of the contemplative spirit, we find joy in the Holy Spirit and give witness to the Kingdom. The rhythm of our lives, with its schedule of prayer and apostolic activity of going out to others, is certainly in accord with the life which Christ himself practiced and which was practiced by Francis and his early Friars."

The Little Sisters welcome candidates for a three to six month observership, six month postulancy, one year novitiate, and five years of temporary vows before final commitment. They are located at 789 Parker Street, Mission Hill, MA 02120.



## Stella Matutina

The dwindling dark has robbed the sky of stars; Dawn hovers on the silver edge of night. But in the span that marks my window frame a single star still shines serene and bright.

O Morning Star! when life's brief night shall wane, and one by one earth's lights shall fade from me, May your sweet shining on my heart's horizon herald the glad white dawning of Eternity.

Mother Mary Clare of Jesus, P.C.C.



Listen, Lord. By Walter J. Paulits. Cincinnati: St. Anthony Messenger Press, 1979. Pp. x-198. Paper, \$3.95.

Reviewed by Father Wilfrid A. Hept, O.F.M., a member of the staff of St. Francis Chapel and Moderator of The Secular Franciscan Fraternity at Providence, RI.

There is a lot of hunger for God in the pews these days. Most homilists are aware of this and are on the lookout for source material to communicate good Christian knowledge and values to their people in their weekly homilies. One such source might be Listen, Lord, by Father Walter J. Paulits. It has the advantage of covering the entire three-year cycle in one slender volume of about two hundred pages. Needless to say, each reflection is brief and unique in as much as each is concluded with a prayer. One can appreciate this format better by understanding how the book came about. It was written to fulfill a need at St. John's Church. Westminster, Maryland, for a text and meditative prayer to be read by the lector after Holy Communion. It certainly would be useful in such a liturgical setting.

For the layperson, seriously trying to apply the Sunday Liturgy of the Word to his everyday living, this book should be a valuable, year-round source of reflection and prayer to be used at home or in church before or after Sunday Mass. This is one of many such books written to help homilist and parishioner to a deeper and more prayerful appreciation of the Sunday liturgical readings. Maybe this one fits the bill for the reader.

Afterlife: The Other Side of Dying. By Morton T. Kelsey. New York: Paulist Press. 1979. Pp. 314, including bibliography. Cloth, \$10.95.

Reviewed by Father Julian A. Davies, O.F.M., Ph.D. (Fordhum), Head of the Siena College Philosophy Department and Associate Editor of this Review.

Professor Kelsey's latest book is in a way an apologetics text—it seeks to show the reasonableness of the nonphysical mode of existence surrounding us at the present, and thus to ground the possibility of life after life. As Jungian psychology, with its awareness of the psychic in man and the race, opened up for him the reality of the psychic dimension, the author believes it can perhaps do the same for others. In addition, the research efforts of Moody and Kubler-Ross and the evidence from psychics like Edgar Cayce offer empirical, experiential testimony that the scientistic, materialistic view so prevalent in our society today is just not true. Kelsev sees his job as particularly relevant today because of the dearth of faith in an after-life found in many nominal Christianseven clergymen. (I would add as another factor in such disbelief the secularist thrust in the Church after Vatican II, with its whole-hearted emphasis on the present building up of society.)

Kelsey gives detailed attention to the notion of the "kingdom of God' statements of the New Testament as inaugurating man into a milieu of the non-physical. He raises the questions of the eternity of hell (ending up by affirming hell's reality strongly, but not its eternity) and reincarnation, which he examines very thoroughly and generally rules out. A useful appendix offers some accounts of near-death experiences, another discussion of the kingdom of God, and an outline and bibliography for a class in working with the dying based on an actual course he offered to pre-med students at Notre Dame.

I thought the author's most valuable contribution was hisnfingering of contemporary materialism. His observations on the incompatibility of work with the dying and unbelief in immortality, and the need for the theologian to be emotionally involved with God are also well taken. While quite personal in tone, Afterlife is solidly based in experience and, of course, in Scripture.

Act of Contrition: Personal Responsibility and Sin. By Jeffrey Sobosan, C.S.C. Notre Dame, IN: Ave Maria Press, 1979. Pp. 127. Paper, \$2.95.

Reviewed by Father Gregory P. Toomey, O.F.M., who has served on the faculties of Christ the King Seminary and St. Francis College (Rue Beach, NH) and is presently on the staff of St. Anthony's Shrine in Boston.

Act of Contrition is a singularly modest title for this book which investigates the disruption of man's relationship to God and neighbor

which comes from sin and the appropriate remedies which must reestablish these. Without polemicism, Father Sobosan pursues the task of clarifying the means which must be utilized from the viewpoint of psychology and the teaching of the Gospel. Although he never refers to it, his discussion can be readily seen as an analysis of that form of the confiteor which is found in the penitential rite of the new Order of the Mass. Firmly grounded on the necessity of personal recognition of responsibility for what we are and what we do with our lives, the author examines sin and the consequent necessity of contrition, reparation. and amendment of life within the framework of mature Christian living.

Living, as we do, in an era which has seen the exploitation of "selffulfillment," it is refreshing to find sin described as stemming from "excessive self-assertion" together with the misuse of that freedom which is God's gracious gift to mankind. In a world which had tended to relinquish theological precision to the unwarranted pressures of psychological and sociological conclusions, it is encouraging to read:

Let me stand alone and face the fact that I am accountable for what I have done. ... For in confessing that I have done wrong of my own accord. I am asserting at the same time that I have the power to do right [pp. 15-16]. .

The priest who exercises his ministry in the Sacrament of Reconciliation will find much to deepen his appreciation of the direction in which he must guide many of his penitents who have become confused by current notions concerning the nature of sin and the purpose of the Sacrament

of Reconciliation. Not only the priest. but all who are seriously seeking direction for growth in Christian living, can profit from Father Sobosan's calm analysis of human behavior when, as individuals, we confront the objective reality of our obligation to God and to one another.

It is only towards the conclusion of this book that it becomes apparent that the implications of the author's discussion are as deep and personally significant to Christian living as the Gospel itself. The reading of this book must give us pause to consider how honestly we have confronted ourselves in the light of the Lord's call to "follow Him." It is not likely that a careful reader of this little book will be able to pray: "I confess ... that I have sinned. through my own fault in my thoughts and in my words, in what I have done and in what I have failed to do...," without a greatly enhanced insight into what the Church is calling us to understand and live as the people of God.

First Encounter with Francis of Assisi. By Damien Vorteux, Trans. by Paul Schwartz and Paul Lachance. Chicago: Franciscan Herald Press, 1979. Pp. x-87. Cloth, \$5.95.

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

You cannot tell a book by its cover. but sometimes the attractive format is indicative of the rich content within. Such seems to me to be the case with First Encounter with Francis of

book in the Tau series published by the Franciscan Herald Press. However, since spiritual books for the most part are not read merely for enjoyment or because of their appearance, but rather as tools to improve our own spiritual life or that of others, we need to know what is the purpose of this book and for whom would it achieve this aim. The author says on p. 15: "Our aim here is to tell how Francis discovered Christ and the Gospel, and how his discovery shone out over all the world."

For those unfamiliar with Francis of Assisi it will whet their appetite for a deeper knowledge of Francis and the Franciscan movement. For those well versed in Franciscana, it will be a good compendium of the life and influence of the great Saint of Assisi. For both groups it has its limitations. Its greatest limitation is its length—a mere 87 pages including notes. For such a small book, \$5.95 seems steep even in this time of inflated book cost.

The book is divided into three sections. The first chapter, "The Century before the Outbreak," is a gem, setting the scene for what happened to Francis and paralleling it with our own times, especially as the century of lay people. This, together with a very comprehensive chronology of St. Francis in the back of the book, gives a bird's eye view of what was happening in society, the Church, monasticism, art, and the life of Francis during this time. The second section, "I was seized by Christ," gives in capsule form the principal events and influences in the life of St. Francis: the beauty of Assisi, his conversion, gospel reading Assisi, by Damien Vorreux, the latest about poverty, Tau symbol, the IV

Lateran Council of 1215, the stigmata, spread of the Order, the death of Francis. While these treatments are brief, there are many references to the *Omnibus of Sources* to fill out the narrative. On one page alone (34), I count six such references.

The last 25 pages constitute the final section, entitled "The spiritual Universe of St. Francis." The author seems to say that Francis joins with the thought of St. John, who assembles in one verse the two basic dimensions of revelation: "The Word was made flesh ... and we have seen his glory." Through this simple formula, St. Francis finally knew who

he was and who God is. This knowledge is based on a personal and living experience: viz., his encounter with the Person of Jesus Christ. Whether in his writings or in his daily living. Francis dealt with the Incarnation. crucifixion, Eucharist, etc., as concrete facts. But over it all there was a profound lyricism that permeated the brotherhood and caused the friars to burst out into song. The author seems to have grasped the spirit of Francis which made him the most liberated man in the Church of his day, and yet the most docile to its hierarchy and institutions. This book may help you put this spirit in your life too.

## Shorter Book Notices JULIAN A. DAVIES, O.F.M.

Together by Your Side: A Book for Comforting the Sick and Dying.By Joseph M. Champlin. Notre Dame, IN: Ave Maria Press, 1979. Pp. 80. Paper, \$1.50.

This valuable booklet speaks to a now popular but much neglected area of pastoral care, dealing with the sick and dying. The five stages of dying outlined by Dr. Kubler-Ross are described, a "spirituality of sickness" is outlined, suggestions for visiting the sick are made, and a collection of scriptural texts from Old and New Testaments, together with special prayers for the sick and dying complete the work. Suitable for pocket or purse, it will be an aid to everyone involved with a sick person, not just those in pastoral ministry.

Letters to God from Teenagers. Edited by Kevin Jones-Prendergast. St. Anthony Messenger Press, 1979. Pp. vii-102. Paper, 3.50.

From 5000 "letters to God" written by high-schoolers as a retreat exercise, the editor has selected 100 and organized them around six themes: The Search for Purpose; Doubt and Suffering; Relationships; Petitions; Thanks; and Dialogues with God. Since the book is designed for possible use in religious education, each section is followed by several series of study questions and an exercise. Photos of young people aptly illustrate the text. All who have the care of teenagers can find something here; and since there is some of the teenager in me. I found something there for myself. You might too.

## **BOOKS RECEIVED**

- Bonaventure, St., Disputed Questions on the Mystery of the Trinity. Works of St. Bonaventure, vol. 3. Introd. & trans. by Zachary Hayes, O.F.M. St. Bonaventure, NY: The Franciscan Institute, 1979. Pp. 273. Paper \$10.00 plus postage and handling.
- Goad, Harold, Greyfriars. Chicago: Franciscan Herald Press, 1979 (reprint of 1947 ed.). Pp. 238. Cloth, \$6.95.
- Habig, Marion A., O.F.M., The Franciscan Book of Saints: Lives of the Saints and Saintly Persons of the Three Orders of St. Francis for Every Day of the Year with Meditations and Liturgical Prayers. Chicago: Franciscan Herald Press, 1979 (rev. ed., illus.). Pp. xliv-1059, incl., appendices & index. Cloth, \$18.95.
- Habig, Marion, A., O.F.M., ed., Franciscan Readings. Eng. trans. of Vitam Alere. Chicago: Franciscan Herald Press, 1980. Pp. 152. Paper, n.p.
- Hubbard, Bishop Howard J., Always God's People: Good News in an Age of Confusion. Cincinnati: St. Anthony Messenger Press, 1980. Pp. vi-73. Paper, \$1.75.
- Knight, David, To Follow His Way: A Parish Renewal Program. Cincinnati: St. Anthony Messenger Press, 1980. Pp. vi-88. Paper, \$3.95.
- L'Engle, Madeleine, Ladder of Angels: Scenes from the Bible illustrated by Children of the World. New York: Seabury Press, 1979. Pp. 128, 9"x10". Cloth, \$17.50.
- Maloney, George A., S.J., The Everlasting Now: Meditations on the Mysteries of Life and Death as They Touch Us in our Daily Choices. Notre Dame, IN: Ave Maria Press, 1980. Pp. 222. Paper, \$3.95.
- Marbach, Ethel, Saints for the Journey for Children: Lent, Easter. Cincinnati: St. Anthony Messenger Press, 1980. Pp. vi-90. Paper, \$2.95.
- Miller, John F., M.D., The Art of Parenting in a Changing Society. Chicago: Franciscan Herald Press, 1979, Pp. xiii-195. Cloth, \$8.95.
- Nixon, Joan Lowery, Before You Were Born. Illus. by James McIlrath. Huntington, IN: Our Sunday Visitor Press, 1980. Pp. 32. Cloth, \$5.95; paper, \$2.50.
- Palmer, Russell, John Paul II: A Pictorial Celebration. Huntington, IN: Our Sunday Visitor Press, 1980. Pp. 128, with photos, 8 1/2 x 11. Cloth, \$12.95.
- Twigg, Sister Blanche, M.H.S.H., God Speaks in Jesus: A Journey through the New Testament. Cincinnati: St. Anthony Messenger Press, 1980. Pp. vi-186. Paper, \$3.25.