

# The CORD

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## COVER AND ILLUSTRATION CREDITS

The cover and illustrations for our February issue were drawn by Brother Ronald A. Chretien, O.F.M., a full time artist resident at St. Francis Friary, Rye Beach, New Hampshire.

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## More than a Matter of Fraternity

RECENTLY in a presentation on the psalms as prayer, a speaker highlighted the corporate nature of those prayers. The "I" who praises God and laments his own woes is a "we"—the people of Israel who experienced ups and downs in their history. The Church is the new Israel of God. Taking the psalms to herself, she prays them. The cries of woe that go up from Christians are the cries of woe of the refugees, the persecuted, the poverty-stricken, the invalid, the mourning—the body of Christ suffering. The paeans of praise are those of joyous pilgrims, happy parents, the healed, the converted—also the body of Christ. In praying the psalms as part of the Office (or on our own) we are not merely making a *personal* effort to contact God, but an *ecclesial* effort. Self—ideally—is about the last thing we should think of when going to pray the Office.

Does that last statement express what you and I have heard lately? Is it not rather, "I don't get anything out of those at times unchristian expressions," or "I don't find our community's recitation of the Office something that I enjoy"? Or, to give a more plausible excuse, "the Office is the prayer of community, of fraternity, not of location," so we do as much of it as we the community feel necessary.

A look at history shows that Francis wrote into his Rule that the friars should say the Office; and the breviaries designed by friars were the practical means they had to carry out that injunction—an injunction which became common law for those in sacred orders. Intuitively, Francis saw the ecclesial dimensions of the Office; it was not just another builder of community like common meals or common recreation, or community Mass. It was not *the* builder of community either—as in some monastic traditions. The Office was the prayer of Jesus Christ in his members. It was the continued praise of creation for God. It was far more than a personal interest or a fraternal interest.

Some of us male religious have gotten used to a reduced obligation of Divine Office, and the view that it is not all that important has sort of crept in. Reflection on its significance for the whole Church ought to help us back to acting like the "people for others." Our vocation calls us to be that. ☩

## Touches of Grandeur

Bright red berries  
On a clear winter's day  
Clear crystal-tipped  
And shining orange  
Against a golden clay  
Touches of God's royalty  
As we prepare His way

*Sister M. Francis Assisi Kennedy, O.S.F.*

# Equality and Clericalism

ANTONINE DEGUGLIELMO, O.F.M.

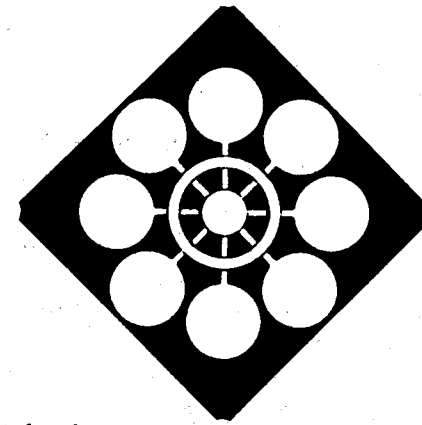
IN PREPARING for its General Chapter of 1979 the Order of Friars Minor conducted two distinct investigations under the auspices of the General Office for Education, which I then headed. The one was to trace the history of formation in the Order during the previous decade and to describe its state at the time, the other to evaluate that state. The former, of more concern in these pages, was conducted by thirteen regional reporters according to a plan devised by the then Minister General. Summoned to Rome to process their findings for the coming General Chapter, they singled out what they considered the more urgent problems that beset our formation, in the first place our Franciscan identity.

In the wake of the Second Vatican Council, it is true, not a few of us enrolled among the Friars Minor were shaken in our allegiance to Francis of Assisi, not infrequently ascribing this condition to the fact that we just didn't know what Franciscanism really meant. This uncertainty in turn had two unfortunate results: many defections from the Order and a marked decrease of recruits to the Order.

When the members of the General Chapter considered this one matter, they felt it was necessary to pursue it much further and so directed the Office for Franciscan Education, with the assistance of the regional reporters, to continue and to complete the study of our identity and to report to a plenary council, which is now projected for completion this year. The work is going on and, since I have been able to lend a little assistance before my return to the homeland, I am very happy—and relieved—to see that the problem is being viewed in its proper perspective. For protracted experience in the field of education as well as in the day-to-day life of the friars the world over, had made me quite apprehensive, aware as I was and am of the many considerations that have distorted the image of Franciscanism. In the title to the present discussion I point out two; there are not a few others, of course, but with these we are all too often and unduly preoccupied when we would pin down our identity. At the present stage of the study by the Office

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for Education, however, it has been possible to narrow down considerably the elements or essential qualities of Franciscanism, and it has become evident that "equality" and "clericalism" are but side issues: an attempt to arrive at the identity of Franciscanism by insisting on the one and excluding the other is to define our essence by fastening on accidentals.

This is not to deny that in the matter of "equality" there is work to be done to achieve the kind of society that is worthy of our founder Francis. As an example let me cite two areas that need attention:

1. It is imperative to dissipate the conviction of not a few ordained friars that the very real prerogative of the priesthood (to a lesser extent, of the diaconate) makes them "better" than their brothers who are not ordained, hence entitled to perquisites.
2. It is imperative to dispel the false notion that "equality" is of the essence of Franciscanism, which has been the occasion of many an identity crisis, particularly in the lay element."

"Equality" may be a quality to be desired in the society of Friars Minor; it may even be said to be an outgrowth of the Franciscan charism. Nevertheless, it is not an *element* of Franciscanism and certainly in itself does not constitute the Friar Minor. My own conviction is that it is much misunderstood and much misused as a slogan. Can one seriously think that we were meant to have been, and should now be, a classless, faceless mass? His followers were clearly different in the eyes of Francis, who welcomed them all whatever their condition. This is emphasized by his biographer, Thomas of Celano:

There was indeed at that time a great rejoicing and a singular joy among Saint Francis and his brothers whenever one of the faithful, no matter who he might

be or of what quality, rich or poor, noble or ignoble, despised or valued, prudent or simple, cleric or unlettered [*idiota*] or lay, led on by the spirit of God came to put on the habit of holy religion.<sup>1</sup>

A corollary of all this is that in our dealings with our fellow friars we should keep in mind that they are different, that we must make adjustments with the individual; also that in the formation program each candidate must have the care that he as an individual needs. Are we to be reminded that friars are not numbers, but usually highly individual?

The preoccupation with "clericalism" is harder to justify. Stemming from a pseudo-historical view of the origins of the Order, it casts a current phenomenon—the preponderance of cleric candidates—in the role of villain. This simply because it mistakes the essence of our Franciscan nature. It appeals to history; it presents as a devastating argument the fact that the early followers of Francis were lay for the most part. I shall cite three examples of this preoccupation, all voiced in connection with the General Chapter of 1979.

It is evident in the report of the first of the above mentioned investigations, when the thirteen reporters ask: "May we hope that the Church will allow us to be an Order neither 'clerical' nor lay nor marked by any other restrictive qualification? . . . Indeed it may be asked whether the juridical classification 'lay' is better suited to our basic identity."<sup>2</sup> During the Chapter discussion a minister provincial objected quite vehemently, and on two distinct occasions, that it was improper to phrase the matter as in the first sentence: on the contrary, it is to be stressed that the Order is all-embracing, that it receives all, clerics and non-clerics.

Moreover, in reporting the evaluative research into the state of our formation, one of the six collaborators took alarm that the clerical element daily forms a larger and larger percentage of the Order: "It appears that the Order has to seek again more strongly its identity as an Order. This also requires a stronger emphasis on the 'lay' element if one takes into account the history and origin of the Order."<sup>3</sup> Thus he would just about make the lay state an essential of Franciscanism.

The same preoccupation was doubtless in the mind of some Chapter

<sup>1</sup>Cel 31; *Omnibus*, pp. 253-54.

<sup>2</sup>"Possumusne sperare fore ut ecclesia nobis concedat ut simus Ordo nec 'clericalis' nec laicalis, seu sine ulla qualificatione? . . . Immo quaeri potest an iuridica qualificatio 'laicalis' melius congruat identitati nostrae fundamentali." *Acta Capituli Generalis 1979*, p. 551; trans. by the editor.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 688.

members who struggled manfully against allowing permanent deacons in the Order. They voiced the fear that some of the friars now lay might wish to become ordained deacons, and so in effect they would have placed a juridical impediment to the admittance of candidates aspiring to the permanent diaconate or to permission for any of our friars to become a permanent deacon. It is hard to reconcile this attitude with the fact that our founder was himself a deacon.

Now the fact that the Order today has a far larger percentage of clerics than in the past, than in the days of Francis, in no way means that it has departed from a pristine purity in this respect. This development is simply the result of the availability of advanced education in almost all states. In the past so many who would have wished to be ordained were barred because they could not undergo the academic preparation. This obstacle now rarely exists, and so it should be no surprise that the proportionate number of candidates for the priesthood has risen so sharply. When we encounter a preference for the priesthood or diaconate among our candidates it is unfranciscan to discourage this aspiration. To be in accord with the mind of Francis, the Order must welcome it with joy and, in the present circumstances, even with satisfaction since it will help to alleviate the shortage of ordained ministers.

Indeed, universality is a hallmark of the Order. Our service, for example, is for all: rich or poor, highly or less educated, professional or lay. And that, too, as we read above, is how Francis thought it should be with those who are to serve in the Order. If we are to live up to the ideals of the Poverello, we must continue to keep the Order open to all. We should not be keeping faith with him if in any way we sought to bar or limit the fit who wish to join us, whether they wish or do not wish to be ordained and whatever the proportion of ordained to non-ordained may result. Ω

## Reflections of a Pond (*Icon*)

Paler  
Receiving only what falls from above  
Mirroring only what is over it  
Content with two dimensions  
Yet its very depth  
In the image  
It reflects

Susan Saint Sing

# Seven Masses

HUGOLINE A. SABATINO, O.F.M.

## VI. Nuptial Mass

*"Then the Lord God had a trance fall upon the man and when he had gone to sleep, he took one of his ribs, closing up its place with flesh" (Genesis 2, 21)*

*"Under the apple tree I awakened you where your mother was in travail with you, where she that bore you was in travail" (Song of Songs 8, 5)*

we have sprung  
like twin streams  
from one source  
parting at rocks  
only to interflow

tower and bending like the wheat stalk  
he is crowned pure gold  
dry warmth fills an atmosphere  
he is the sun on our land  
who tickles the breeze  
and digs from soil  
the hope of seed.  
Man must earn his bread  
so the millstone he bears  
and the ox's tread—  
kneaded and pounded he rises  
though they grill him and char  
his body becomes fragrant  
his heart, new-born soft

we have sprung  
like twin streams  
from one source  
parting at rocks  
only to interflow

She is the laden vine in my patio  
her breasts like clusters of grape  
that know to intoxicate  
she is darker than mystery  
though comely—  
ever a new decanter  
storing better wine till later  
aromatic  
to moisten lips and dull all pain—  
blood of the earth and sparkle of heaven  
magic potion  
quaff of unquenchable love  
she clings fast  
where oaks are blown and washed away  
ooze of the wine press  
indelible crimson stain

we have sprung  
like twin streams  
from one source  
parting at rocks  
only to interflow

I awake to a dream come true  
from the trance and twinkle  
of a possible eye  
from the shook out sack  
of blackness—  
I, Adam, take thee, Eve,  
as my queen of creation—  
Amen to His "Let-there-be's"!  
Through the serpentine path  
I do—  
and by the power from on high  
I call you by my name  
you are the flesh of my flesh  
you are the bone of my bone

we have sprung  
like twin streams  
from one source  
parting at rocks  
only to interflow

# An Analysis of the Capuchin Reform

JOSEPH JERRY HERRERA, O.F.M.CAP.

THE TRIUMPH of the Observant reform was finally achieved in 1517 with the official recognition of the Order of Friars Minor of the Observance by the Bull *Ite et Vos in Vineam Meam* of Leo X. Less than ten years later the Capuchin reform was initiated, and by 1528 it had won official approval with the Bull *Religionis Zelus* of Clement VII. Why did the new reform begin? Why did it attain success so quickly? These are the questions we hope to answer in our brief look into the Capuchin reform begun by Fra Matteo di Bascio in 1525.

To study the movements of these two great reforms of the Order we must first look more closely at the meaning of "reform" in itself. What does it mean for one to reform? A cynical observer of Franciscan history might say that reform is synonymous with division since both the great reforms within the Order resulted in division. The word *reform*, however, comes from the Latin *reformare*, which means to shape again, to form anew, to amend. A reform, then, can be a reshaping, a return to the original form, or a new way of seeing a certain form. This is important for our study since, according to Marion Habig in *The Franciscans*, there seems to be a misconception among authors on religious orders that reform means simply to correct abuses.<sup>1</sup> As we can see from our definition reform can have several interpretations. Habig goes on to say that reform can also mean a calling to a stricter way of life, as well as the mere correction of abuses.<sup>2</sup>

Reform has long been a part of the general definition of the Roman Catholic Church. This reform has often manifested itself through both the above mentioned methods. The *Ecclesia semper reformanda* can point to various great reformers within its history. Among the greatest of these Pope Saint Gregory, Saint Charles Borromeo, the counter-reformation, and Vatican Council II attest most eloquently to the truth of this Latin adage.

<sup>1</sup>Alexandre Masseron and Harion A. Habig, O.F.M., *The Franciscans: St. Francis of Assisi and His Three Orders* (Chicago: Franciscan Herald Press, 1959), p. 96.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

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The adage *Ordo semper reformanda est* can easily be seen to apply to the Franciscan family, for, as in the history of the Church, reform has always been a particularly strong characteristic of the Order. Several instances of this fact, even in Francis's own lifetime, bear this out. Once, when Francis had been away and was on his way back to the Portiuncula for a Pentecost chapter to be held there, the townspeople noticed that there would be insufficient housing for all the friars and had built them a stone convent near the Portiuncula. Upon arriving at the site, Francis immediately jumped upon its roof and began frantically to rip off the shingles with the intention of tearing down the structure. As he tore at the roof he begged his friars to help him destroy "this monstrous thing contrary to poverty."<sup>3</sup> This was one of the first reforming acts of this new way of life. Also, in words designed to remind the friars never to become comfortable or complacent with the way in which they lived their lives, Francis admonished and legislated that they remain "strangers and pilgrims (1 Pt. 2:11) in this world."<sup>4</sup>

The Portiuncula affair and especially Francis's admonition helped initiate a spirit, a conscientization, of reform in the Franciscan family. It meant that future followers of Saint Francis would, to use a phrase from Michael Crosby's *Thy Will Be Done*, read the reality of their lives by "becoming critical thinkers able to reflect on sin "in its individual and social manifestations."<sup>5</sup> Future Franciscans inherited Francis's spirit of reform. They were "conscientized," in Crosby's terminology, to seek the good. But this conscientization is not merely the negative spirit of correcting abuses; it also includes seeing the area in which growth is needed and deciding to fill the void. Just as sin can result from doing evil or from omission of a good, reform can be effected by correcting an evil or by incorporating a previously omitted good.

The reforming spirit of the Order is a well documented historical fact. But there were many different kinds of reform attempted, and so we must look again at reform in itself and try to establish some criterion for authentic reform. That is, we need to ascertain what it means to say that some reforms succeed while others fail. Is it numbers, popularity, or papal approval that ultimately spells out success?

Concerning ecclesiastical reform, J. A. Finchtne lists four norms to safeguard orthodoxy:

<sup>2</sup>Cel 57; *Omnibus*, p. 412.

<sup>4</sup>RegB 6; *Omnibus*, p. 61.

<sup>5</sup>Michael H. Crosby, O.F.M.Cap., *Thy Will Be Done: Praying the Our Father as Subversive Activity* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1977), p. 197.

1. True reform has a good sense of church and "upholds the primacy of charity."
2. "True reform can come only from within the entire ecclesial community," not just from an interest in one aspect.
3. "True reform is patient but prompt." It is prayerfully peaceful.
4. "True reform is a return to the sources." The ability to interrogate tradition, history, Scriptures, the present. In a word, to read reality critically.<sup>6</sup>

These same norms can be used in our study on reform within the Order of Friars Minor. The communal, holistic, patient, and critical approach to true ecclesiastical reform is a good standard of measurement for reform in the Order as well as in the Church.

The first real cry for reform within the Franciscan family came from the so-called Spiritualist party. Their reform failed because of their narrow approach to the Franciscan lifestyle. This is true especially in their failure to recall Francis's deep love for the Church and its hierarchy. Also, they exaggerated the vow of poverty. That is, they made poverty the absolute end, rather than valuing it as the means that it is. Instead of being just one characteristic of their lifestyle, it became *the* lifestyle itself. Their strong sentiments towards poverty eventually led many of them to adopt the Joachimist heresy, exalting the friars as champions of the new Age of the Holy Spirit. This new Age was to be one of purity in which the pure poor ones would obviate the need for "authoritative institutions," and the Spirit of God would replace the New Testament Church structure.<sup>7</sup> The heresy of the Spirituals is not, however, the important matter in our study. From our point of view its most devastating result was that their narrow-mindedness made them lose sight of that all-important reforming virtue, the "primacy of charity" (Congar's first norm). Their love was not for the Order but for the Rule itself (norm two). But the Order was not made for the Rule; rather the Rule was made for the Order. The Spirituals followed neither the spirit nor the letter of the norms for true reform.

### The Observant Reform

THE NEXT CRY for reform of any historical significance is generally considered to have issued in success. The Observant reform was, according to

<sup>6</sup>J. A. Finchtne, "Reform in the Church," *New Catholic Encyclopedia*, 12:173, citing Yves Congar, *Vraie et fausse reforme dans l'Église*.

<sup>7</sup>John Moorman, *A History of the Franciscan Order from Its Origins to the Year 1517* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1968), p. 115.

Bishop Moorman, a "triumph." Its proponents did, admittedly, sound very much like the heretical Spirituals, and in fact their desires and demands were the same as those which had been demanded up to that time. Why did the Observant reform "triumph" and that advocated by the Spirituals fail? To see why, let us take up the specific demands made by the Observants, their methodology of reform, and their eventual status.

The Observant movement was characterized especially by the desire to observe the Rule more strictly. It began as a retreat into the eremitical life "spent in small communities in remote places."<sup>9</sup> According to most sources the first movement of reform was made by John of Valle when he and some of his companions left the friary they were living in and went to the friary of Brugliano, near Foligno in the marches of Ancona, in 1334. John's desire was "to live in conformity to the Rule."<sup>10</sup> Neither he nor his successor at Brugliano, Pauluccio d'Trinci, offered a real program of reform; but we can gather that prayer, solitude, and smaller houses were very important parts of "living in conformity to the Rule."

The real champion of the Observant reform and the friar who really organized the Observant "program" is John Capistran. Reform in the Order, John maintained, required getting rid of the "three ps": *pecunia, pueri, et petulantia*; i.e., "the accumulation of property, the acceptance of young boys into the order, and the lack of responsibility of those in office."<sup>11</sup> His program of reform became known, in 1430, as the *Martinianae* constitutions, which contained four main prescriptions: (1) forfeit all landed property, (2) refrain from holding property, (3) adopt a uniform habit, and (4) all who are able to do so should work.<sup>12</sup> Conspicuously missing from this program are the aspects of prayer and housing which we have mentioned, but we can presume that, even though Moorman does not mention them, they were key aspects of the saint's reform. As Father Maurice Sheehan, O.F.M.Cap., observes, "Prayer, as much as poverty, has been the catalyst of every enduring reform of the Order."<sup>13</sup> And according to John Capistran himself, three things testified to the superiority of the Observant reform: "a much stricter observance of Fran-

<sup>9</sup>Cf. *ibid.*, pp. 369-83.

<sup>10</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 506

<sup>11</sup>Masseron and Habig, p. 79.

<sup>12</sup>Moorman, p. 447.

<sup>13</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>14</sup>Maurice Sheehan, O.F.M.Cap., "Contemplation in the Franciscan Tradition," *THE CORD* 29 (1979), 185.

ciscan poverty, a greater attention to penitential exercises, and, above all, a deeper devotion to *prayer, solitude, and meditation*."<sup>14</sup>

The Observant cry for reform was, then, basically a desire to return to the seraphic simplicity of the early Franciscans just as the Spiritualist movement had been, save that the polemics of poverty did not take on the exaggerated importance it had assumed with the Spirituals. Those who stay within the bounds of the "primacy of charity" will not be led astray. Rather than fight over a single issue, the Observants wanted to return to the sources and hence advocated, along with poverty and austerity, the mixed life with a strong emphasis on the eremitical character of the Order and a uniformity of observance.

Unlike the Spirituals' reform, that of the Observants clearly conforms to Congar's criteria. From its roots with John of Valle, Pauluccio, and Saint Bernardine, it was marked by the insistence that reform had to take place within the Order, without separation, for the good of the brotherhood. Moorman tells us that in the *quaerimoniae* the French Observants were "convinced that the Observant way of life is essential to the well-being of the Church and the reputation of the Order as a whole."<sup>15</sup> They showed, too, that they were not interested simply in observing poverty but desired to live the whole Rule. Prayer and penance received a great deal of emphasis.

Finally, one who considers the Observant reform cannot fail to notice the patience which characterized it. It was 1334 when John of Valle initiated the movement, and 1517 when Leo X split the Order, giving the Observants the "triumph" they had so long and so patiently awaited. How ironic, that they had so patiently and heroically worked success—"triumph"—only through the Order's division! By the time Leo's Bull was pronounced, at any rate, the Observant message had grown from the whisper of John of Valle to the tremendous shout of *Ite et vos*. From the mere thirty communities of John Capistran's time, the movement had grown to 1,262 houses a little less than a century later.<sup>16</sup> The popular and holy friars of the Observance had won the hearts of Pope and people alike, as well as most of the aspirants to the Franciscan way. The tears shed in the Marches in those early years had at last been rewarded. All was going well, perhaps too well!

Almost immediately after the Observant triumph, a new cry arose for a stricter living of the Rule of Saint Francis. Initiated by three sincere Observant friars, this cry became, within ten years of *Ite et vos*, the beginning of a

<sup>14</sup>Moorman, p. 506; emphasis added.

<sup>15</sup>Ibid., p. 383.

<sup>16</sup>Ibid., p. 490.

reform which resulted in a further division of the Franciscan family when the new Order of Friars Minor Capuchin was officially recognized in 1536. Something which took the Observant party over 200 years to accomplish became a reality for the Capuchins within ten. How is this to be explained?

## The Capuchin Reform

THERE IS A spirit in humanity which, paradoxically, seeks after nothingness itself. This questing spirit, left to the family by its founder, bore its first fruit in the hearts of Francis's earliest companions, who retired to the caves of the Marches of Ancona after his death. In Brothers Giles and Bernard and others like them is found, in mysterious and dynamic unity, this twofold quest for perfection and for nothingness which had been so characteristic of Francis himself.

This union of two seemingly opposed quests is actually not limited to Franciscanism but has its foundation in the Incarnation itself, which Jacques Guy Bougerol, O.F.M., characterizes as follows: "Jesus Christ, God and man, the absolute and the relative, Being and nothingness . . . united in one single person."<sup>17</sup> It is this spirit which keeps calling the Franciscan to a deeper self-emptying in the footsteps of Jesus so that he may be filled with Jesus's own perfection. And it is this same twofold spirit which enlivens Franciscan reform: a spirit which can never die and so can never be specifically new. Each time it emerges, it is "merely the carrying on of the spirit of all former reforms because that one spirit [bequeathed to us by Francis himself] never died out in the Marches" where his companions nurtured it.<sup>18</sup>

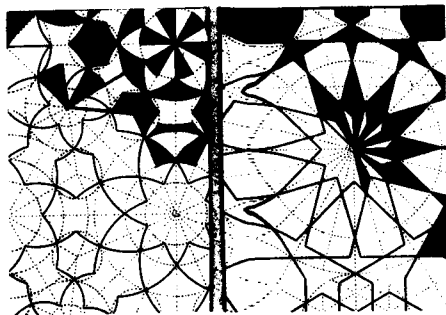
To this spirit of reform we attribute the birth of the Capuchin Order. But a mere desire, no matter how fervent, does not become a reality simply because it is desired. The rapid success of the Capuchin reform owes its being to a number of external events, chief among them the success of the Observant reform itself. According to Father Malachy Flaherty, the separation of 1517 was of direct influence on the Capuchin reform, which followed it "almost necessarily."<sup>19</sup> The Observant reform did, as Father Gall Higgins explains,

<sup>17</sup>Ewert H. Cousins, *Bonaventure and the Coincidence of Opposites* (Chicago: Franciscan Herald Press, 1978), p. xiii.

<sup>18</sup>Gall Higgins, O.F.M.Cap., "Reform Movement in the Provinces of the Marches," *Round Table of Franciscan Research* 9 (reissued 1949), 14.

<sup>19</sup>Malachy Flaherty, O.F.M.Cap., "The Separation of 1517 and the Capuchin Reform," *Round Table of Franciscan Research* 7 (reissued 1949), 12.





receive the headship of the Order. In 1517, Pope Leo X placed the Conventual friars under nominal subjection to the Observants. At first sight this did, indeed, look as if the reform would flourish and renew itself, [but] quick and decisive steps were needed to reform the first vigor of reform. These steps did not follow.<sup>20</sup>

At least they did not follow within the structure of the Order. We shall see more of this later.

Before we discuss the shape into which the new reform evolved, let us look into some of those areas in which "steps were needed" for reform. The four areas or Franciscan charisms to which we now turn our attention are key areas of the Franciscan way of life as well as of any Franciscan reform: poverty, prayer, penance, and pilgrimage. If we keep in mind that "reform," in the Franciscan tradition, is a movement from the less perfect to the more perfect *nothingness*, we should be able to see how the Capuchin reform was a necessary consequence of the Observant triumph.

**Pilgrimage.** Some may argue that poverty is the most basic Franciscan charism, others may accord that place to prayer, and still others to austerity. It is our belief that the spirit of pilgrimage gives birth in some way to all the others and that it, more than any of them, embodies the Franciscan spirit of reform.

It was Francis who established the itinerant-mendicant character of the Order. He initiated that "gypsy-like" flavor which we refer to as the charism of pilgrimage when, as Bonaventure reports, "he was at Mass one day on the feast of one of the Apostles and the passage of the Gospel was read, 'Take nothing for your journey' (Mt. 10:9). . . . He exclaimed, 'This is what I long for with all my heart.'"<sup>21</sup> In this and many other ways (recall the admonition to the friars in chapter 6 of the Rule of 1223, mentioned above), he initiated and legislated a wandering spirit for his Order. But "when Bonaventure codified the medley of the friars' laws in 1260, he fell back on the chief model to hand, the monastic."<sup>22</sup> This act, Father Sheehan believes, brought the friars "off the roads . . . attaching them to fixed

<sup>20</sup>Higgins, p. 14.

<sup>21</sup>St. Bonaventure, LM 1.3.1; *Omnibus*, p. 646.

<sup>22</sup>Sheehan, p. 184.

abodes."<sup>23</sup> Thus was obscured the charism of pilgrimage which was, ironically, very much a part of Bonaventure's own spirituality.

Many of the early reformers of the Order tried to renew this charism in their lifestyle, and as Moorman says, most of the leaders of the Observant party were "notable preachers."<sup>24</sup> It was Matteo di Bascio's desire to be a wandering preacher that inspired him to seek permission from his superiors first, and then from the Pope, to live an itinerant lifestyle, observing the Rule without gloss. And it was this action by Matteo which initiated the Capuchin reform. He wanted to "go about the world preaching the commandments of God . . . exhorting all men to walk in the way of God and in good works."<sup>25</sup> Later, the Capuchin Constitutions of 1536 ensured that this charism would not be lost.

Many of the successes achieved by the Observant reform—especially in the area of pilgrimage—were actually to prove harmful to the Observant cause and helpful to the Capuchin reform.

Just as Bonaventure had legislated fixed abodes and so lost the pilgrimage spirit, so the Observants' success in numbers forced them to build larger convents,<sup>26</sup> which often rivaled those of the so-called *non-reformati*. That success likewise exacerbated a problem which had existed since Francis tried to tear down the convent near the Portiuncula. In Spain, Archbishop Ximenes was "busy closing Conventual houses and filling them with friars of the regular observance."<sup>27</sup> According to Father L. Gribbon, O.F.M.Cap.,

. . . there seemed to be no law against affiliating entire Conventual convents and even provinces with one generous nod of acquiescence and without too rigid an inquisition into the character and motives of the "converts."<sup>28</sup>

"In the long run," observes Father Nathaniel Sontag, O.F.M.Cap., "instead of adapting the convents to suit their status they adapted their status to fit the convents."<sup>29</sup>

In the end, like all previous reforms, the Capuchins retired to hermitages,

<sup>23</sup>Ibid.

<sup>24</sup>Moorman, p. 520.

<sup>25</sup>Father Cuthbert, O.S.F.C., *The Capuchins* (Port Washington, NY: Kennikat Press, rpt. 1971), I, 32.

<sup>26</sup>Flaherty, p. 12.

<sup>27</sup>Moorman, p. 571.

<sup>28</sup>Leander Gribbon, O.F.M.Cap., "The Rise of the Capuchins, 1518-1528," *Round Table of Franciscan Research* 7 (reissued 1949), 33.

<sup>29</sup>Nathaniel Sontag, O.F.M.Cap., "The Spiritual Tradition and the Capuchins," *Round Table of Franciscan Research* 7 (reissued 1949), 25.

leaving the overgrown convents in which they could not satisfy the spirit within them which thirsted for austerity. The Capuchins ensured that this spirit would endure by legislating in 1536 that "there should be a wide distinction between the palatial residences of the rich and the mean dwellings of poor *mendicants*, *pilgrims*, and *penitents*."<sup>30</sup> They even prescribed the size of the places (cf. § 74). The following description of the first Capuchin convent shows how faithfully they followed these early ideals:

... built on a sloping hill, of which part of its foundation rested on a narrow ledge of rock while the rest was supported by arches. The door was so narrow that anyone inclined to obesity could hardly enter. The windows were extremely small and the choir could hold no more than seven friars. The refectory and cells were devoid of flooring. The outer walls were of stone, while the inner ones were constructed out of twigs and mud, covered with whitewash.<sup>31</sup>

The Capuchin reform was also facilitated by Observant success in the area of prayer. It is in this area that the early Capuchins have left their biggest mark. As we said earlier, Father Sheehan considers it to have been as much the issue as either poverty or austerity in the reform.

Prayer. Prayer has always been an integral part of the Franciscan life, especially the contemplative aspect of prayer.<sup>32</sup> As in the case of pilgrimage, with respect to prayer too the early friars followed Francis's example by using the hermitage as the basic model for a family of apostles sharing the common life of prayer and working as preachers. Francis himself retired to his favorite mountain retreats for months at a time. Bonaventure, however, also monasticized prayer in his efforts to "codify the medley of laws." He fell back on the monastic prayer schedule which fostered unity and de-emphasized solitary prayer and the eremitical life. So the reformers fled to the mountains and to this spirit of solitude. They fled to the desert that these hermitages provided.

But if the early Observants, such as John of Valle, had already cried so loudly for reform in prayer, why did the Capuchins continue to do so? As was the case with the charism of pilgrimage, the Observants did not go far enough. They settled in too soon to satisfy the reforming spirit at the heart of Franciscanism. "The constant but vain endeavors to succeed in this

<sup>30</sup>Capuchin Constitutions, §73. All subsequent references to these 1536 Constitutions are made in text by section number only. The text can be found in *Round Table of Franciscan Research* 7 and 8 (reissued 1949), 110-42; 116-26.

<sup>31</sup>Roland Dusick, O.F.M.Cap., "Early Capuchin Convents," *Round Table of Franciscan Research* 9 (reissued 1949), 3.

<sup>32</sup>Sheehan, p. 188.

reform finally ended when a few friars realized that reform within the Order was impossible."<sup>33</sup> Many friars had been seeking reform in this area, as we can see from the tremendous popularity of the "ritiro" movement in Spain. But, fearful for the unity of the Order, the Observant superiors denied permission to the friars seeking reform in prayer.<sup>34</sup> This obstinacy greatly contributed to the birth of the various independent reform movements, including the Capuchins, so that "by 1650 there were distinguishable within the Franciscan family five separate reform movements, all of which had taken their origin in solitude and made prayer the cornerstone of their life."<sup>35</sup>

We see, then, that in prayer as in pilgrimage, the Capuchins wanted nothing new. Solitude, interior prayer, and hermitages had been part of every previous reform. The difference between the Observants and the Capuchins is that the latter learned from the former's mistakes. Rather than risk losing their initial fervor in prayer, they legislated these aspects of prayer into their first Constitutions, whereas the Observants do not seem to have supported them.<sup>36</sup>

The Capuchin Constitutions of 1536 ensured that this vital charism would not be easily mitigated or lost. They thus restored a dimension of Franciscanism which had been greatly downplayed. In distinctly prayerful language the Constitutions begin their treatment of prayer with the spirit of prayer itself. The friars are to pray more with their hearts and less with their lips (§36). They are to maintain silence in the friaries "to safeguard the religious spirit." And "there shall be one or two modest cells in the woods or other places consigned to the friars. . . so that if any friar desire to lead an eremitical life . . . he may in peaceful seclusion . . . surrender himself entirely to God" (§79).

The friars, then, legislated contemplation into the reform. As Father Sheehan mentions, however, "theirs was not a fugitive and cloistered virtue . . . but one geared to preaching and the care of the sick."<sup>37</sup>

... while preaching to others, should they feel the spirit weakening, let them return to solitude, there let them remain, till once again, full of God, the im-

<sup>33</sup>Gall Higgins, O.F.M.Cap., "Early Opposition to the Capuchin Reform," *Round Table of Franciscan Research* 8 (reissued 1949), 62.

<sup>34</sup>Cf. Fintan Spruck, O.F.M.Cap., "Matthew of Bascio," *Round Table of Franciscan Research* 7 (reissued 1949), 51.

<sup>35</sup>Sheehan, p. 188.

<sup>36</sup>Cf. note 29, above.

<sup>37</sup>Sheehan, p. 187.

pulse of the Holy Spirit may move them to go forth to spread divine grace over the world. Thus engaged, now like Martha, now like Mary, they shall follow Christ in his mixed life, who after praying on the mountain, went down to the Temple to preach, nay descended from Heaven to earth to save souls [§114].

**Poverty and Austerity.** Here again the reason for the Capuchins' successful reform depends heavily on the success and the popularity of the Observant reform. According to Father Sonntag, "Many Conventuals joined the Observants before 1517. In most cases they passed over, convent and all. The buildings were originally established according to Conventual specifications—large and convenient."<sup>38</sup> And of course they found it impossible to maintain these houses without foundations and revenues.

The capitular fathers of 1536, wanting to avoid this situation, mandated that "the Rule be observed to the letter, with simplicity and without gloss," and so they went on to "renounce all privileges and explanations that relax it" (§5). They also renounced exemption from their Ordinaries (§8) and the dispensation allowing friars to have procurators (§37).

The Capuchins were very strong in their legislation regarding poverty, and it was this concreteness and firmness in uniform purpose, which the Observant party lacked, that really ensured the success of the Capuchin reform. The failure of the *bull* *unionis* of Leo X actually to unite the Observant factions in one united front made it difficult, if not impossible, for them to reform from within the Order.<sup>39</sup>

There were many Observants who came to the realization that internal reform would be impossible and fled in the footsteps of Matteo and Lodovico. In fact, in the first thirty years of the Capuchin reform, all the superiors were former Observants. It was not that these men had been impatient: they simply continued to press for reform, not being content with what the Observants had already accomplished. As Father Higgins writes, "Viewing the reform movement as we have done, we see it as something dynamic. Each reform was but another expression of that spirit of Francis and each attempt at reform just another step towards the final realization of that spirit."<sup>40</sup>

But why was the new reform such a quick success? Three reasons in particular seem plausible. First, the Observants failed to go all the way. They forgot that Franciscan reform is never definitively attained. Final victory is attained only at the end of time. The Observants had attached more im-

<sup>38</sup>Sonntag, p. 25.

<sup>39</sup>Gibbon, p. 33.

<sup>40</sup>Higgins, p. 18.

portance to unity than to the quest for authenticity.

In the second place, success came because the Capuchins quickly broke ties with the disorganized, faction-ridden Observant Order and established their own Constitutions which ensured that the spirit of reform would be preserved and observed. They were the first, e.g., to use the term *mental prayer* in their legislation (§§41-42). Their unity, by way of legislation, and their independence were the pillars on which they built their way of life. Father Sheehan observes that by locating their friaries in the outskirts of the cities (§77) they guaranteed themselves the quiet necessary for prayer, and "by making a complete break from the start (via *Religionis zelus*) they avoided many of the entangling relationships and distracting struggles that the Observants had to work through in order to make their reform effective."<sup>41</sup>

Success was quick, finally, because of several outside influences: specifically and most importantly, two very prominent women (Catherine of Cibo and Vittoria Colonna) who were won over to the Capuchin side by the friars' holiness of life and dedicated labors, and a very weak Pope (Clement VII), who "under pressure proved timid, irresolute, and procrastinating."<sup>42</sup> These people were, we are convinced, merely agents in the hands of the Lord, used to uphold the Franciscan Order and the spirit of reform.

## Conclusion

DOES THE Capuchin reform conform to Father Congar's program for authentic reform? The legislation, the historical events, and the test of time tell us that it does. The reform had a good sense of community. The Constitutions of 1536 begin thus: "In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ begin the Constitutions of the Friars Minor Capuchin. To the end that our Order, as the vineyard of the Most High Son of God, may better stand fast in the spiritual observance of the Evangelical and Seraphic Rule. . . ." The Capuchins were trying to reform the entire Order in all its aspects. If we understand reform as the continuing unfolding of the reforming spirit, then the new Capuchin reform was a patient one. The first Capuchins were all Observants who had been a part of the long Observant struggle for stricter observance. They had not found it in the Observant party, at least not to a degree sufficient to satisfy their reforming spirit, and so they continued their

<sup>41</sup>Sheehan, pp. 187-88.

<sup>42</sup>Joseph McSorley, *An Outline History of the Church by Centuries* (St. Louis: B. Herder Book Co., 1946), p. 576.

cry for the eremitical life in strict observance of the Rule.

That the Capuchin reform was a return to sources is evident from the importance the Capuchins attached to the Testament in their observance of the Rule (§6). The important thing, however, is not that their work conformed to Congar's norms, nor that they did things legally, nor that they were officially recognized. Rather, what is important is that they lived the reform and remained open to further reform through legislation which fostered an ongoing spirit of reform.

According to David of Augsburg, writing before any of these events had taken place in the Franciscan family,

Those whose outlook is distorted and who have strayed from God's way are afraid that, if they give in at all, the numbers of those who are zealous for right religious discipline will gradually increase and they themselves, as it were despite themselves, will be drawn into a more observant way of life. To avoid this they show themselves very hot indeed in their opposition, and, under the pretext of rooting out singularity they ostracize and oppress those who are anxious to restore religious life to its proper state.<sup>43</sup>

The Conventuals made the mistake of trying to put down the reforming spirit. The Observants did not let it continue to grow. Will the Capuchins do the same, or will we once again ignite that spirit of reform which has brought us to where we are now? Ω

<sup>43</sup>David of Augsburg, *Spiritual Life and Progress*, trans. Dominic Devas, O.F.M. (London: Burns, Oates and Washbourne, Ltd., 1937), p.33.



## Agape

Under  
Springtime shadow  
Of first sprouts  
Sap of the Spirit  
Intensely received.

Winter famine?  
. . . . Oh no . . . .  
With winter wheat  
He nourishes me.

Barbara Doria

## Even Francis Got in God's Way

SISTER FRANCES ANN THOM, O. S. C.

EVERY PERSON who enters a religious community must of necessity consider that particular community as the perfect life-style to lead him or her directly to heaven; otherwise, why go to all that trouble of leaving home, giving up legitimate friends, pleasures, and opportunities to join something less perfect than what one already has? As time progresses and human nature becomes a more apparent factor, one may wonder about the perfection of this lifestyle. This life which should be a foretaste of heaven seems, at times, to be less and less the spiritual uplift one sought. After many years, one may realize that while the lifestyle is aimed toward perfection, one is living with human beings whose perfection has not yet been accomplished. Also, if there is a perfect community, few of us would fit into it!

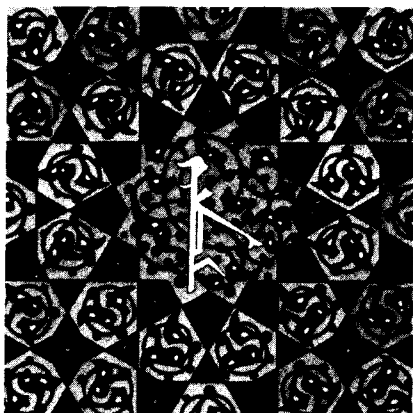
Sometimes—somehow—we manage to get in God's way! He wants to do something for us. What do we do? We doubt; we question; we fear; we mistrust, and all too often we misunderstand. We can, however, find some bit of consolation in the lives of many of the saints. No need to mention Saint Peter or Saint Paul as examples, since we are all familiar with Peter's spontaneous bravery followed by fear and denial, and with the way God knocked Paul off his horse to get his attention. But there is one saint with whom we can identify, one saint whose human problems caused him often to get into God's way instead of being on the way to God: Francis Bernardone!

We need only recall an early event in the life of the young Francis when he was acting as a very efficient clerk in his father's shop to understand how one can sometimes get in God's way. The beggar asked for alms for the love of God. Francis brushed him aside, as he was very busy, and then God intervened in, as we might say, nowadays, Francis's subconscious. Francis could have ignored this small voice within him, but he didn't and thus had a second chance at the grace offered him. He ran pell mell down the street, practically scaring the wits out of the beggar, so he could right himself with

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the Lord. Anyone witnessing that incident probably knew Francis and his other types of escapades and took this one for just another of Francis Bernardone's tricks.



Francis, at any rate, must have returned to his father's shop feeling very light-hearted and proud of his humility for being so charitable and good, and he liked the feeling, too. How deep was his love of God at this time? No matter how deep or how shallow it was, it was his generosity upon which God knew he could depend, and it was this natural gift upon which grace would build. How God must have smiled as the self-satisfied Francis went back to his work of being a shrewd businessman!

Francis again stumbled before God when he sold his and his father's goods for a good work, the repair of San Damiano. The trouble is, Francis never dreamed the priest would refuse the money nor that his father, who had spoiled him in so many ways, would make such a fuss over so few things. God used this event to turn Francis's heart from money and its vanities as well as to divest him of family dependency. From now on, he would be able to call only God his father and God would lead his chosen son to do things beyond his greatest dreams.

Impulsively Francis decided that God wanted him to be a hermit. So, after giving up all in the courtyard of the Bishop of Assisi, he saw his personal vocation to be that of a solitary. As always, looking for the straight path and convinced that he had found it, Francis pursued the eremitical life. But God didn't seem to agree. Soon his solitary life was interrupted by others who desired to follow on the same path. Francis had learned more openness to God's Spirit by then; so he freely and joyfully accepted those God had sent him. They would learn from him, and he from them.

Francis really found himself in God's way when he instinctively fumbled for coins as an alms during his unexpected encounter with a leper. This time, however, God's grace was able to move him to dismount, place the coins in the leper's diseased hand, and embrace him in recognition of what he really was—his brother. The old light-hearted spirit returned! The knowledge of doing something good sparked again. But the total disappearance of the leper in an impossible space of time in the unwooded area carved in his heart the certainty that he was now on God's way.

Even when God plainly spoke to Francis there were times when his predispositions or literal-mindedness overburdened and overshadowed the message. The voice from the crucifix did ask him to repair the church, but it took Francis three churches later to realize the true, universal and spiritual, sense of the message. But it was this same literal quality which would cause fear in the hearts of so many of his followers later on as they clamored to have the Rule moderated. Without this literal aspect, however, one wonders whether Francis would have become what Franciscans proudly call him: the most perfect imitator of Christ.



Does this mean that Francis arrived at a point in his life where he continuously lived on the threshold of heaven with his feet on the ground but his head perpetually in the clouds? Of course not; in fact, even after the gift of the stigmata Francis underwent some of his most severe trials. Earlier, after his conversion, there is one scene which tells us how he began to cope with human nature and build up his spiritual life. Francis walked into town because he needed oil for the lamp. He had already established himself as a beggar, had been bedecked with stones and mud on one occasion, had been cursed by his father, and had persevered through a number of other trials. Now, however, as he neared the place he heard familiar sounds and familiar voices. These were the sounds of an evening of fun—an evening such as he and his friends would enjoy together, with himself as the king of revels. How would they receive him now? What would they say to him? How would they look at him? Francis was ashamed! Now—would he get in God's way, or would he walk on the way to God? As we know, he overcame his shame, entered the place, and strengthened his allegiance to poverty. Through God's grace he was growing in humility, trust, and love.

Much later God and Francis had an interesting discussion about who was running things. Poor Francis, ill from his sufferings inflicted by the holy wounds, wearied with community problems, and possessed by a sense of helplessness, complained to God. What was to be done with the wayward

friars? It was impossible to control so many men—why had God called so many to follow him? What consolation does God give to his loyal follower and most perfect imitator? God asks him whose Order it is, anyhow, and tells Francis to be more concerned about his own salvation. How's that for getting in God's way? Ω

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## Tapestry



Today threading their way  
south from Boston  
slim silver planes caught fire  
from the sun and cut by the wire  
of the telephone pole were lost in  
grey clouds over the Bay.

*Mary L. O'Hara, O.S.C.*

## Living Bread

Saracens' retreat:  
Sunburst of gold, delicate  
Wafer, Clare's firm grasp . . .  
Peaceful assurance whispered:  
"I shall always protect you!"



*Guy Tillson, O.F.M. Cap.*

## Contemplation

I wandered under the Father's gaze,  
Unnoticed, by me, His watching eyes,  
I saw the grass, the trees, the men;  
Hearing in the wind the groans, the cries.  
Tripping lightly on violets—blue;  
And black-eyed Susans' golden spray,  
I danced in the gentle breeze's path  
And with each floating leaf did play.  
Essence of heavenly flowers mixed  
With aromas a chef could never create,  
Filled my brain to powerful depths—  
Leading me on 'til it was too late!  
At last, I paused to look around  
Where all was clothed with shades  
Of greys and blacks; a mixture of a kind  
Like fearful depths in which life wades.  
"No more behind . . .," I cried aloud.  
My heart pulsed like a fear-filled stone  
And thrust my eyes in front of me  
To see a path newly hewn  
Glimmers of rays fast sinking down  
Caught me as I ran—oh, where?  
To the ends of the earth it seemed to be  
Without the light I didn't care.  
So—onward—pushing—always ahead—  
But darkness was faster afoot.  
My wondrous sights and gaily  
Lost forever in falling soot!  
Which fell like a passion as I sank very low  
To discover a soft resting-place  
Where tender essence continued to blow  
Sweetness and softness on my face.  
It was then the darkness comforted me;  
It was then that I came to rest;  
It was then my breath barely breathed at all;  
It was only then I understood the test.

*Sister Frances Ann Thom, O.S.C.*

## Book Reviews

**Grey Friars.** By Harold Goad, London: John Westhouse Publishers, 1947; reprinted Chicago: Franciscan Herald Press, 1979. Pp. 238. Cloth, \$6.95.

*Reviewed by Father Raphael D. Bonanno, O.F.M., missionary of Holy Name Province, in service at the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, Jerusalem.*

The subtitle of this book gives a better idea of its content: the story of St. Francis and his followers. The first chapter deals with the birthplace, boyhood, and conversion of Saint Francis. Chapter two already moves into the Order's foundation as the "Poor Men of Assisi." Chapter three treats of the Order after Francis's death. Chapters four through nine deal with various areas of Franciscan influence: viz., the preaching and worship of the friars, the freedom of poverty, Franciscan politics, popular music and poetry, plays and painting, science and philosophy. There is a curious final chapter on Franciscan individualism. Most chapters begin with a quotation from Dante who expresses the profoundest thoughts in succinct lines.

Goad seems to be a Protestant, possibly Wesleyan (p. 227), writing definitely for an English audience. The title of the book, *Grey Friars*, is the nickname the people of England gave the Friars Minor centuries ago. Many chapters of the book dwell more on events or topics related to England.

Goad tries to provide background to understand Saint Francis better. He suc-

ceeds admirably. His book is a good introduction to Franciscanism. Of course it is not the last word on this subject; that book has not been written yet.

Goad's book is a reprint of his 1947 book which in turn was an amplification of the book he wrote in 1926 called *Franciscan Italy*. This latter story of Saint Francis was built around the cities and towns where he lived, prayed, and preached. The present book has very little actually on the internal disputes of the Order, e.g., with the Spirituals. Goad's emphasis is clearly on the external influence of the friars in the world. Reflecting on that image, he shows us what the Grey Friars were all about.

Goad's book needs some updating because Franciscan studies have progressed so much in recent years, e.g., on Donna Pica's nationality, on Francis's visit to Jerusalem, on the houses of Saint Francis or Pietro Bernardone in Assisi, and on Clare and her chronology.

Something new for this reader was Saint Francis's devotion to Michael the Archangel as patron of the medieval knights. The medieval shrines at Cornwall in England, Mont Saint Michel in France, Soracte and Monte Gargano in Italy were part of knightly cult to the warrior angel (p. 43). Well known is Saint Francis's yearly fast in honor of Saint Michael, because during that of 1224 on Alvernia Francis received the Stigmata.

In Goad's chapter on preaching and worship, there is an interesting excursus on the history of language in Europe and how the friars helped because they preach-

ed in the national vernaculars, e.g., Saint Bernardine of Siena and his Sieneese dialect. Duns Scotus probably would disagree with Goad that the friars defended the Immaculate Conception "by poetic rather than philosophic arguments" (p. 86).

In the chapter on Franciscan politics, the closeness of the friars to the poor made them generally left-wing or people-oriented. And yet they were generally also respectful of the hierarchy and orthodoxy. A notable exception was Ockham's opposition to John XXII.

In the chapter on poetry, Goad includes his own translation of the Canticle of the Sun from the original Italian and uses the phrase "Monsignor Brother Sun," which is far too literal and ecclesiastical. Some American monsignors would wonder about that translation. Regis Armstrong, O.F.M.Cap., an expert on Saint Francis's writings at the Franciscan Institute, St. Bonaventure, New York, renders the Italian better when he uses "Sir Brother Sun."

In the chapter on plays and paintings, Goad shows how the Coventry plays were organized by the friars and their liturgical pageants of *Corpus Domini* were only a step removed from the famous medieval "miracle" or "mystery plays." In painting, Saint Bonaventure's books, the *Legend of Saint Francis*, and the *Meditations on the Life of Christ* influenced Cimabue, Giotto, and other great painters of the period. Goad shows how the gold and silver backgrounds of byzantine paintings changed when birds, flowers, and little animals appeared as a result of Franciscan interest in Nature.

In the chapter on science and philosophy, Goad gives little personal sketches that help one know better famous names like Robert Grosseteste, Adam Marsh, Roger Bacon, Brother Bartholomew Anglicus, Alexander of Hales,

Bonaventure, Duns Scotus, and William of Ockham. Goad also considers Francis's miracles over against the modern, skeptical mind and concludes that Francis's greatest miracle is his influence on people over seven hundred years. Francis's science was simple and primitive, compared with modern sophistication. Yet he had the happy intuition of respect for the inner power of each creature within its own order of creation. He thought creatures may be used by people but not uselessly hindered in their order of creation. Goad already recognized Francis as the patron of ecology back in 1947.

Winter wheat  
doesn't grow  
in upper Michigan.  
Winter is eternal.

The sun  
a cat's eye aggle,  
rolls on  
grey fields.

Andrew Lewandowski, O.F.M.

Saint Bonaventure in philosophy voted for the search of Truth but with the help of mystical guidance or grace, which idea is roughly equivalent to Henri Bergson's Intuition, according to Goad. In science, Roger Bacon is made responsible not only for gunpowder but also eventually for today's nuclear bomb. One serious problem Goad raises is the motivation of medieval and even modern scientists. Is their research motivated more by pride and curiosity, or more by love of God and men? This is probably the moral problem of science today.

The most difficult chapter of the book is the last, on Franciscan individualism. Here the author is very hard on the bar-

barian hordes of Europe, who were "herd-men without personality." Or had the weak Romans lost their personality, through decadence? I think Goad is right when he claims that Francis approached every creature or person individually in the spirit of love, thereby releasing new forces hitherto latent and unsuspected. But it is Francis's fraternity that brings out the richness of another's individuality and even his own. Brotherhood, or mutual love, or the multiple relationships of persons in community is what makes an interesting individual. Goad never sees that. Of course he is looking from the outside in and cannot be blamed for that.

I recommend his book to beginners in Franciscanism, those who might have seen the movie, "Brother Sun, Sister Moon" or read some small pamphlet on Saint Francis, and now want more.

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**The Apocalypse.** Vol. 22 of New Testament Message Series. By Adela Yarbro Collins. Wilmington, DE: Michael Glazier, Inc., 1979. Pp. xiv-155, including bibliography. Paper, \$4.95.

**Matthew.** Vol. 3 of New Testament Message Series. By John P. Meier. Wilmington, DE: Michael Glazier, Inc., 1980. Pp. xii-377, including bibliography. Paper, \$7.95.

**Interpreting the New Testament.** Vol. 1 of New Testament Message Series. By Daniel J. Harrington, S.J. Wilmington, DE: Michael Glazier, Inc., 1979. Pp. xi-149, including bibliography and two appendices. Paper, \$4.95.

*Reviewed by Father Stephen C. Doyle, O.F.M., S.T.L., S.S.L., Professor of Scripture and Biblical Preaching at Pope John XXIII National Seminary, Weston, MA,*

and author of *Covenant Renewal in Religious Life.*

Some time ago I joined with a Protestant biblical scholar to give a workshop to a group of Protestant and Catholic clergy. The question was asked, "Which is the best translation and one volume commentary on the Bible?" The other scholar did not hesitate to declare that the New American Bible and the Jerome Biblical Commentary were the best. We've come a long way!

As Cardinal Medeiros said to the members of the Catholic Biblical Association: "The maturing of the Catholic biblical movement in the United States is a great sign of the deep, inner renewal of the Church in America." (*Bible Today*, Jan., 1980).

Now comes this new series from Michael Glazier Publishers that is a further indication of that vitality. Twenty-two volumes on every book of the New Testament are the fruit of the very best in contemporary scholarship. Clear and scientific, yet not overly technical, they are intended to be aids in preaching, adult education, and building a biblical spirituality.

It is impossible to have read each one of them in depth in the short time since their publication. However, if Daniel Harrington's *Interpreting the New Testament* (the introductory volume to the series), John P. Meier's *Matthew*, and Adela Yarbro Collins's *Apocalypse* are typical, then William Barclay had better move over.

Harrington's contribution would also make a fine text for an introductory course on the New Testament. In addition to chapters on every aspect of exegesis, he has insightful sections on preaching and biblical spirituality. Each chapter has a good bibliography attached, and the book concludes with pertinent questions to see if the matter has been grasped.

John Meier is now one of the foremost renowned authorities on Matthew. Since 1981 is the "A" cycle in the lectionary, this commentary is indispensable for homily preparation right now. Meier's thought and insights have been well honed by the interaction of the participants of the C.B.A.'s task force on Matthew, of which he was a prominent member. The book is deep, clear, and pleasant reading.

Adela Yarbro Collins fills the lacuna left by Joan Massingberd Ford's disappointing Anchor Bible volume on the Book of Revelation (which she doesn't even mention in her bibliography). Her sane and scholarly viewpoint is stated well on p. 56: "The point [of the Apocalypse] is not to provide readers with a timetable for the future, but to give them an understanding of reality to interpret and shape their present lives."

If the book has a fault it is a lack of a more complete exposé of the literary form apocalyptic into which this book must be situated. This is satisfied somewhat by a fine annotated bibliography where such material can be found.

Present indication is that this series will have a wide, well deserved readership.

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**The Francis Book: 800 Years with the Saint from Assisi.** Compiled and edited by Roy M. Gasnick, O.F.M. New York: Macmillan, 1980. Pp. ix-211, illustrated. Cloth, \$19.95 (Collier Books paperback ed., \$12.95).

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

This carefully edited and handsomely designed anthology offers readers the thoughts and insights of outstanding

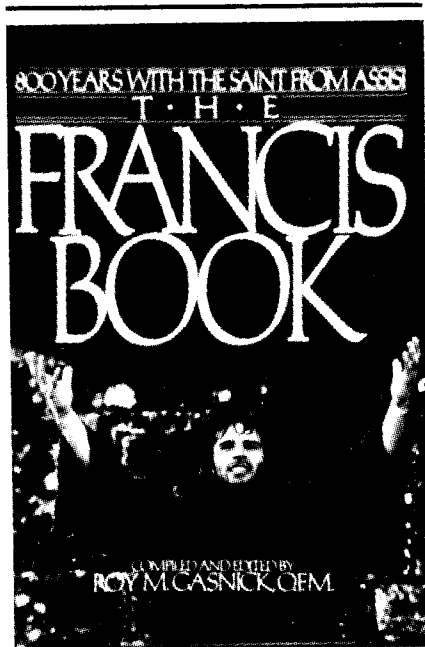
writers of the past eight centuries as they confronted the life and personality of Saint Francis of Assisi, whose eight hundredth birthday the book celebrates. Here, in addition to such familiar writers as Thomas of Celano, Johannes Jørgensen, and G. K. Chesterton, one will find unexpected contributors such as Ernest Renan, Oscar Wilde, and Arlo Guthrie. Merchants and revolutionaries, bishops and hippies, writers and artists and filmmakers have turned to the Poor Man of Assisi for inspiration and a glimpse of a better life, and Father Roy here presents us with some of their contributions to the "Francis phenomenon." "Those who read this book are not expected to agree with all the opinions and interpretations about Saint Francis contained herein. The editor himself does not. But our times call for honesty, openness, and objectivity, and hence the need to present as broad a picture of Francis as possible" (p. ix).

The anthology is organized around broad areas such as Francis's city, his life, his values, his best friend (Saint Clare), his continuing influence, his universal appeal. Giorlamo Moretti offers an analysis of Saint Francis's handwriting; John Ruskin suggests another view of Francis's relationship with his father; Romano Guardini reflects upon Saint Francis and self-achievement; Bishop Moorman traces the persistence of Francis's ideals; Reinhold Schneider and William Fleming examine his influence on art, while Colin Eisler looks in close detail at Bellini's great painting of Saint Francis (one of the joys of a visit to New York's Frick Museum off Fifth Avenue). Of more than timely interest is Father Basetti-Sani's essay on Muhammad and Saint Francis, in which the author states: "to arrive at a more Christian understanding of our brothers in Islam, it is important for us to adopt the attitude adopted by Saint Francis of Assisi



and meditate on a phase of his life that has perhaps escaped a number of biographers and admirers: namely, the mysterious bonds that united the Poverello to the founder of Islam, the Arab Prophet Muhammad" (p. 184). A thought-provoking and extremely fascinating essay by John Garvey on the "fool" in Franciscan, Russian, and Jewish traditions is well worth a reader's reflective reading.

The book's multi-media format—fiction, essays, poetry, journalism, song, painting, drawings, photographs, and comic book illustration—may prove distracting to some readers and a disappointment to others. The editor, Director of Franciscan Communications for Holy Name Province, has attempted to suggest that Francis has been "modern" for every age since he burst upon the world 800 years ago. Such a format adds witness to the fact that Francis has appealed to all tastes, and the anthology has been designed to entertain as well as to inspire. It is designed to take Saint Francis out of the birdbath and place



him at the heart of human and divine experience. The book should appeal to many readers, and it will prove a bargain for all.



## Standard Abbreviations used in The CORD for Early Franciscan Sources

### I. Writings of Saint Francis

Adm: Admonitions	Fragm: Another Fragment, Rule of 1221
BenLeo: Blessing for Brother Leo	LaudDel: Praises of the Most High God
CantSol: Canticle of Brother Sun	LaudHor: Praises at All the Hours
EpAnt: Letter to St. Anthony	OffPass: Office of the Passion
EpCler: Letter to Clerics <sup>1</sup>	OrCruc: Prayer before the Crucifix
EpCust: Letter to Superiors <sup>1</sup>	RegB: Rule of 1223
EpFid: Letter to All the Faithful <sup>1</sup>	RegNB: Rule of 1221
EpLeo: Letter to Brother Leo	RegEr: Rule for Hermits
EpMin: Letter to a Minister	SalBMV: Salutation to our Lady
EpOrd: Letter to the Entire Order	SalVirt: Salutation to the Virtues
EpRect: Letter to the Rulers of People	Test: Testament of St. Francis
ExhLD: Exhortation to the Praise of God	UltVol: Last Will Written for Clare
ExpPat: Exposition on the Our Father	VPLaet: Treatise on True and Perfect Joy
FormViv: Form of Life for St. Clare	<sup>1</sup> I, II refer to First and Second Editions.

### II. Other Early Franciscan Sources

1Cel: Celano, First Life of Francis	LMIn: Bonaventure, Minor Life of Francis
2Cel: Celano, Second Life of Francis	LP: Legend of Perugia
3Cel: Celano, Treatise on Miracles	L3S: Legend of the Three Companions
Fior: Little Flowers of St. Francis	SC: Sacrum Commercium
LM: Bonaventure, Major Life of Francis	SP: Mirror of Perfection

Omnibus: Marion A. Habig, ed., *St. Francis of Assisi: Writings and Early Biographies*. English Omnibus of the Sources for the Life of St. Francis (Chicago: Franciscan Herald Press, 1973).

## Books Received

- Gasnick, Roy M., O.F.M., comp. and ed., *The Francis Book: 800 Years with the Saint from Assisi*. New York: Macmillan, 1980. Pp. xii-211, illustrated. Cloth, \$19.95 (Collier Books paperback ed., \$12.95).
- Hurley, Karen, ed., *Why Sunday Mass? New Views for Those Who Go and Those Who Don't*. Cincinnati: St. Anthony Messenger Press, 1980. Pp. v-106. Paper, \$2.25.
- Harrington, Wilfrid, O.P. (Scriptural Commentary), Thomas Halton (Patristic Readings), and Austin Flannery, O.P. (Church Documents), *The Saving Word: Sunday Readings, Year A*. Introd. by Bishop Thomas J. Mardaga of Wilmington. Wilmington, DE: Michael Glazier, Inc., 1980. Pp. xiii-358. Paper, \$10.00.
- Untener, Bishop Kenneth E., *Sunday Liturgy Can Be Better! Practical Suggestions for Planners, Ministers, and People in the Pews*. Cincinnati: St. Anthony Messenger Press, 1980. Pp. vii-119. Paper, \$2.50.