

# The CORD

## A Franciscan Spiritual Review

FR. MICHAEL D. MEILACH, O.F.M., *Editor*  
Siena College Friary, Loudonville, NY 12211

FR. JULIAN A. DAVIES, O.F.M., *Associate Editor*  
Siena College Friary, Loudonville, NY 12211

FR. BERNARD R. CREIGHTON, O.F.M., *Business Manager*  
The Franciscan Institute, St. Bonaventure, NY 14778

### CONSULTING EDITORS

FR. REGIS ARMSTRONG, O.F.M. CAP  
The Franciscan Institute  
St. Bonaventure, NY 14778

SR. MADGE KARECKI, S.S.J.-T.O.S.F.  
1226-28 W. Sunnyside  
Chicago, IL 60640

SR. MARGARET CARNEY, O.S.F.  
The Franciscan Institute  
St. Bonaventure, NY 14778

SR. MARY McCARRICK, O.S.F.  
Daemen College  
Buffalo, NY 14226

FR. ERIC DOYLE, O.F.M.  
Franciscan Study Centre  
Canterbury, England

FR. THOMAS MURTAGH, O.F.M.  
Box Hill  
Victoria, Australia

FR. PETER D. FEHLNER, O.F.M. CONV.  
St. Anthony on Hudson  
Rensselaer, NY 12144

FR. DOMINIC F. SCOTTO, T.O.R.  
St. Francis Seminary  
Loretto, PA 15940

FR. THADDEUS HORGAN, S.A.  
Atonement Seminary  
Washington, DC 20017

FR. DAVID TEMPLE, O.F.M.  
Old Mission  
Santa Barbara, CA 93105

SR. FRANCES ANN THOM, O.S.C.  
Monastery of St. Clare  
Lowell, MA 01853

The Staff of the Franciscan Institute

Cover Design by Brother John Francis Tyrrell, F.F.S.C.

# The CORD

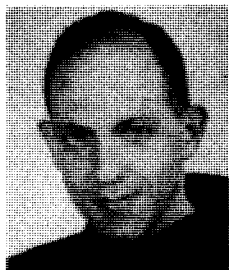
MARCH, 1981

Vol. 31, No. 3

## CONTENTS

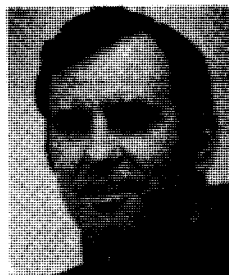
AN IDEA WHOSE TIME HAS COME .....	66
<i>Editorial</i>	
SENSUOUS SPIRITUALITY: PAUL AND FRANCIS .....	68
<i>Robert E. Donovan</i>	
SEVEN MASSES: VII. Mass on the Sickbed .....	76
<i>Hugoline A. Sabatino, O.F.M.</i>	
FIVE SORROWFUL SONNETS .....	77
<i>Sister Mary Agnes, P.C.C.</i>	
SERMON I ON THE ANNUNCIATION .....	80
<i>Saint Bonaventure</i>	
THANKSGIVING FOR ALL KINDS OF SOUNDS .....	88
<i>Sister Dorothy Klaas, O.S.F.</i>	
BOOK REVIEWS .....	91

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, NY 14778. Subscription rates: \$8.00 a year; 80 cents a copy. Second class postage paid at St. Bonaventure, NY 14778, and at additional mailing office. Please address all subscriptions and business correspondence to our Business Manager, Father Bernard R. Creighton, O.F.M., at the Franciscan Institute, St. Bonaventure, NY 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, NY 12211.



EDITORIAL

## An Idea Whose Time Has Come



FOR A NUMBER of years we have desired editorial assistance with *The Cord*, and from time to time we have put forward some tentative suggestions, none of which had ever come to fruition. A November, 1980, meeting with the Staff of the Franciscan Institute, however, has at last fulfilled our desire with the creation of an Editorial Board.

This Editorial Board is truly representative of Franciscan religious communities, as one knowledgeable of religious initials can see. Each of the members has at least one special area of competence and interest and has something unique and precious to contribute to our common endeavor. Most have worked either at the Franciscan Institute or with members of the Staff there. They have already begun to solicit and evaluate articles on Franciscan spirituality, and some of them will from time to time contribute editorials.

As we expand our Editorial Board, we hope also to expand our readership. You—our satisfied readers—can help by telling your friends about us. As printing and mailing costs continue to inflate, our need for subscribers also mounts.

We warmly thank our collaborating editors for their generous response, and we look forward in these centenary years to a constant improvement in the help we are called to give in deepening the Franciscan spirit among all English-speaking followers of the Poverello. Ω

Fr. Michael D. Mailach, *ofm*      Fr. Julian Davis, *ofm*

## The Franciscan Institute . . .

. . . is a center for learning, research, and publication related to the Franciscan movement, principally its spirituality, theology, philosophy, and history. A major project of the Institute is the Latin critical edition of *William of Ockham's Philosophical and Theological Works*, which has been described as one of the most important projects in America in the area of medieval scholarship.

Most noteworthy among its other publications are the series devoted to texts, philosophy, theology, and spirituality.

Besides *The Cord*, the Institute also publishes *Franciscan Studies*, a scholarly annual for the publication of articles and texts concerned with the Franciscan contribution to theological, philosophical, and scientific thought, and with the historical evolution of the Franciscan movement, principally in the medieval period. Articles are accepted for publication in English and other major languages of western Europe. Each annual volume is \$12.00, and a comprehensive index (1941-1982) is available for \$1.25.

Through the graduate school of St. Bonaventure University, the Franciscan Institute offers a program in Franciscan Studies leading to the M. A. Degree. (A schedule of courses offered this coming summer may be found on the inside back cover of this issue of *The Cord*).

Through its library and resource people, the Franciscan Institute is a principal American center for Franciscan research.

# Sensuous Spirituality: Paul and Francis

ROBERT E. DONOVAN

WHEN I was growing up, the sensuous and the spiritual were rarely if ever linked together. Rather they were inimical. You had to develop calloused knees if prayer and spiritual growth were to be furthered. There was no such thing as a comfortable position, place, or attitude in connection with growth in the spiritual life. To grow spiritually one had to hurt. This notion of ascetic/denial spirituality has its roots in martyrdom—"white," not "red." When Christians could no longer heroically advance to union with Jesus along the "red" road of martyrdom at the hands of the cruel, pagan, Christ-hating Romans, they turned to the path of "white" martyrdom. With Saint Antony of Egypt they went to the desert and there, bereft of all comfort, color, and company, they denied themselves into union with Jesus.

Now don't get me wrong. I am not putting this kind of spirituality down. It had a place then and through many years in the Church. In the Middle Ages, e.g., the royal road to Jesus once again ran red with the blood of the "white" martyrs who practiced self-flagellation. (Indeed, until Vatican II and possibly today, some religious orders maintained the practice, though usually they limited it to those in formation). This way to holiness/union was part of their world-view as it is, at least on the gut level, part of ours. Denial, after all, is central to any spirituality. And yet, it seems that there is another way that can complement and has complemented the way of denial and will, in time, replace it—the *via positiva*, sensuous spirituality, the "yes" spirituality.

The ascetic/denial spirituality runs from matter, from the sensuous, especially sensuous pleasures. In its attempt to build a spirituality—a purely spirit-centered spirituality—matter must not be converted into spirit but denied and shunned. There is a place for such a spirituality. It produces the results desired. It is, for me, easier. Taken in isolation, however, it very obviously becomes elitist. This can be clearly seen in Paul and the usual interpretation of his writings.

---

*Dr. Robert E. Donovan is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Theology at St. Bonaventure University.*

Paul

It is obvious that Paul can be fit into the category of a main support for the ascetic spirituality. His discussion of virginity in 1 Corinthians is very explicit. He plainly urges the unmarried to stay that way and marry only if they cannot control their desires because "it is better to marry than to burn with passion" (1 Cor. 7:8). Going further, Paul points out that virginity/celebrity allows one to be more easily concerned with the Lord's work. Those married folk are concerned with pleasing their husband or wife and not with pleasing the Lord (1 Cor. 7:32-34).

At face value it would seem that Paul is making a case for choosing virginity/celebrity (the ascetic spirituality) as the better way of giving oneself "completely to the Lord's service without any reservations" (1 Cor. 7:25). In fact he says that this way will take the man or woman out of the "world." From this vantage point religious life has developed as celibate, virginal, ascetic, and "better," i.e., elitist. I do not doubt either that Paul meant it, at least under the circumstances. Given the enthusiasm of the Christian community at Corinth, this way was easiest. Less temptation.

Paul also upheld the other, the sensual, way to serve the Lord. In doing so he speaks of the gifts/charisms that each one has uniquely (1 Cor. 7:7). We can't all be like Paul, but we can open ourselves up to the Lord's presence by building up our unique gift. If one is given the gift of marriage, Paul tells him or her to marry and grow in the Kingdom through marriage. If, on the other hand, one is gifted with virginity/celebrity, he or she should grow in the Kingdom that way. Paul wants to help, not place restrictions on anyone (1 Cor. 7:35).

Seen in this way, being virginal/celebrity is not so much a denial, a giving up, as it is a gift. If one does not have the gift, he or she should get married (1 Cor. 7:36). This is his/her charism. Of the two, Paul sees the married as doing well and the virgin as doing better. It would be foolish to conclude that Paul is advocating that one with strong passion choose celibacy. That could be wrong, a misuse of a gift, and hence immoral.

So Paul calls on the Christians of Corinth not so much to renounce the world as to embrace the special gift that God has given each one. Virginity/celebrity, then, becomes not a renunciation but an embracing. This is the interpretation of priestly celibacy held and taught by Pope John Paul II in his "Letter to Priests, Holy Thursday, 1979." For him, a man "decides upon a life of celibacy only after he has reached a firm conviction that Christ is giving him this 'gift' for the good of the Church and the service of others. Only then does he commit himself to observe celibacy for his entire life."<sup>1</sup> (It is too bad that many men and women have chosen the religious or priest-

ly life as a renunciation rather than an embracing of a gift. This was not Paul's idea.)

Nor would it have been Paul's idea to make virginity/celebrity (renunciation/ascetic spirituality) the sign of the inbreaking of the Kingdom. That sign is important and "better," but along with it must be placed marriage (sensual spirituality), the best sign/witness of the love Christ has for his Church. In this, of course, Paul is only following the Prophets who use the marriage symbol over and over to express, symbolize, and sacramentalize Yahweh's love for his people, Israel. In his letter to the Church at Ephesus, Paul points this out explicitly.<sup>2</sup> It is important enough to quote at length.

Submit yourselves to one another, because of your reverence for Christ.

Wives, submit yourselves to your husbands, as to the Lord. For a husband has authority over his wife in the same way that Christ has authority over the Church; and Christ is himself the Savior of the Church, his Body. And so wives must submit themselves completely to their husbands, in the same way that the Church submits itself to Christ.

Husbands, love your wives in the same way that Christ loved the Church and gave his life for it. He did this to dedicate the Church to God, by his word, after making it clean by the washing in water, in order to present the Church to himself, in all its beauty, pure and faultless, without spot or wrinkle, or any other imperfection. Men ought to love their wives just as they love their own bodies. A man who loves his wife loves himself. (No one ever hates his own body. Instead, he feeds it and takes care of it, just as Christ does the Church; for we are members of his Body.) As the Scripture says, "For this reason, a man will leave his father and mother, and unite with his wife, and the two will become one." There is a great truth revealed in this Scripture, and *I understand it applies to Christ and the Church*. But it also applies to you: every husband must love his wife as himself, and every wife must respect her husband [Eph. 5:21-33; emphasis added].

From a familiar reading, one would think that Paul is still talking of that "higher" ascetic spirituality. Christ loves his Church detachedly and cleanses it almost to a fault. It is almost antiseptically clean: "no spot or wrinkle." Indeed, no imperfections. No relationship at all to the world, the body, matter? Well, not quite. Many have read these verses this way, but they do so at the neglect of the rest.

<sup>1</sup>John Paul II, "Letter to Priests Holy Thursday 1979," as quoted in *National Catholic Reporter*, vol. 15, n. 26 (April 20, 1979), p. 13.

<sup>2</sup>Not going into detail as to the question of authenticity of the various Pauline epistles, we shall accept the view of Joseph Fitzmeyer, S.J., that this epistle is Pauline, whereas the Pastoral epistles are not. See Joseph Fitzmeyer, *Pauline Theology: A Brief Sketch* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ, 1967), p. 4.

Remember the comparison is Christ/Church::Husband/Wife. In the first instance Christ's love for the Church (ascetic spirituality) is the image/model/analogue for a husband's love for his wife. So then the second part should follow in the same vein: the husband's love for his wife is the image/model/analogue for Christ's love for his Church. And it does. Only this must be seen as pointing in the direction of sensual spirituality. To reduce that love to steps in modern terminology, it would read thus: first, you must love yourself—all of you and revel in being you; secondly, you must love another in order to enhance the whole of each other's being; and thirdly, this is the way Christ loves the Church and the Church loves Christ.

Paul is even more explicit. The husband must first love his very own body—sensibly. With this very same (sensual) love, husbands are to love their wives and their wives them. This will produce union—the union of two in one—the you and me in the us—just as Christ's sensual love for his Body (the Church) and the Body's love for Christ produces the one Body: many members and Jesus in the Body of Christ.

In terms of this dynamic, the present reality, Christ + members = Church/Body, the best sign is the married couple, you + me = us, not the celibate priest. The celibate priest better signifies the future, proleptically present reality, the inbreaking of the Kingdom. Together they offer the full range of options and spiritualities. And since the priesthood symbol has been so elevated it is time to redress the balance. To beat the sensual drum, as it were.

## Francis

Francis, the poor man of Assisi, was aware of this, too. In a world where the whole Church had been monachized in various degrees,<sup>3</sup> where ascetic spirituality held sway, Francis, while a saint really "into" ascetic spirituality (he was a man of his time, after all), also offers an alternative to monasticism and beats the drum for sensual spirituality. Following the prevalent spirituality of the time, Francis literally beat his body, Brother Ass, into submission. As Celano testifies:

For though he was enfeebled and completely broken in body, he never halted his pursuit of perfection, he never suffered himself to relax the reign of discipline. Francis even when his body was exhausted could not give it even a little relief without his conscience murmuring.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>3</sup>David Knowles, *Christian Monasticism* (Toronto, 1969), pp. 83-84.

<sup>4</sup>Cel 210, in *Omnibus*, p. 530.

Francis was a true ascetic. He yearned for the "red martyrdom" and pursued the "white" tenaciously. This, however, was not the whole of it. Francis was also very much "into" sensual spirituality. He was aware that the body was good. It was part of creation. For Francis all creation resonated with the presence of God. He was aware of this because he resonated with the same presence. As Bonaventure points out:

Such was his pure love of God that Francis has arrived at a point where his body was in perfect harmony with his spirit, and his spirit with God. As a reward, God disposed that all creation, which must spend itself in the service of its maker, should be subject to his will and obey his command. . . . Not only did all creation obey his slightest wish; but by his providence God himself condescended to his will.<sup>5</sup>

In short, Francis was perfect ascetically and sensually.

Francis's sensual spirituality with the ascetic overtones can be seen so very clearly in his *Canticle of Brother Sun*. In this poem, Francis's immersion in, love for, and oneness with, the physical/sensuous is overpowering. All of creation is filled with the grandeur of God and sings his praises. These physical things are Brother and Sister to Francis. He knows, loves, and is at one with them. They signify God's love and concern for man and raise man's heart and mind to God. They describe ever new moments of ecstasy. One can feel the presence of that which stands beyond our limits. The words take on more significance when we realize that Francis wrote them when he was blind. In the writing and singing the sensual experience of God's presence returns.

Be praised, my Lord, with all your creatures,

Especially Sir Brother Sun, Who brings us the day, and through whom you give light; And he is beautiful and radiant with great splendor. He signifies you to us, Most High!<sup>6</sup>

Yet in the midst of this celebration of God's presence in the physical, the ascetic is not forgotten. One must accept suffering and death as a means to further union. They must be loved and not feared. "Blessed those," Francis sings, "Lord, who keep your ten commandments. They do not fear death; they love it." This is as it should be. What I am suggesting as important for today is not putting an end to ascetic spirituality but putting more

<sup>5</sup>St. Bonaventure, LM, 5.9.11, in *Omnibus*, p. 669.

<sup>6</sup>Translation adapted from that of Nikos Kazantzakis, *Saint Francis* (New York, 1962), p. 358.

<sup>7</sup>Kazantzakis, p. 365.

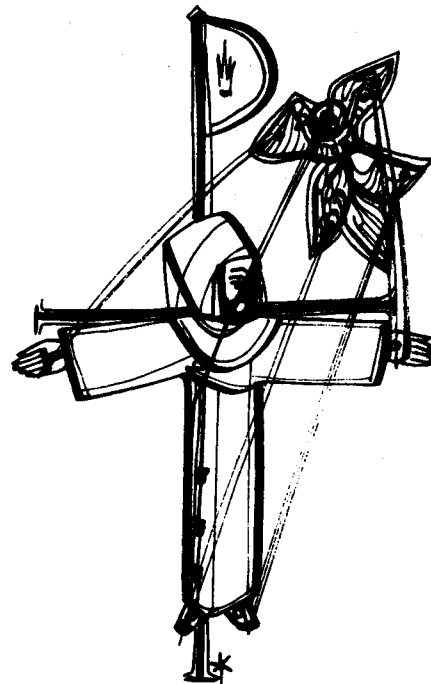
emphasis on the sensual.

Francis was also a model of the sensual spirituality in his personalism. For the most part, the human person was more important than rules—even rules for ascetic spirituality. In a story told by Thomas of Celano, one of the brothers is really having difficulty abiding a particular fast. Not being able to stand the rigors of denying himself food, he cries out, "I am dying, brother, I am dying of hunger." What does one do in such a circumstance? Kick the fellow out? Demand an even more vigorous denial or firmer commitment to the ascetic life? Francis did none of these. For him the person was most important, and so he and all the brothers got up and all ate. It was their duty, "lest that brother should waste away from shame." And then Francis uses this experience to teach that the person is central. He admonishes his flock not "to deprive the body indiscreetly of what it needs." In this he shows his leaning toward sensual spirituality.

As is the case with everything human, Francis too is ambiguous. Though the person comes first and with him/her charity/love as the greatest virtue, nonetheless the spirit can best be fed by starving the body.

"Know, dearest brothers," Francis concludes his lesson, "that what I have done in eating, I have done by dispensation, not by desire, because fraternal charity commanded it. Let this charity be an example to you, not the food, for the latter ministers to gluttony, the former to the spirit."<sup>8</sup> It is precisely in remarks such as these that Francis betrays his deep immersion in the sensual dimension. So deeply rooted is he, as was Paul, that the ascetic spirituality cannot overcome the sensual. Yet he remains ambiguous.

Another instance of Francis's centering on the person is his *Letter to a Minister*. Here Francis speaks again of the importance of the person over rules. He tells his minister (the one who is to exercise authority by being the servant) that



<sup>8</sup>2Cel 22, in *Omnibus*, pp. 380-81.

There should be no friar in the whole world who has fallen into sin, no matter how far he has fallen, who will even fail to find your forgiveness for the asking, if he will only look into your eyes. And if he does not ask forgiveness, you should ask him if he wants it. And should he appear before you again a thousand times, you should love him more than you love me. . . .<sup>9</sup>

To me, there is no more telling understanding of our participation in the love of God than these lines unless it is the story of the Prodigal Son/Loving Father (Lk 15). We participate in a full way by respecting the person over the institutions. That's sensual spirituality. It's Francis's way.

And yet there is that ambiguity. In another place Francis seems to be for the rules and not for the person. In his Testament, Francis advises his friars to take a disobedient friar, a friar who refuses "to say Office according to the Rule" or "is not true to the Catholic faith," and make him prisoner. He should be kept in prison until turned over to the Bishop of Ostia.<sup>10</sup> One could interpret this as a case of hyperbole, but I rather think it just highlights Francis's humanity and resultant ambiguity. Though you can forgive a thousand times, sometimes you must punish. Though the person should come first, sometimes it has to be the institution. And so it goes.

There are, of course, other signs of Francis's sensual spirituality. One of these is his concern for a sensual rendering of the life of Christ. As Matthew Fox, a commentator on sensual spirituality, points out, "A sensual experience is a memorable experience; the beauty of it lodges in the imagination." For Francis this is true of the whole life of Christ, most specifically in the moment of the Incarnation. Francis helped to make this moment sensual by means of the Crib he set up at Greccio. To bring Jesus to life again Francis needed to set before the people's "bodily eyes" "how he lay in a manger, how he lay upon the hay where he had been placed."<sup>12</sup>

Making the humility of the Incarnation sensual was the work of many hands on one night; making the charity of the Passion present took a lifetime and was recorded sensually in the one body of this man who sought to walk in the footsteps of our Lord Jesus Christ. It is fitting that Francis, who was a sensual man all his life even when practicing heroic denial should have been rewarded so sensuously with the stigmata. And I have to imagine that he was more joyful with the stigmata than with any other gift from his Lord. It was his most ecstatic moment.

<sup>9</sup>*Omnibus*, p. 110.

<sup>10</sup>*Omnibus*, p. 69.

<sup>11</sup>Matthew Fox, *Wheel We Wee All the Way Home* (New York, 1977), p. 145.

<sup>12</sup>*Omnibus*, p. 300.

Finally, one of the most characteristic signs of sensual spirituality is the resultant joy not only for the person but for all those around him or her. In this regard Francis once again qualifies as one who follows the sensual path to union with God. One of the most explicit stories about Francis's joy-filled-ness is told by Thomas of Celano:

Sometimes Francis would act in the following way. When the sweetest melody of spirit would bubble up in him, he would give exterior expression to it in French, and the breath of the divine whisper which his ear perceived in secret would burst forth in French in a song of joy. At times, as we saw with our own eyes, he would pick up a stick from the ground and, putting it over his left arm, would draw across it, as across a violin, a little bow bent by means of a string. And going through the motions of playing, he would sing in French about his Lord.<sup>13</sup>

In these moments of ecstasy, Francis acts out with his body the effects of the sensual presence of the Lord. For himself and for others these ecstatic moments, I'm sure, came often.

### Conclusion

With both Paul and Francis there are the obvious references and exhortations to the ascetic way which has held sway in Christianity for so long. There are, too, some less obvious but no less strong exhortations to sensual spirituality. Since this type of spirituality is just as constitutive of the unusual spirituality of Christianity it is time to redress the balance: to emphasize the sensual side. It has been buried for too long.

I do not mean that it should stand on its own. It seems to me to need the ascetic for balance. The reverse, though, is also true: the ascetic needs the correction of the sensual. Finally, with an eye to fitting the spirituality to the time, this is the time of the sensual. Rather than fight it we should use it. Instead of continuing to push an ascetic spirituality that goes against the grain we should do much better to emphasize a sensual spirituality such as described here. This would enable "the folks" to channel their sensual appetites and energies onto the path to union with God. The resulting joy would be reward enough.

So let us follow the leads seen in Paul and Francis and develop our own sensual spirituality. Let us be able to rejoice in the sensuality of marriage, with its ability to signify God: sensual love for us. Let us rejoice in all the sensible creatures of God. Let us, like Francis, see

<sup>13</sup>*Omnibus*, p. 467.

in beautiful things . . . Beauty Itself; all things were to him good. "He who made us is the best," they cried out to him. Through His footprints impressed upon things he followed the Beloved everywhere; he made for himself from all things as ladder by which to come even to His throne.<sup>14</sup>

If the ascetic spirituality has been leaving you cold, grab a sensual ladder. Ω

<sup>14</sup>*Omnibus*, p. 495.



## Seven Masses

HUGOLINE A. SABATINO, O.F.M.

### VII. Mass on the Sickbed

naked hungry and homeless  
he wanders the earth  
leprous cancerous and cardiac  
he stumbles—  
premature mourners gather  
thinking "heritance"  
family despair  
over hospital bills or funeral bills  
or both  
and an afterthought of him  
who knows the hour and the day

why do you look among tombs  
for the one who lives?  
I have healed all wounds in my flesh  
drown your sorrow  
in the oil of gladness—  
I am glorious head  
you are my body  
walking and leaping through walls  
and praising God on earth  
as in heaven—  
I am light who brook no shadow  
I am I can

## Five Sorrowful Sonnets

SISTER MARY AGNES, P.C.C.

### I. Christ in the Garden

With supper done they went into the night,  
the Christ, His chosen; awed with mystery  
and words they walked while still they had the Light  
toward fallen shadows of Gethsemani.

Within the olive gloom their wonder grew:  
the Master sorrowful to the brink of death.  
In dread of the long desired Pasch He drew  
aside to pray, fell prostrate on the earth.

Rejection, unbelief, all evil found  
its mark: in the heart of the eternal Son,  
time's gathered gullit. Blood shuddered to the ground.  
Not His but God the Father's will be done.

Christ rose with all creation in His power,  
went freely to arrest; it was the hour.

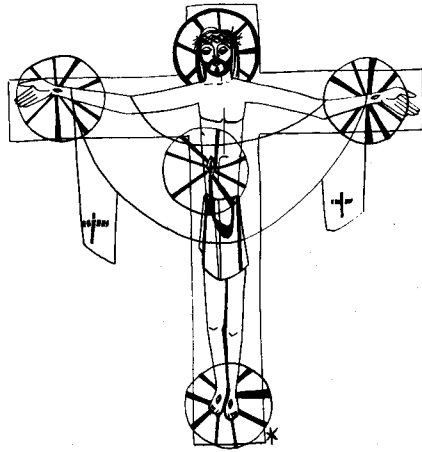
### II. Flagellation

The lacerations of the heart Christ bore  
with quiet grief: the traitor's kiss, quick flight  
of bosom friends, then fall of His Rock. Before  
base guards, high priests He stood alone that night.

At dawn the leaders hustled Him from court  
to insolent court to legalize their plan  
and netted from Rome command that made Him sport  
of ruffians: Take and flog this guiltless Man.

Stripped naked, Jesus bent His back and took  
for us the scourge of weighted thongs—our Lord,  
the silent Lamb, surrendered up to stroke  
on brutal stroke, humiliated, gored.

Scarce room for five more wounds when it was done.  
O God, You did not spare Your only Son.



### iii. Crowning with Thorns

Is He a King? But royalty needs state.  
The soldiers now took up their whips of scorn  
at Him and mocked a coronation rite  
complete with roughly woven crown of thorn.

They costumed Him in a purple cloak, a reed  
for sceptered might, enthroned Him in disgrace  
upon the scourging stone all stained with blood,  
and then they spat, they spat into His face.

With briar-cap pressed deep into His head,  
the Christ was King indeed in fool's disguise.  
Caught up in taunts, mock homage that they paid,  
did no one see forgiveness in His eyes?

Or would the sight of Him appease the crowd  
in which we stood and could not see our God?

### iv. The Cross Bearing

The hour to which His whole life strained was here.  
In blind Jerusalem, here only did  
the prophets die. Now Pilate, riddled with fear,  
delivered up their King to be crucified.

Impelled by love men's malice could not change,  
ingratitude restrain, Christ raised the weight  
of wood, His feet set toward the mount. God's strange  
design to save mankind must be complete.

With the crux of sin upon Him and all  
its consequence, our Savior staggered up  
the winding streets that led outside the wall.  
There were a few to share His bitter cup.

The grim procession climbed the destined hill  
of death and glory. Every bird was still.

### v. Crucifixion

The pound of nailing pierced the air. Fire  
shot through His limbs. With gashes torn to drain  
His life, yet arms spread out to all, our Lover  
was lifted, stretched upon a rack of pain.

Beneath the cross of crucifixion stood  
His Mother Mary, there with full consent  
in transfixed heart to this and motherhood  
of sinful men, the whole of God's intent.

Then from the tree of bitter death there came  
the sweetest song the heart of man has heard.  
It sang the lengths God's love would go to flame  
our own and share His life, to keep His word.

More Love than thrust of lance that gave release  
to wellsprings of our pardon and our peace.



# Sermon I on the Annunciation of the Blessed Virgin Mary

SAINT BONAVENTURE

## Translators' Introduction

*The Lord God has given me a well trained tongue, that I might know how to speak to the weary a word that will rouse them (Is. 50:4).*

PERHAPS NONE of the great Franciscan preachers can live up to this Scriptural passage as well as the Seraphic Doctor, Saint Bonaventure of Bagnoregio. His sermons, of which the following is a fine example, are masterpieces of style and the technique of Latin linguistics.

Bonaventure's theology is essentially Christocentric, as is Franciscan theology in general; thus it is no surprise to see that in a sermon on the Annunciation we find all solid Christological teaching. Bonaventure, again in line with basic Franciscan spirituality, relies heavily on Scripture for his homiletics as well as his spirituality. His mastery of Scripture is astounding: a closer perusal of some of the scriptural quotations in the sermon below shows that they are often mere fragments of verses; to tie them together logically, Bonaventure must have had a near total knowledge of Scripture. His uses of scriptural metaphors in this sermon are of particular beauty. Among these note especially the metaphor of the rainbow and the various metaphors connected with the sun.

Aside from all this at times flowery theology, Bonaventure firmly grounds his sermons on basic Christian virtues. He relates his metaphors not only to aspects of the Incarnation but more importantly to the virtues. Throughout the sermon we find exhortations on purity, humility, constancy, magnanimity, and charity. These, perhaps more than his metaphorical wanderings, give him solid spiritual strength.

Together with the spiritual and stylistic aspects, Bonaventure has a fine technical, logical structure to his sermons. In this one, e.g., there are four basic divisions, each of which contains three metaphors concerning the Incarnation, making a total of twelve metaphors. There is a logical sequence to

---

*This translation, done by Timothy Kulbicki, O.F.M.Conv., Stephen Pojtyraj, O.F.M.Conv., and Claude Jarmak, O.F.M.Conv., and edited by Germain Kopaczynski, O.F.M.Conv., is reprinted with permission from The Saint Hyacinth Studies (published by the Conventual Franciscan Friars at St. Hyacinth College and Seminary, Granby, MA), volume 16 (1979), 1-11.*

Bonaventure's metaphors. The first triad illustrates activities moving upward from beneath the ground; the second triad uses "ground level" metaphors; and the final two triads, illustrating Christ's dual natures, use celestial metaphors. Also to be noted in terms of style are Bonaventure's use of chiasmic arrangements and alliteration in the original Latin, some of which we managed to preserve in our translation.

## Introduction

**B**ECAUSE THE mystery of the Incarnation of the Lord is so mysterious and profound, no human intellect can understand it; no human tongue can explain it. The Holy Spirit, realizing our limitations, wished to explain this mystery in different metaphors. We can come to an understanding of the Incarnation only when the Spirit leads us, as it were, by the hand. As the Apostle says: "The invisible things of him are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made" (Rom 1:20).

In our opening passage from Isaiah, this mystery is explained by three metaphors: root, branch, and flower. *Root* signifies the nobility of the one conceiving; *branch* signifies the purity of the conception; and *flower* signifies the eminence of the Child conceived. Because the mystery of the Incarnation is, as we have said, denoted by various metaphors in holy writ, let us now gather them together, for they will lead us by the hand to understand the mystery to some degree.

### 1. The Nobility of the One Conceiving

THE NOBILITY of the one conceiving is itself denoted by a triple metaphor: Mary's profound *humility* is signified in the *earth blossoming forth*; her unshaken *constancy* is shown in a *root sprouting*; and her unparalleled *generosity* is demonstrated by a *gushing fountain*. These three virtues ennobled Mary and prepared her for conceiving the Son of God.

Scripture mentions this humility in two passages: "Let the earth bring forth the green herb" (Gn. 1:11); and "Drop down dew, ye heavens, from above. Let the earth be opened and bud forth a savior" (Is. 45:8). The *heavens* signify the Trinity sending the Word; the *dew* is the excellence of the angelic messenger; and the *earth* is the Virgin in her free consent. Of this David says: "Lord, you have blessed your land" (Ps. 84:2).

We too must be strong in humility if we desire the grace of God: "The Lord will give goodness" (Ps. 84:13), but only to the humble. As the Apostle James puts it: "God resists the proud, but gives grace to the humble" (Jas. 4:6).

“We must imitate [Mary], then, in her virtue of constancy if we wish to blossom forth in good works.”

The proud are as mountains, unable to receive the dew of grace. Scripture tells us: “You mountains of Geba, let neither dew nor rain come upon you” (2 Sm. 1:21); and again, “In the midst of the hills the waters shall pass” (Ps. 104:10).

Concerning Mary’s constancy, we read in Sirach: “And so I was established in Zion, and in the holy city I rested. I took root among an honorable people” (Si. 24:15-16). And in Revelation: “I am the root and stock of David, the bright and morning star” (Rv. 22:16).

We must imitate her, then, in her virtue of constancy if we wish to blossom forth in good works. James warns us: “A double-minded man is inconstant in all his ways” (Jm 1:8).

In reference to Mary’s generosity, we read in the Cantic of Canticles: “The fountain of gardens, the well of living waters, runs with a strong stream from Lebanon” (Sg. 4:15). Mary waters the garden of the entire Church, and because she has communicated her graces so freely, the Church has been abundantly blessed. “Blessed Mary, in her abundant charity, made all indebted to her, and from her plenitude all have received.” For that reason is she full of grace above all others: “The little fountain grew into a river and was turned into light and into the sun” (Est. 10:6).

Therefore, let us imitate her in this virtue of generosity so that the more we give, the more we receive, grace for grace. Indeed, this is the very condition of grace: it lives in sharing, it dies in hoarding. The Gospels tell us: “Give and it shall be given you” (Lk. 6:38); “to those who have not, what little they have will be taken away” (Mt. 13:12). He who refuses to be generous by sharing God’s graces with others will be deprived of whatever grace he has. For we read in Proverbs: “May your fountains be conceived abroad and in the streets divide your waters” (Pr. 5:16).

## 2. The Purity of the Conception

OUR SECOND major metaphor is the *shoot* signifying the *purity of conception*. It is both miraculous and extraordinary, and this in three ways, all of which are prefigured in sacred Scripture. The *conception without loss of bodily virginity* is signified in the miraculously *burning bush*; the

*conception without the passing of time* is signified in Aaron’s *staff* suddenly sprouting leaves; and the *conception without hint of concupiscence* is signified in the passage of Judges dealing with the *dew-moistened fleece*. We must explain each point in turn.

We read of the burning bush in Exodus: “I will go and see this great sight, why the bush is burning but not consumed” (Ex. 3:3).

Although awe-inspiring, this incident is nevertheless understandable. This heavenly fire is a sustaining, life-giving flame, unlike earthly flame which consumes and destroys. In the same way man possesses two “flames” within him: the heavenly saving love, “charity,” and the empty earthly love, “concupiscence.”

It is in Numbers that we find allusion made to conception without interval of time: “When Moses returned, he found the branch of Aaron budding and blossoming, and even forming leaves and fruit” (Nb. 17:8). Marvelous though this incident be, much more so is the Incarnation. For without the passage of time, he who was perfect God became perfect man at the moment of conception in the womb of the Virgin.

Although admirable, this too is fitting and reasonable. Were it otherwise, were Christ viewed as man before God, such a view would entail his being God not naturally but accidentally. Therefore, he was at the same instant God and man.

Further, as Damascene notes: “The Deity joined his intellect to flesh.” Since the rational soul is not infused unless the body be perfectly organized, we know that in the Incarnation the body receiving the soul was indeed perfectly organized. And what is more, the soul was infused with all virtue and wisdom. It is unthinkable that the all-perfect God be joined to a soul in any way deficient. We conclude, therefore, that at the moment of conception in Mary’s womb, perfect God became perfect man. Whence Jeremiah can write: “The Lord has created a new thing upon the earth: a woman shall encompass a man” (Jr. 31:22). And “man” here means not only in sex but in wisdom and virtue as well. As Ambrose says, “What we are ignorant of after great efforts, the Spirit makes known by his free gift.”

Of the dew-soaked fleece (signifying conception without hint of concupiscence) we find mention made in the book of Judges. Gideon, asked to fight for the liberation of his people, requests a sign that God is with him: “He put a woolen fleece on the floor. The next morning there was dew on the fleece but the ground was dry” (Jg. 6:37). The Psalmist says: “He shall come down like rain upon the fleece” (Ps. 72:6). And Jerome observes: “The fleece, though it be part of the body, did not feel the passion of the body. In the same way virginity, though it be part of the flesh, knew nothing of fleshly defilement.”

### 3. The Sublimity of the Child Conceived

OUR THIRD major metaphor, the eminence of the Child conceived, assures us that we are dealing with a "giant of twin natures," to use one of Augustine's expressions, the "twin natures" being the divine and the human, subsisting in the one person of Christ. Three metaphors help explain the human element: the *raincloud* denotes the *plenitude of grace*; the *rainbow* gives witness to the *beauty of wisdom*; and the *glittering star* bespeaks the *righteousness of justice*. Let us examine each in turn.

#### a. Metaphors of the human.

Chapter eighteen of the First Book of Chronicles gives us the *raincloud* metaphor: "A little cloud arose out of the sea, and suddenly there fell a great rain" (1 Chr. 18:44-45). This refers to the Christ Child coming forth from Mary, a name which means "the sea."<sup>1</sup> And it is this rain of grace which makes the Church fruitful.

We too ought to be like this, clouds filled with grace sharing that grace with others. The Psalmist says: "He covers the heavens with clouds" (Ps. 146:8). And from Peter we hear: "Every man has received grace, ministering the same one to another" (1 Pt. 4:10). Let us not be like stormclouds, giving out thunderclaps of impatience and lightnings of wrath. Rather, we should heed the words of Scripture: "Wonderful are the surgings of the sea, wonderful is the Lord on high" (Ps. 92:4). The sea mist, though salty and bitter, is changed into sweet rain in the clouds. In much the same way both the bitterness and the sadness of life are transformed into sweetness for the man who is like a grace-filled cloud.

Genesis speaks of our second metaphor, the *rainbow* signifying the *beauty of wisdom*: "I will set my rainbow in the clouds, and it shall be a sign of the Covenant between me and the earth" (Gn. 9:13).

As in a rainbow we discover a multitude of colors, so in the soul of Christ do we find a plenitude of wisdom. This wisdom includes the innate knowledge of creatures possessed by Adam, the infused knowledge of believers on earth, and the glorious knowledge of the saints in heaven. Fitting indeed is the figure of the rainbow to symbolize the splendor of this wisdom: "Look upon the rainbow and bless him who made it" (Si. 43:11).

How well the rainbow bespeaks Christ. Formed as it is in nature by direct, refracted and reflected rays of the sun in the clouds, it reminds us of

<sup>1</sup>Difficult to express in English is Bonaventure's play on the words *Maria*, *amarum*, and *maria*.

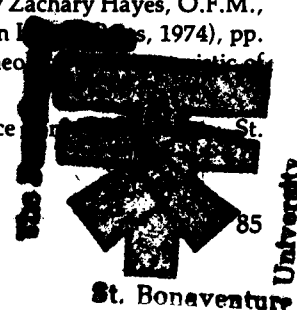
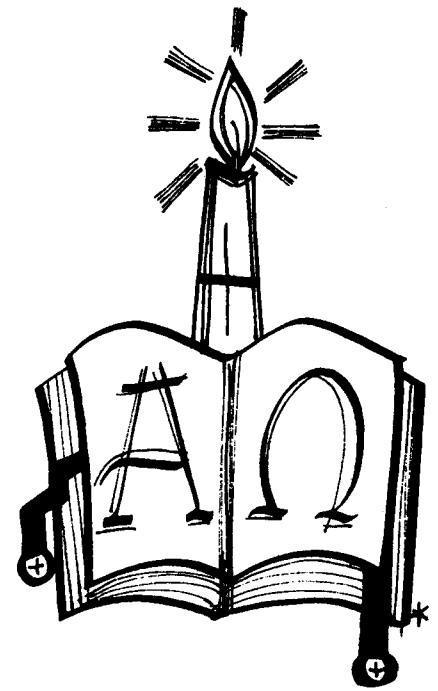
Christ, the Sun of Justice, the cause and origin of all knowledge in the world.<sup>2</sup> For it is Christ who gives rise to every type of knowledge in the soul. First, there is the knowledge of faith, shown by the refracted solar ray. Faith proceeds where reason falters: "Faith has no merit if human reason demands proofs."<sup>3</sup> Next, there is the knowledge of human rationality and resourcefulness, shown by the reflected solar ray, a knowledge illuminated by grace. Finally, we come to the knowledge of contemplation, the direct ray, as it were, able to surpass the limitations of the mind by direct communion with God.

Christ is the origin of faith because he is the incarnate Word. Christ is the origin of reason because he is the Light of our intellect. And Christ is the origin of contemplation because he draws us to the Father.

Our third metaphor for the human nature, the *glittering star*, is found in Sirach: "He shone in his day, as the morning star in the midst of the clouds" (Si. 5:6). Christ himself shines in the midst of the clouds, that is, of sinners. By his words and actions he has shown us the light of justice. To Christ we must be conformed, then, lest we be "wandering stars, to whom

<sup>2</sup>The Augustinian theme of divine illumination, so characteristic of Bonaventure and the early Franciscan tradition, is adumbrated here in this section. A lengthier exposition may be found in another sermon by the Seraphic Doctor: "Christ the One Teacher of All," translated into English by Zachary Hayes, O.F.M., in the volume *What Manner of Man?* (Chicago: Franciscan Press, 1974), pp. 21-46. The close connection between epistemology and theology is characteristic of Saint Bonaventure's approach.

<sup>3</sup>The Quaracchi editors give the following reference: Gregory the Great, *II Homil. in Evang. homil 26, n. 1.*



the storm of darkness is forever reserved" (Jude 13). Far better for us to be like those spoken of in Daniel: "They that instruct many to justice are like stars for all eternity" (Dn. 12:3).

#### b. Metaphors of the divine.

Just as the human nature of Christ, Son of the Virgin, is represented by a cloud, a rainbow, and a star, the divine nature of Christ, Son of God, is most fittingly represented by the sun.<sup>4</sup> Nothing else in visible creation could so easily lead us by the hand to this subtle perception of the mystery of Christ's divine nature: "He has set his tabernacle in the sun" (Ps. 18:6). And in the prophets we read: "Unto you that fear my name the sun of justice shall arise" (Mal. 4:2).

By his very nature, Christ possesses incomparable dignity, unchanging stability, and inaccessible clarity. Scripture illuminates these three aspects of Christ's nature in three solar miracles: the sun going backwards, the sun standing still, and the sun shining ever so brightly.

We read of the first in Isaiah: "The sun returned ten lines by the degrees by which it had gone down on the sundial of Achaz" (Is. 38:8). Why was it necessary to prolong the king's life by a miracle affecting the whole world? Could the reason not be that the Lord wished to prefigure by this an even greater miracle?

There are twelve divisions on a sundial, just as there are twelve grades of life, the nine angelic orders and the three orders of visible creatures: rational, sentient, and vegetative. We note that the Sun of Justice did not go beyond the tenth hour, "for nowhere did he take hold of the angels" (Heb. 2:16); nor did he go above the tenth hour, for it would not be fitting for him to assume a mere sentient or vegetative nature. Rather, he remained at the tenth level, "where he took hold of the seed of Abraham" (Heb. 2:16).

Just as he humbled himself by descending through ten divisions of creation and ascended in the same fashion, so did Christ glorify man by raising him to a more noble dignity: "You have made him little less than the angels" (Ps. 8:6). Christ did this by joining his incomparable dignity to mankind.

The book of Joshua deals with the second metaphor, the sun depicting Christ's constancy: "The sun stood still in the midst of the heavens, and did not set for one day" (Jos. 10:13). Could God have granted victory to his

<sup>4</sup>Reading these words, one thinks of Saint Francis's "Canticle of Brother Sun." On the question of the saint's faithfulness to the thought of Francis, see Michael Taylor, O.F.M.C., "St. Bonaventure: A Francis of Assisi Gone to Paris?" *St. Francis Studies* (1978), 13-20. The notes at the end of the article give further references to the writings on the question.

people without this miracle? Undoubtedly! But he chose this way to show that, although the Sun of Justice would indeed do battle in the human nature he had assumed, he would nonetheless retain forever the ineffable splendor of the Godhead.

Concerning the third metaphor, the brightly shining sun, "There was darkness upon the land of Egypt" (Ex. 10:21). "The whole world was enlightened with a clear light . . . over them [i.e., the Egyptians] alone there spread a heavy darkness" (Wis. 17:19). The meaning is clear: Christ the Sun, by the merits of his deeds, is able to leave unbelieving sinners in the darkness of the night while wondrously revealing himself to all other men.

### Conclusion

WE MUST NOTE in concluding that the mystery of the Incarnation is signalled by twelve scriptural metaphors which begin in the humble earth and rise to the sun of divine wisdom: "Where there is humility there is wisdom" (Pr. 11:2); "the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom" (Si. 1:16). We therefore see that these twelve metaphors lead us to a better understanding of the holy Virgin and the Incarnation of her Son. Now we are able to fathom what is spoken of in Revelation 12:1: the "woman clothed with the sun" refers to Mary being clothed in divine brilliance; "with the moon under her feet" tells us that she surpasses all that is changeable, all that is temporal; and the "crown of twelve stars" on her head signifies the twelve scriptural metaphors we have utilized in this sermon which explains this mystery. All these metaphors, diverse though they be, signify the same mystery.

Bernard has written:

There is undoubtedly only one Spirit of all the prophets. They may work at different times with different signs and methods, but what they have seen and predicted has all come from none other than the one Holy Spirit. What is symbolized by Moses and the burning bush, by Aaron and the blossoming rod, and by Gideon with the dew and the fleece, is clearly in the mind of Solomon when he foretold a valiant woman and her dignity (Pr. 31:10). It is even clearer in the mind of Jeremiah: "A woman shall encompass a man" (Jr. 31:22). And it is clearest of all in the mind of Isaiah: "Behold, a virgin shall conceive and bring forth a Son" (Is. 7:14). But no one has ever put it more majestically than Gabriel as he draws all of Scripture together and salutes the Virgin: "Hail, full of grace, the Lord is with you" (Lk. 1:29).<sup>5</sup> Ω

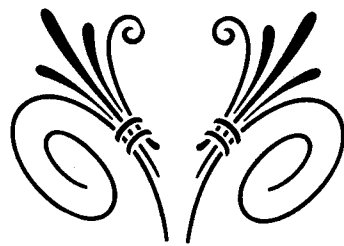
<sup>5</sup>The reference in the Quaracchi edition: Bernard, *Homil. 2 super Missus Est*, n. 11.

## Thanksgiving for Sounds of All Kinds

SISTER DOROTHY KLASS, O.S.F.

Heavenly Father, you have been so good to us in so many, many ways. We scarcely know how to name the multitude of gifts which you have bestowed upon us: your great love for us; the life you have given us; our families, friends, and neighbors; the talents, the health, and the strength which are ours; our faith and the sacraments; the freedom we enjoy and this beautiful land of ours. We thank you especially for giving us our five senses: the ability to see, to hear, to taste, to smell, and to feel. Without the five senses, we could never have learned anything about the wonderful world around us. Nor would our minds have arrived at any truth, human or divine, for the senses are truly the gateways to the mind.

Today, however, we wish to focus on just *one* of the senses, that of hearing, and what it has meant to us. We want to tell you how glad we are that you have given us ears. How grateful we are for the sounds we hear, coming from all directions around us! With glad hearts we offer you this litany of thanksgiving.



For the many sounds of your animal kingdom,  
we give you praise.

For the crowing of a rooster announcing the day  
the buzzing of bees darting among the flowers in the field  
the sweet song of birds filling the air with melody  
the purring of a cat brushing its side against my leg  
the whinney of a horse begging for a sugar lump

FOR ALL THESE SOUNDS, WE GIVE YOU THANKS.

For the sounds that human beings make,  
we give you praise.

For a mother's tender lullaby  
a father's cheerful whistle  
a youngster's hearty laughter  
a baby's noisy kiss  
a grandfather's low chuckle  
a friend's enthusiastic "Hello"  
an opera singer's lovely aria

FOR ALL THESE SOUNDS, WE GIVE YOU THANKS.

For all the ordinary, everyday domestic sounds we hear  
we give you praise.

For the singing of the tea kettle on the stove  
the sizzling of bacon in the frying pan  
the clatter of dishes in the kitchen sink  
the splashing of water in the bathtub  
the hum of an electric motor  
the ticking of the grandfather's clock  
the patter of a child's bare feet on linoleum

FOR ALL THESE SOUNDS, WE GIVE YOU THANKS.

For the sounds made by water in various ways,  
we give you praise.

For the bubbling noises of boiling water in the kettle  
the hissing and the pounding steam as it warms my radiator  
the pitter-patter of rain on my window  
the babble of brooks as they twist and turn  
the roar of waterfalls high in the mountains  
the boom and the crash of mighty ocean waves

For the glorious sounds produced by musical instruments,  
we give you praise.

For the soaring melody of a violin  
the majestic chords of a pipe organ  
the blaring notes of a trumpet  
the steady beat of a drum  
the thin voice of flute  
the magic blend of a symphony orchestra

FOR ALL THESE SOUNDS, WE GIVE YOU THANKS.

For all the sounds peculiar to each season of the year,  
we give you praise.  
For the grumbling and the growling, the rumbling and the sharp cracking  
of thunder on a late spring day  
the chirping of crickets and the croaking of frogs  
on a hot summer night  
the crackle of leaves under my feet on a crisp autumn afternoon  
the crunch of snow as I walk on a cold winter morning  
FOR ALL THESE SOUNDS, WE GIVE YOU THANKS.

For sounds we often hear on a Sunday morning,  
we give you praise.  
For the rustle of taffeta or a silken gown  
the swish of traffic on city streets  
the joyous ringing of church bells  
the eager voices of a children's choir  
the awesome words of the priest, "This is my Body"  
the chatter of friends as they gather after church services  
FOR ALL THESE SOUNDS, WE GIVE YOU THANKS.

For all the marvelous variety of sounds that you have  
created for us, we give you praise.  
For the loud cheers of fans at a ballgame  
the honking of geese as they migrate in the fall  
the murmur of trees swaying in the breeze  
the happy squeals of little girls at play  
the thud, thud of soldiers marching in parade  
the clickety, click of tap dancers  
the thump, thump of my own heart beat  
FOR ALL THESE SOUNDS, WE GIVE YOU THANKS.

Lord, your gift of sound has brought much joy into our lives, and we thank you for letting us hear so many wonderful sounds. Just to remember them now gives us pleasure, and we bless your holy name. How great, how good you are! May you be praised and glorified forever and ever. Amen.

## Book Reviews

*Francis of Assisi: A Prophet for Our Time.*  
By N. G. van Doornik. Translated by  
Barbara P. Fasting. Chicago: Fran-  
ciscan Herald Press, 1980. Pp. xvi-244,  
including bibliography. Cloth, \$8.95.

*Reviewed by Father Wilfrid A. Hept,  
O.F.M., Spiritual Assistant of the Secular  
Franciscans at Providence, RI, and a  
member of the staff of St. Francis Chapel  
there.*

When we read a new life of Saint Francis of Assisi, we wonder whether this is the one which will give us the real Francis. In this present case, we put the book down once again convinced of the truth of its last sentence: "The true identity of this simple yet mysterious figure—in other words, who Francis really was—only God knows." Yet a book such as this gives us some insight into the relevance of Saint Francis for our time. This is, in fact, the purpose the author sets forth in his Introduction: "To ascertain whether this unusual personality has indeed some significance for us today."

While we should be on our guard because of the difficulty of reading the signs of our times, to say nothing of the signs of medieval times and the complexity and richness of the character and life of Francis, Father van Doornik does help us see why so many thousands of believers and unbelievers are still attracted by the life-story of Francis more than seven hundred years after his death.

Passing over the first few chapters (Son of a Merchant, Metanoia, The Desert

Years, The Prophet Finds His Mission), we find the author asking the question, in chapter five: "What is this compelling central theme which Francis discovered in the gospel and which is to give the movement its special character?" Father van Doornik finds the answer in those three famous texts about poverty—Mt. 12:21; Lk.9:3; and Mt. 16:24. For Francis and his early followers the whole emphasis is on renunciation. It is significant that his first followers for the most part left behind not poverty but prosperity. They were fleeing a society in which status, success, and comfort threatened to choke the deeper values of life. The author does find it difficult to draw parallels between this first Franciscan movement and the desire on the part of many today, especially among youth, to escape our consumer society.

Those who find the conflict between church authority and freedom a central issue of our time will find some parallels and insights if not solutions in the sixth and seventh chapters: "Pope—King and Church" and "The Dream of a Pope." For Saint Francis, who met the all but impossible challenge of being the most liberated man in the church of his day and yet the most docile to its hierarchy and institutions.

To an age that takes seriously the words of Jn. 17:3 ("Eternal life is this: to know you, the only true God, and him whom you have sent, Jesus Christ"), the ninth chapter, "I Already Know Christ," has something important to say: "To Francis imitation lay more in 'being like' than in 'acting like' Christ." As in his time so in

ours the throne and scepter are fading; the cradle and cross are advancing. Father van Doornik points to the Christmas at Greccio in the winter of 1223 as an example of this.

The author uses many other facets of Francis's life to shed light on problems of our times: e.g., Saint Francis and animals (ecology); Saint Francis: prayer and active life; Saint Francis and the structure of the Order.

The book contains, besides its bibliography, some ten pages of Historical Notes and Sources which give us a thumbnail sketch of some of the principal works about and by Saint Francis. It should prove to be a valuable addition to the overwhelming proliferation of books and articles that already crowd our library shelf under the title "Franciscana." Why another life of Saint Francis? Perhaps Hamlet gives the answer when he says: "There are more things in heaven and on earth, Horatio, than are dreamt of in your philosophy."

---

**Discovering God's Presence.** By Robert F. Morneau. Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 1980. Pp. viii-187. Paper, \$5.95.

*Reviewed by Nancy Sweetland, a freelance writer and stringer for The Compass, Green Bay diocesan paper.*

The Most Reverend Robert F. Morneau, Auxiliary Bishop of the Green Bay, Wisconsin, diocese, has collected fifteen essays from his works previously published in religious journals (1972-1980) to comprise *Discovering God's Presence*, a quality paperback published by the Liturgical Press.

Bishop Morneau brings to this collection not only the revelations of his own experiences as professor, preacher, spiritual

director, and pastor of souls, but also his familiarity with classical writings, scripture, and contemporary psychological, philosophical, and theological work.

The essays, originally written for religious, are equally relevant to the lay Christian. They have a central theme, a single truth: God's presence. Each is a reflection on encountering that presence—in poetry, prayer, community deliberations, teaching, play, reconciliation, and death.

The scope of *Discovering God's Presence* could, but does not, make it a pretentious "listen-here-now" work. Rather, it is thoughtful—and sometimes warmly humorous. Its repeated affirmations of one man's realization of the Almighty's presence make it abundantly clear that his own realization can and should be shared by all of us, each with the other.

Titles of individual essays are powerful and intriguing, such as "Presence and Perplexity—Aboutness: Religious Life Once Removed"; "Presence and Perspective—Towering: Sharing a Faith Perspective"; and "Presence and Pot Pourri—the Ho-Ho-Hum-Hum-Principal."

Unobtrusively but thoroughly footnoted and drawing from such diverse sources as C. S. Lewis and St. Teresa, each essay points up our need to confirm God's presence in all facets of our lives.

The study of "aboutness" (knowing "about" God, not *knowing* him, as a "sports fan in the stands, always watching . . . but never playing the game") calls up our need to be committed to, not "about" Christianity. "Prepositional Christianity" asks us to consider that three simple prepositions are "subtle instruments depicting the mystery of Trinitarian love . . . in the 'with-ness' of deep presence, the 'in-ness' of our par-

ticipation in the mystery of reality, and 'for-ness' revealing concern and generosity that creates growth and life."

"Presence and Possibility—Beyond Death and Dying" reaches beyond the popular secular dissertations on the five stages of accepting physical death to "stage six," the joyful expectation/hope of becoming forever united with Christ.

Though many of these essays are directed to religious, others are simply for Christians, such as "Presence and Poetry: Healing Power in Poetry," and "Presence and Praise," an examination of George Herbert's poem, "Love." Other sections present insights on prayer, peace, and thoughts on the spirituality of St. Augustine who was "in touch with the inner movements of his spirit."

Perhaps the most delightful—and personally challenging to the reader—of the essays is "Presence and Play: The Ministry of Surprise," in which Bishop Morneau states "The God of Surprises continues throughout history to amaze us in sudden and unexpected ways. Hopefully we have the sense and sensibility to respond . . . we are challenged to

minister to each other and the world as God has ministered to us—creatively, incarnationally, and resurrectionally . . . how this will happen is not essential; the fact that we are willing to serve is."

Life without surprises would indeed be dreary, and Bishop Morneau surprises his readers with an unexpected listing of the qualifications necessary for one who would hold the hypothetical office of Ministry of Surprise, including "acceptable units for ongoing education" such as the daily reading of cartoons (1 credit) . . . traveling on back roads (1¼ credits), and hugging the huggable (1¼ credits). "We see in our God the very element that takes us off guard: the unexpected. We cannot control and manage him; his ways and thoughts are not ours. How delightful and exciting this is. . . ."

The comfortable format of this book enhances its overall quiet call to joy in God's daily presence in the world around us. 5½"x8¼" with easily read type and interesting black and white photographs by Herb Montgomery, *Discovering God's Presence* will be a welcome addition to any library.



## Books Received

- Koester, Sister M. Camilla, P.C.C.,** *Into This Land: A Centennial History of the Cleveland Poor Clare Monastery of the Blessed Sacrament.* Cleveland: Robert J. Liederbach Co., 1980. Pp. xi-175, including 3 appendices. Cloth, \$5.00. Available only from The Monastery of Poor Clares, 3501 Rocky River Drive, Cleveland, OH 44111.
- MacNutt, Francis,** *The Prayer That Heals: Praying for Healing in the Family.* Notre Dame, IN: Ave Maria Press, 1981. Pp. 116. Paper, \$2.95.
- Maloney, George A., S.J.,** *Prayer of the Heart.* Notre Dame, IN: Ave Maria Press, 1981. Pp. 206. Paper, \$3.95.

## Shorter Book Notices

JULIAN A. DAVIES, O.F.M.

*Companion to the Clams.* By Hugh Noonan, O.F.M. Illustrated by Phero Thomas. Chicago: Franciscan Herald Press, 1977. Pp. 84, 10"x10". Cloth, \$12.50.

This is a different genre of meditation book. The approach to God and to his Christ is usually indirect, through observations, narrative, and reflection upon people and nature. The format is verse and vignette with ample black and white drawings to fill out a meaning. I liked the short (two-stanza) "Christ is Present" and the vignette "Glowings" best. People who know the author, and/or know California, will relate to some of the local color.

*Called to be Friends.* By Paula Ripple, F.S.P.A. Notre Dame, IN: Ave Maria Press, 1980. Pp. 160. Paper, \$3.95.

Few things are as important to life as friendship. Love of God and love of humans form a unity. To try to eliminate people in the quest for God, and to try to eliminate God by focusing in exclusively on people are both unprofitable and erroneous extremes. In eleven reflective, experientially based, and literarily elegant essays the author treats of the call to friendship, including dimensions of self-discovery, listening, separateness, and

faithfulness; as well as of the pitfalls to friendship, its symbols, its relationship to the Eucharist and Presence. Readers of the author's earlier work, *The Pain and the Possibility*, will find a continuity of theme—a continuity which becomes explicit in the chapter on finding meaning in failed friendship. The importance of freedom in the relationship of friendship is another link of significance. The chapter on "Seasons of Friendship" has a wisdom about it. In fact, throughout the book one finds considerable balance. Many of our readers will find in it, not an answer-book on friendship, nor the last word on that perennial topic, but another perspective that may be revealing.

*Summer in the Seed.* By Aelred Squire. New York: Paulist Press, 1980. Pp. xvi-240, including index. Paper, \$7.95.

"The whole essence of the spiritual life consists in recognizing the designs of God for us at the present moment." This quotation from de Caussade, cited by the author, expresses the major theme of his profound essays. Marx, Russian literature, I Ching, Jung, and evolution are looked into to discern their authentically human, thereby authentically Christian, message.

John of the Cross, Aelred, St. Thomas, and Gregory of Palamas are used as guides in reflecting on the nature of union with God, friendship, the Incarnation, and spiritual discernment. I found *Summer in the Seed* difficult reading. But the chapters on the Incarnation (9 and 10) are particularly worth the effort, and readers might well begin with them.

*Second Start.* Edited by Paul Salsini. Huntington, IN: Our Sunday Visitor Press, 1980. Pp. 166. Paper, \$4.95.

The editor has collected the accounts of thirteen men who came into the priesthood after having pursued other careers—careers as different as jazz musician and insurance executive. Thematic to all of the accounts are the awareness of a call from God, a desire for service, a discovery of the reality of personal relationship to God in prayer. *Second Start* is inspiring as well as interesting, and a work which should be in parish and priestly libraries—as should information about seminaries like Pope John XXIII in Weston, Massachusetts, expressly devoted to those seeking a "second start."

*Francis: Brother of the Universe.* By Roy M. Gasnick, O.F.M., and Mary Jo Duffy. Illustrated by John Buscema and Marie Severin. New York: Marvel Comics Group; Ramsey, NJ: Paulist Press, 1980. Pp. 48. Paper, \$0.75.

It is hard to think of a way that Saint Francis, who is everyman's saint, could become better known—but this comic book life of Francis will do just that. Reading and looking at this life, I was reminded of how many of the issues that confront each of us in our search for God were raised in the life of Francis: vocation, relation to family, prayer, adjustment of ideals to reality, perseverance. And these issues are raised in a way that is understandable not only to people like myself, but to the book's intended audience as well. I found this out in my own mini-survey of youngsters from age 10 up. "Good" and "enjoyable" were words that occurred often, and "entertaining, not like the sermons in Church," was one capsule comment. Readers of any age can draw profit from this "spiritual reading." Future printings will, we hope, correct the impression that all Franciscans are bald.



## Pope John Paul II Pilgrim of Peace

A TWO RECORD ALBUM has been released by Fiore Productions of Hollywood which we think deserves the attention of our readers. Endorsed by the Vatican, the recording preserves with excellent audio fidelity and full live ambience the addresses delivered by the Holy Father on the occasion of his visit to America. All of them are included: the talks in Boston, New York, Philadelphia, Des Moines, Chicago, and Washington. In addition, the album contains the speeches of welcome by Mrs. Carter at Logan Airport and by President Carter at the White House.

Packed with the two records is an attractive color photograph of Pope John Paul II, suitable for framing, and though one did not come with our copy, we are told that some copies of the album contain a hand engraved medal with the Pope's profile on the front and a Madonna and Child on the back, with the inscription MATKA BOSKA SZESTOCHOWSA.

For the time being, the album is available only through Catholic churches throughout the country, with commercial distribution set for a later date. We did not ascertain, in time for our deadline, the price being asked for the records, but we believe that they are well worth any of the prices currently charged for twelve-inch discs.

## PREPARE FOR THE 800TH ANNIVERSARY OF ST. FRANCIS' BIRTH IN THE FRANCISCAN INSTITUTE'S M.A. PROGRAM

The Student may pursue a general course of study or specialize in research or in spiritual direction within the program of Franciscan Studies.

### COURSES OFFERED IN SUMMER, 1981

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

NEW STUDENTS who are studying for a degree and who will be at The Institute during the year and are enrolled in the Spiritual Direction Track must take courses FI 500, 501, and 539 this summer.

ALL OTHER new students pursuing a degree must take FI 500 this summer.

STUDENTS ENROLLING in the Spiritual Direction Track must attend two summer sessions because some required courses for this track are not offered during the year.

8:15 - 9:40	<b>FI 501</b>	<b>Sources for Franciscan Studies I</b> 3 cr. hrs., Fr. Regis Armstrong, O.F.M. Cap., Ph.D.: Room 201. Course 501 will not meet July 6-10.		
	<b>FI 536</b>	<b>History &amp; Spirituality of the Franciscan Penitential Movement</b> 2 cr. hrs., Fr. Raphael Pazzelli, T.O.R., S.T.D.: Room 301. Course 536 will begin July 6.		
8:30 - 9:40	<b>FI 541</b>	<b>Franciscan Theology of Prayer</b> 2 cr. hrs., Fr. Peter Damian Wilcox, O.F.M. Cap., S.T.D.: MWThF Room 300.		
9:45 - 10:55	<b>FI 500</b>	<b>Bibliography</b> 1 cr. hr., Sr. Mary McCarrick, O.S.F., M.A.: MTThF Room 201. Course 500 will meet June 29-July 17. Degree candidates must take this course in the first summer session attended.		
	<b>FI 502</b>	<b>Sources for Franciscan Studies II</b> 3 cr. hrs., Fr. Wayne Hellmann, O.F.M. Conv., D.Th.: Room 300. This course is a prerequisite for FI 504.		
	<b>FI 521</b>	<b>Rule of St. Francis</b> 2 cr. hrs., Fr. Maurice Sheehan, O.F.M. Cap., D. Phil. Oxon.: MTThF Room 301.		
11:00 - 12:10	<b>FI 504</b>	<b>Life of St. Francis</b> 3 cr. hrs., Fr. Conrad Harkins, O.F.M., Ph.D.: Room 201. Prerequisite: FI 502		
	<b>FI 506</b>	<b>Survey of Franciscan History</b> 3 cr. hrs., Fr. Lawrence Landini, O.F.M., H.E.D.: Room 300.		
	<b>FI 534</b>	<b>Franciscan Reforms and Renewal Today</b> 2 cr. hrs., Fr. Sergius Wroblewski, O.F.M., S.T.L.: MTWF Room 301.		
1:00 - 2:10	<b>FI 508</b>	<b>History of Franciscan Thought</b> 3 cr. hrs., Fr. George Marcell, O.F.M., Ph.D.: Room 201.		
	<b>FI 538</b>	<b>The Theology of St. Bonaventure</b> 2 cr. hrs., Frs. Regis Armstrong, O.F.M. Cap., Ph.D.; Wayne Hellmann, O.F.M. Conv., D.Th.; Joachim Giermek, O.F.M. Conv., S.T.L., M.A.: MWThF Room 300.		
	<b>FI 539</b>	<b>Spiritual Direction and the Franciscan Tradition</b> 2 cr. hrs., Fr. Maury Smith, O.F.M., D.Min.: MWF Room 301. Course 539 is limited to 15 students.		
	By Arrangement:		<b>FI 599</b>	<b>Independent Research</b> 1-2 cr. hrs.
	<b>FI 517</b>	<b>Intro. to Palaeography</b> 2 cr. hrs., Staff.	<b>FI 699</b>	<b>Master's Thesis</b> 6 cr. hrs.
	<b>FI 571</b>	<b>Practicum in Spiritual</b>		
	<b>FI 572</b>	<b>Direction</b>		
	<b>FI 573</b>	1 cr. hr., Staff		

STUDENTS MAY FULFILL A MAXIMUM OF SIX CREDITS IN ELECTIVES FROM COURSES OFFERED IN THE DEPARTMENT OF GRADUATE THEOLOGY.

### CALENDAR

Registration	Monday, June 22
Classes Begin	Tuesday, June 23
Modern Language Exam	Friday, July 10
Final Exams	Friday, July 31

### FEES

Tuition per graduate hour:	\$95.00
Room and Board:	\$330.00
Fees subject to change; individual courses subject to cancellation because of insufficient enrollment.	

### PRE-REGISTRATION

Pre-registration forms are available from the Office of Graduate Studies, St. Bonaventure University, St. Bonaventure, New York 14778. Students who pre-register need not report for registration on June 22.

### ACADEMIC YEAR OFFERINGS

THE FRANCISCAN STUDIES M.A. Program may be pursued during the Summer, Autumn, and Spring Semesters. The required number of course credits can be obtained in two Summer sessions and the intervening academic year, or in six Summer sessions.