The CORD

A Franciscan Spiritual Review

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The **CORD**

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Questions, Questions

The current concern of the Third Order Regular congregations of men and women throughout the world is to formulate a New Rule which is more solidly based on the Franciscan sources. Discussion, for the most part, has centered on the "propria indolis," the distinguishing charism of the Third Order. Some congregations have been strongly influenced by the Madrid Document which is mainly the work of the TOR groups of men, while others prefer a wider statement of the charism which does not single out penance as the "propria indolis." In view of this I want to take this opportunity to raise some questions that will hopefully aid further reflection.

Is the insistence on the distinction of the three Orders really helpful? Did Francis distinguish them in this way, or was that a canonical requirement? Was Francis intent on these distinctions, or was he more concerned about motivating all his brothers and sisters "to live the life of the Gospel"? Surely it is clear that each religious family in the Church has its own "propria indolis," but do not all groups within a given religious family have that same charism? Do not subtle distinctions only contribute to fragmentation in a religious family?

What definitive evidence is there that the so called Volterra Letter (technically cited as IEpFid or titled "The Letter to the Brothers and Sisters of Penance") was intended for existing penitential groups? Can it not just as validly be assumed that it was written for people who were moved by Francis's preaching and life and who had no connection with a previous penitential movement?

Is not the concept of penance, or continual conversion, something that binds all Christians, since we are not yet what we ought to be? Can one live a life of penance without spelling out an accompanying life-style? And is not that life-style itself then the distinguishing characteristic of the group living it?

Can the charism of the Franciscan family be reduced to a single characteristic like that of penance or minority? If so, is not minority the larger of the concepts? Does it not form the context for a life of penance as understood by Francis? In trying to divorce the two do we not do violence to Francis's vision of the Gospel life?

Did Francis, in first calling his followers "penitents from Assisi" and later calling them Friars Minor make a change in the charism of the First Order? If this is the case, then why did he, at the end of his life, remind them in the Testament that he had been called to a life of penance? And why, in that same text, did he go on to describe that way of life as one marked by choices that would clearly place his followers among the minors of society? What then are some of the implications of this for the whole Franciscan family?

We know from historical research that the Writings of Francis were ignored, for the most part, by the Franciscan family for literally hundreds of years after his death. In view of this is there a need for us, as an entire family, to look critically at the historical expressions of Francis's original inspiration? Have the historical adaptations of that charism been true to the vision of our founder? Do they reflect the harmony of concepts that we find in his Writings?

By the same token should not Third Order congregations, especially those founded in the 18th and 19th centuries, examine their own way of living to see to what extent they are reflective of a canonical understanding of religius life and to what extent they reflect the life-style Francis had in mind for his followers?

Updating the Franciscan Rule is indeed an opportunity for conversion. We can no longer afford to define the Franciscan life as a spirituality, something solely interior. Yes, it begins with the heart, with a change of attitude, but real penance implies a change in how we're living, that necessarily follows from a change of heart; at least that's how it worked for Francis. This is something many of us Franciscans find it hard to face because we have vested interest in an established, institutional way of living religious life and ministering to people. Asking questions such as those posed above, and many more, is the necessary outcome of examining our heritage. They help us to move beyond the realm of theory to practical living.

Madge Karecki, SSJ-TOSF

Problems and Possibilities:

The Third Order Rule in Progress

THADDEUS HORGAN, S.A.
AND
MARGARET CARNEY, O.S.F.

FIDELITY TO THE Church is one of the characteristics that should mark Franciscans. At this moment the two of us find ourselves uniquely summoned to this fidelity. In the Spring of 1980 we were named by the International Franciscan Commission to the Work Group charged with developing a new draft text of a Rule for the entire Third Order Regular of St. Francis. Our situation is unique because our response to fidelity is to and among other Franciscans. At issue is the Church's teaching in Vatican II documents and in subsequent papal teachings on the propria indolis (specific character, charism, spirit of the founder) of our Order, the Third Order Regular of St. Francis. The Church teaches that renewal processes of religious orders must be based on a clear statement and understanding of their propria indolis.

Have you ever been part of a Franciscan gathering where the question "What is our charism?" has been up for discussion? If you have and if you remember the answers, you can appreciate our feeling of "being in the middle" of a situation that feels, at times, as though it could become a sort of holy war. Answers to the question range from poverty to seraphic love, from conversion to simplicity, with every other Franciscan characteristic getting honorable mention in between. One thing is certain: the charism is alive and so is our attachment to it, even if it is not clearly and commonly perceived. While such discussions have helped clarify renewal problems and exposed the diversity of responses to Franciscanism among us, the results are far from conclusive. For us, at this moment of responsibility in drafting a new Rule, this question is no longer simply a matter of great interest, but it is the question, the issue which we must—in some degree—decide.

¹Perfectae caritatis, §23; Ecclesiae sanctae, §16:3; Evangelica testificatio, §11.

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Reflection on the matter moves us to note that the spirit of Francis is an incredibly rich heritage. His is a holistic vision of evangelical life which does not lend itself to easy analysis. Because the root of our charism is not a program, but a person-Francis-even the best efforts to subdivide and analyze his spirit leave us somewhat dissatisfied. Yet we cannot deny what history demonstrates: namely, that the various branches of the Franciscan Order have developed not only in response to the ministerial need of the Church, but also in response to internal failure adequately to maintain the Franciscan ideal. When laxity or mismanagement (real or perceived) threatened fidelity to the charism, reformers called for renewed vigilance. More significantly, they paved the way for new branches or congregations to be born. Today we have a First Order in three distinct and separate units. Prior to 1898 and the Leonine Union there were many others. The Second Order of Poor Clares is, in fact, several distinct federations. The Third Order Regular is composed of more than four hundred autonomous congregations of men and women. This reality of manifold distinct. autonomous congregations is in keeping with the nature of the Third Order and parallels the structure of the Secular Franciscan Order, which is made up of local fraternities. While all these groups struggle to uphold the Franciscan ideal, their pluriformity demonstrates the many facets of Franciscan life and charism.

It is inevitable, however, that tensions arise when one or another branch, congregation, or fraternity within the Franciscan movement raises the ques-

²See Raffaele Pazzelli, T.O.R., "Outline of the History and Spirituality of the Franciscan Penitential Movement," available in mimeograph form from the Franciscan Federation, 720 N. 7th St., Springfield, IL 62702. Also K. Esser, O.F.M., "La Lettera di S. Francesco di fideli," in L'Ordine della Penitenza di San Francesco d'Assisi nel secolo XIII (1973), pp. 70–72; and idem, "A Forerunner of the Epistola ad Fideles' of St. Francis of Assisi," in Analecta, T.O.R. 129 (1978), pp. 11-47.

tion of propria indolis for itself. "How are we the same and how are we distinct among the members of the Franciscan family?" Obviously we are the same and share a common Franciscan identity. But equally apparent is the fact that we are distinct. We are not First, Second, or Third Order Franciscans by degree. No, given the sociological factors and ecclesiastical realities of Francis's day, "first," "second," and "third" represent ways or styles to live Francis's charism. Even a partial survey of early sources conveys a tone of exultation running through the narratives that describe the founding of the three Orders. True, early biographers concentrated on the development of the Friars Minor because that was their mandate. Nonetheless, when recalling the impact of Francis upon every stratum of society they use glowing terms to describe the founding of these branches of the family. A line from a sermon of St. Bonaventure summarizes this quality poignantly: "St. Francis founded these three institutions and they were like three daughters to him."

Evidence indicates that the shared vocation of all Franciscans is literally "to live the gospel." The opening words of all the Franciscan Rules bear this out. But it is argued—and rightly so—that the gospel belongs to all religious, to all the baptized. The very arrangement of the chapter on religious life in Lumen Gentium (following the one on "The Universal Call to Holiness") demonstrates this. Francis never let go of the principle which the Second Vatican Council had to resurrect and place before us so dramatically in Perfectae Caritatis: "Since the fundamental norm of religious life is the following of Christ as proposed by the gospel, such is to be regarded by communities as their supreme law." But Francis was equally aware of the particular grace that was his and which he struggled to impart in his letters, Admonitions, and Rules. Just as the Holy Spirit gifted the Church with four Gospels in order to probe the depth of the mystery of Jesus Christ, so the Spirit inspired Francis to write many forms of expression of his particular gift, most notably the Rules. Francis pointed out three ways according to his lights and current circumstances in which his followers would be able to live the gospel. This, then, is the first reason for distinctiveness within the branches of the Franciscan movement. A bit of reflection. on "literally living" the gospel, our rich heritage from St. Francis, makes obvious that the way of Francis is open to distinctiveness precisely because of the inclusiveness of his charism. No attempt to state distinction implies that

We are called upon to state the propria indolis of the Third Order Regular of St. Francis. Our task is to discern what is basically distinctive in being tertiary religious Franciscans. We are neither Friars Minor nor Poor Clares nor Secular Franciscans. Our vocational grace is to be Franciscan religious tertiaries and to manifest the giftedness of that call in the Church. At the same time we manifest mutually with our minorite brothers and clarissan sisters the variety of gifts within one Franciscan calling. When we raise the question about what is distinctively "ours" as tertiary religious we experience and we create a certain awkwardness and uneasiness. Students of Franciscan history know that in addition to the triumphs of the Order there are dark pages of trauma as well. The "fallout" of some historic tragedies (especially rivalries among the various male branches) in past ages still has the power to prejudice us. The dialogue necessitated by the Rule Project can be a source of insight and reconciliation. We admit that there are some who disagree with the positions we and our colleagues in the Work Group are taking regarding the whole matter of Franciscan charism. But we further admit that given the need to revise our Rule, this basic issue of the pluriformity of the Franciscan charism cannot remain a matter for endless speculation. We are attempting seriously and prayerfully to articulate the specific character of the Third Order Regular. If what we do helps in any way to clarify the issue for other Franciscans we are grateful to God and to them for the collaborative efforts undertaken.

Historically the Third Order Regular has been distinct because of its origins in the Ordo Poenitentiae and the conversis of Francis's day to whom he gave guidelines and wrote letters. What Francis teaches as basic to this style of gospel life is $\mu\epsilon\tau\alpha\nu\sigma\iota\alpha$. St. Francis influenced the Order of Penance

For an historical overview see Thaddeus Horgan, S.A., "Towards a New Rule for Tertiary Franciscan Religious?" The CORD 31 (Jan., 1981), pp. 10-15.

⁴Consult the Omnibus for the following selections: 1Cel 14-15 (pp. 256-60); LM 2, 8 (pp. 645-46); LM 4, 6 (pp. 657-58); Sermon excerpt on p. 837; L3S 60 (p. 943).

^{*}Francis's letters are as follows. One is the "Epistola fratribus et sororibus poenitentiae" (commonly called the "Volterra Letter" and technically cited as I EpFid or "The Letter to the Brothers and Sisters of Penance." Available in English on pp. 221-26 of Esser's The Rule and Testament of St. Francis (Chicago: Franciscan Herald Press, 1977). The other is the "Opusculum commonitorium et exhortatorium," or "Words of Advice and Encouragement" (commonly called the "Letter to All the Faithful" and technically cited as II EpFid. Cf. Omnibus, pp. 93-99.

to such an extent that it became identified as "Franciscan" (Ordo Poenitentiae S. Francisci). The original penitents were not religious in the canonical sense of that term as we use it today. Within a short time after its foundation, however, some did live in community and profess vows publicly. In 1324 Pope John XXII officially recognized them as "religious," and in 1447 Pope Nicholas V canonically established the Third Order Regular of St. Francis. While some extant congregations can trace their roots back through an unbroken line to these medieval congregations, many contemporary congregations are of more recent vintage. Many of the apostolic congregations that came into existence in the last two centuries were founded for a specific work and were given the Franciscan Rule by a bishop or the Holy See in order to stabilize the spirit of the group. It has been one of the exciting experiences of the postconciliar period to witness the desire of members of these groups to "reappropriate" their Franciscan identity even if it was, in its origins, the result of ecclesiastical fiat.

This description of the renewal effort would be incomplete, however, if we failed to acknowledge that two fairly distinct approaches (at least!) have surfaced in discerning the tertiary charism. For congregations basing their work on the Madrid Statement a rediscovery of the centrality of μετανοια in the preaching of Francis to the penitents emerges as a basic value, one that should be the core of a new Rule. Still other congregations give expression to their charism in terms of qualities that appear with frequency in the tradition and literature of the First or Second Order, particularly poverty, prayer, fraternity, and minority. This causes some tensions since these congregations can view the emphasis upon penitential spirituality as an imposition, a new emphasis with which they are uncomfortable and unfamiliar. Resolving this tension calls for careful study of the writings of Francis and the evolution of the Third Order Rule. We need a clearer grasp of what penance as a way of life meant to Francis. Here is it noteworthy that his final statement about the meaning of his vocation in the Testament focuses upon the fact that the Lord called him "to do penance" (Test 1). It is this same call that Jesus issues in his first preaching (Mt 4:17; Mk 1:15). For us it is the foundation for our form of gospel life after the example of Francis. It * is completed, as all Franciscan life manifests, by all the other qualities of Franciscan living which many congregations in fact highlight. Claiming

μετανοια because of the evidence of scholarly research as the distinctive aspect of the Third Order Regular Franciscans does not mean that it is a "possession." It is an emphasis for us but not an exclusive one. Genuine Franciscan life means it has an essential place in the life-styles and spirituality of the other branches of the Order. History sheds light on why this quality has been retained over the centuries as primary for us. Tertiary religious have always been involved in the world and with works of charity. The Church has consistently taught, and still does in Vatican II documents, that the first principle of all apostolic activity is μετανοια.

This tension within the Third Order Regular was present within the Work Group developing a draft text of a possible new Rule. We resolved it by stating the charism and then projecting Francis's plan for literally living the gospel which embraces all the other familiar qualities of Franciscan life which we, as well as our brothers and sisters in the other branches of the movement, value so highly. This was not easy, because when Francis wrote to the penitents he was addressing lay men and women living in their own homes. The evolution of communities of tertiaries became widespread only after his death. Apart from one section of the "Letter to All the Faithful," Francis's writings for the Third Order are not addressed to "religious." In developing a new Rule in the words of Francis, it became necessary for the Work Group to turn to Francis's writings for religious, notably the Rule of the Friars Minor and the Rule of the Poor Clares, but to use them in view of the present realities of our form of religious life.

The challenge facing the Work Group was and is to determine how best to express the plan for gospel life that Francis enjoined on all who entered his Order and yet to honor the primacy of $\mu\epsilon\tau\alpha\nuo\iota\alpha$ as a specific characteristic of this gospel response. The Work Group retained the structure and many expressions of the Rule of 1223 in order to present Francis's plan for evangelical life. The Testament was also studied and used to broaden the base of understanding the mind of Francis. References to other writings of Francis were necessary insofar as the Rule of 1223 specifies certain things that are characteristic of the Order of Friars Minor, but which would not be appropriate in a Rule for the Third Order Regular.

Apart from the obvious aims of presenting Francis's plan for gospel living for religious Franciscans of the tertiary branch, producing a text of lasting value that incorporates the current norms of the Church, the overall aim of the current Rule Project of the Third Order Regular is to unite the members of the Order and to express with new intensity the relationship that binds us to the First and Second Orders. We did this by stating the shared propria indolis of all in the Third Order Regular because it unites us across congregational lines. But we are members of a family that is larger than the

^{*}See Analecta, T.O.R. 123 (1974), which contains the acts, papers, and decisions of the Fourth Franciscan Tertiary Inter-obediential Congress, held in Madrid. Also see The Madrid Statement, a Study Guide, by Rose Margaret Delaney, S.F.P., and Thaddeus Horgan, S.A., available from the Federation of Franciscan Sisters; cf. note 2, above.

Third Order Regular. The new draft Rule reflects that happy fact by expressing the importance of sharing the Franciscan charism (Chapter 1, Art. 3). As we live our gift of total and continuous conversion (μετανοια) we are enriched by and contribute to the mutuality of Franciscan spirit and life which we share with the Friars Minor of all branches, the Poor Clares, and the Secular Franciscans. To do anything less than this, we feel, would be infidelity to the Church's norms on renewal and infidelity to our vocational identity.

As we go to press, our specific task is not yet completed. The Work Group met for ten days in September of 1980 in southern Germany and is now set to reconvene (in May) in Brussels. Even though you receive this issue of The CORD after that second meeting, you are surely aware that we will still need the support of your prayers and the benefit of your own responses to the draft and to the issues which this work raises for all of us. For this reason we have shared—and will continue to communicate—some of the tensions and issues we have thus far experienced in this process. For all of us this Rule Project, no matter what its final conclusion, is at this point a call to vocational fidelity, serious study, and discernment. Join with us in offering often the prayer that Francis made his own in his struggle to be converted to the will of the Lord: "Instill in [us] a correct faith, a certain hope, and a perfect love; a sense and a knowledge, Lord, so that [we] may do your holy and true command." Ω

One example of this is Lino Temperini, "Penitential Spirituality in Franciscan Sources," Analecta, T.O.R. 132 (1980), pp. 543-88.



In unity love specifies
In poverty love enriches
In chastity love liberates
In obedience love enables
In joy love realizes
In suffering love perfects
In dying love accomplishes
In death love unites with Love.

John Harding, O.F.M.

Cloister at Midnight

There is an illusion that light begets. In the arch of the sky and the wintry hill— All the world seems bounded by blue and white. Then day wears on and the bright sun sets And vision can dart as far as it will Out of the window opened by night. Go seeking the center of time and things. Search out a pathway through the maze; Find the relation of star and sod. Someone has gifted your mind with wings, Set you a definite number of days To spend in your quest for the presence of God. Turn from the fathomless; seek His face, Deep in the crystalline snowflake's heart; Tiny perfections proclaim His plan, Lost 'til a lens has multiplied space— Pictured the Artist in His art. Opened His mysteries freely to man. Now come to the place where quiet dwells: Let voice be dumb and the music stilled— Launch your prayers on your deep desire, Wave on wave 'til the high tide swells Over its bounds—'til your soul is filled And overflown by a sea of fire. Here He can meet you with nothing between, No wish, no dream, no weight of care-Only the immanent presence of Him, Around you and in you, still, unseen— Yet sensed in a measure beyond compare With hearing so dull and vision so dim.

Gene Robinson

The Franciscan Experience of Kenosis—II

ANSELM W. ROMB, O.F.M.CONV.

Having considered the experience of kenosis in the life of St. Francis, I will try in this second section of the present article to apply the kenotic process of spiritual growth to Franciscans as the pattern and key to Franciscan life and spiritual direction.

II. Franciscans Emptied Out

THE POINTS I will make in the following pages are neither exhaustive nor conclusive, and they will surely overlap. Nor will they correlate perfectly with the preceding analysis of kenosis in the life of Francis himself.

A. Creatureliness.

Francis taught us a great "cosmic humility," a sense of creatureliness; that we are part of the drama, rhythm, and worship of the whole universe. Because of our "cosmic humility" we joyfully share not only our physical environment with respect and without exploitation, but especially our human environment with the same respect, as Francis. This is what led him to assume the role of marginality, of identification with lepers and the poor. He wrote in his Testament, "Once I became close with lepers, what had been before a source of disgust became a spiritual and emotional consolation for me. Subsequently I did not tarry long before leaving the world." And of his friars he wrote, "We claimed no learning and were subject to all."

The consequence of our "lowliness" is, in biblical terms, that we are "convicted of sin," reminded of our wounded nature. We lose egocentric curiosity about ourselves, cease to scrutinize ourselves, reviewing our "words and acts even long afterwards to see how we might have conducted ourselves differently. This is like the gardener of whom someone wrote that he kept pulling up his plants by the root to see how they were doing! Or take the preoccupation with humility. If you have to ask whether you are humble, you're not! One who is aware of creatureliness and lowliness in

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God's sight loses interest in defending his rights, guarding himself against attacks (real or supposed), in brooding over setbacks and insults, in measuring his words carefully so as never to reveal his true feelings. This "creatureliness" is one way to measure kenosis.

Contentment with self is a great liberating experience, allowing us, as Francis, immediate spontaneity—to laugh with the laughing, to weep with the sorrowing. Having no special "status" frees us from anxiety of losing our precious dignity. Envy even of holiness is out of the question; we shall be as holy—that is, as "other"—as God wills us to be, to accomplish his designs. Therefore our sins do not depress us any more; we regret that we have been an ignorant and weak creature through sin, but there is always tomorrow. A typical attitude is that we set our sins within the context of our good to have the whole perspective—so that we can rejoice that the good Lord has seen fit to draw good from us and work his marvels through us despite our sins.

The lowly have learned to compromise, not with ideals, which remain inviolable, but with their self-expectations of perfection. Yes, we realize that we are not the spiritual architects of our own houses. Of course, we admit this theoretically, but when the roof caves in, we blame ourselves. For the same reason, when we are not truly empty of ourselves and not truly lowly, most of our sorrow for sin is really sorrow for ourselves—not that we have offended the good God, but that we have not reached a standard of our own making. In the latter case we have made of ourselves an idol, not a creature.

B. Living Tentatively.

Francis, I have said, had to let go of his romantic ideals as a crusader and founder; he had to be deprived of leadership and good health. As a consequence he lived with considerable sense of failure. We in our turn learn to live tentatively, never being sure even of our own charism. To live in this frame of reference means that we stop plotting and planning and projecting anything beyond our immediate competence. Even our ministerial and spiritual effectiveness is, after all, a gift. Everything happens in God's time, not by our deadline. Often the best thing we can do (especially superiors and directors) is get out of the way of God!

Thus we are freed of the desire to leave monuments behind us, lest we who have no visible offspring be forgotten. So we write books, build motherhouses, seek fame, and develop quirks that will make us unique and unforgettable. Better that we instead experience kenosis by simplifying our lives and pursue less novelty and adventure to fill our jaded yet demanding senses. Francis wrote in his Testament that the friars should occupy poor dwellings and churches only as strangers and pilgrims.

Thus we stop collecting things. It is said that when a beautiful woman begins to lose her physical beauty, she starts collecting diamonds. I think some Franciscans do this with stamps, books, art objects, or whatever, especially rich friends. But living tentatively means that we hold loosely in our hands whatever is not of eternal value, even life itself. Like Francis we learn to say "yes" to death and then embrace our sister.

C. Sense of the Sacred.

In imitation of Francis's kenosis we develop a sense of the sacred. This is a secondary level of consciousness, that is, sensitivity to sacred time and space pervading the City of Man. We do not say that we bring God to the City of Man; rather, we remind the City that he has always been there. This is more than "practicing the presence of God." We lie low and lay back to contemplate man's activity and judge it in the light of eternity. Thus mental prayer is at the top of the list of our priorities. For us the Three Persons of the Trinity become real and different and relate to us as individuals in unique ways hidden from the eyes of others.

This triple relationship alone makes chastity viable. Being emptied of human genital love, of physical intimacy, and of sexual companionship is a vacuum that cries out to be filled with some relationships, with some meanings that transcend the visible we have seen beyond. After all, many, if not all, of the tasks of religious persons can be done by those without spiritual commitment. The point of our chaste and celibate "sacramentality" is that we know and can reveal God and the sacred dimension of our tasks in the City of Man. If we are specially blessed, then the secondary level of consciousness becomes the primary from time to time, and we can shake loose of this earth and be wrapped in the divine darkness.

D. Community Bonding.

When we, like Francis, empty ourselves of family and societal values that urge us to be productive, successful, financially independent, and with authority over others, then once more the emptiness that ensues must be replaced with other realities. Franciscans replace those whom we have for-saken with the community and the Church.

Most persons need friends, but that is definitely not the same as community or fraternity. We choose our friends; God chooses our community—yes, even through our superiors. For the person of faith nothing happens by chance. At least sometimes the difficulties we find in living with others comes from our not learning what God has placed us there for. We do not necessarily develop affection for everyone in the community; there may be very little bonding taking place. Much of bonding is

based on similarity of feelings and experiences and likes. But we can always love. Love is not that much of a mystery; it is simply painful at times, because its processes are not geared to our likes and feelings in all cases.

Love has three elements that need to be present to work out well within community—as in a family. Love requires communication, a two-way street, but still possible if one party is willing to risk rejection for some time. Secondly, love requires investment with our moral and physical presence, that is, going beyond mere parallel living to find interest in the lives of others. Thirdly, love requires the attitude of sacrifice, which means mostly compromise with others. Anyone who is committed to the gospel in his heart is capable of these three, even if it is painful and one's overtures are not reciprocated.

You never find community, no matter where you go; you make it happen by working at it with love. No doubt Francis was tempted to leave active participation in the Order when he was eased out of its leadership, but he was committed to the fraternity for better or for worse. A mark of Franciscan spirituality is "hanging in" because we are "emptied out." In fact, Francis warned the friars not to wander outside obedience, that is, the ministry assigned the fraternity. One often hears complaints that a superior merely wants to "fill slots." But a bad name does not make it a bad game. Why not fill a slot if it has been part of the community's ministry to which you committed yourself and if the task is not beyond you? In the Testament Francis wrote, "I am determined to obey the minister general of the Order, as well as the guardian he sees fit to place over me. I want to be a captive in his hands so that I cannot travel or act against his order or wish, because he is my superior." Each Franciscan must ask to what degree he or she wishes to follow Francis in kenosis.

E. Altruistic Love of Others.

Much of our loving, whether of friend or relative or even of God, is cautious—perhaps our attempt to discover whether we ourselves are lovable and loved back. Once we learn to stop testing our lovableness and realize that God has in any case loved us first, even when we were in our sins, we perhaps may learn to love with altruism, that is, because it is good and right and profitable to salvation to love others, not expecting an earthly or human response, but rejoicing when we get a positive response.

It is, therefore, a subtle form of kenosis to love as Jesus loved—to the end, even forgiving those who did not realize some wrong they may have done to us. In fact, John tells us in his letter just how we can know we have made it into the Kingdom: "By this we know that we have passed from death to life, that we love the brothers [and sisters]." The supreme charity is

risking rejection, yet continuing to expose one's feelings and visions, continuing to communicate and invest oneself in others' needs and projects, continuing to sacrifice and compromise; as I wrote about community, so it is true about the individuals we strive to love. What spiritual profit is there in loving only those who love you? Then you are not yet a Christian, that is, a follower of Christ, unless you love altruistically like Francis, who experienced isolation and rejection.

F. Joyful Hope.

The kenotic process would be a sorry and unfranciscan growth without our characteristic joy. Francis himself was an incurable optimist, they say; yet it was not a sinecure to maintain joy in the shadow of the failures he had known. In 2Cel 125, Francis warns against the "Babylonian sickness," which is depression and alienation, such as the Jews experienced during the Babylonian Captivity. We also read, in RegNB 7, that "the friars ought to let others see that they rejoice in God and are cheerful and polite, as others expect. They should likewise beware of appearing gloomy or depressed like hypocrites."

Whereas sadness is not a sin, it does derive from our sinfulness, our fallen and deprived state. Countless spiritual writers have warned against this moping about. The medievals called it acedia, classicists taedium, Victorians melancholy, the French ennui, psychologists the mid-life crisis, Scripture scholars the noonday devil, Americans boredom, and our contemporaries burn-out. It is not being "bad," but being tired of being "good." Slice it as you will, the serving is nevertheless the tasteless repetition of religious acts which have lost their meaning. It is so tiring always to be "sensible," to cross nature, to struggle for this and against that, to give proper example, to live with empty arms, to be at war with sin, especially to repeat one's failures.

I worry about the vocation of candidates whom I never see laugh or joke around. I don't worry about their leaving; I worry about their staying. As one priest likes to put it, "If you are happy to be saved, please inform your face about it!"

The best example of both kenosis and remembering Jesus for whom we perform thankless tasks is, of course, Francis. The story is familiar, but cannot be retold too often, because it epitomizes being emptied out of everything familiar and constant and valued, yet enduring it all to be like the Master. . . .

Remember how Francis was going along with Brother Leo, discussing perfect joy. In what would perfect joy consist? No, not in the power to work miracles and change the course of nature. No, not in the ability to speak

with the tongues of angels and know all the languages of mankind. No, not in possessing every kind of knowledge about the earth and about the mysteries of heaven. No, not even if he could convert all men and move them to tears for the love of God! Leo, his secretary, anxious to record the immortal words of Francis, pressed him: "What, then, would be perfect joy?"

Francis replied:

If I were to come on a wintry day to a friary I myself had founded and was turned away by those who should have loved me most; then if I were to knock persistently and say who I was and the friar were to come out and beat me and call me a thief and throw me into the snow, then [Francis concluded with the certainty born of a lifelong kenosis] if I bore all this cheerfully for the sake of repeating the experience of Jesus—write, Brother Leo—this is perfect joy! Ω



June A.M.

Two birds sit on a telephone wire admiring the rhythm and the movement of the world.

They join a soaring squadron in a brilliant summer sky; two by two they fly swooping low and wild over undulating lawns.

They peck and hop in measured little dance to the music of creation—a beating heart of sound.

A glassy eye in feathered head darts everywhere at once.

The morning world has burst asunder with its beauty and the birds cannot contain their joy; they burst their hearts in song.

Sister Edmund Marie Stets, C.S.B.

Solidarity and Ministry in the Kingdom

SISTER M. VIRGINIA BOOS, O.S.F.

You know how it is

People come here and they want to know our secret of life.

They ask many questions but their minds are already made up.

They admire our children but they feel sorry for them.

They look around and they do not see anything except dust.

They come to our dances but they are always wanting to take pictures.

They come into our homes expecting to learn about us in five minutes.

Our homes, which are made of mud and straw, look strange to them.

They are glad they do not live here.

Yet they are not sure whether or not we know something which is the key to all understanding.

Our secret of life would take them forever to find out.

Even then, they would not believe it [Wood, 7].

They speak of the richness of life, the simple beauty of living so close to the earth that even the color of their skin is the same as the adobe pueblo in which they live. They are one with all of creation, and with the great Tao toward which all created being will one day converge. Theirs is a richness and a strength that no political power can take from them. And yet, their existence is threatened. They are a marginal people, oppressed by government structures that would deprive them of sustenance from the very earth of which they are so much a part. Their voice is the voice of millions of people throughout the world who can be heard only in the silence of appreciative love for the value their many traditions have to bring to a world that is blind to the goodness and beauty of the poor in spirit. If those dedicated to servanthood within the Church would profit by the unspoken word of the Taos Indians, they would do well to reflect—in quiet and in peace—on the concept of solidarity.

We need an acute sensitivity if we are simultaneously to respect the dignity of all human beings and to be receptive to their needs. (The margin between these two is often very narrow.) All of us need increasingly to be "at

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one" with all of creation, to have a sense of solidarity with all other human beings. To prevent the complete destruction now threatened by the possibility of nuclear disaster, we need a sense of solidarity, marked by humble sensitivity to the human condition. This sense of solidarity must be integral to the personality of the individual who ministers within the Kingdom of God if he or she is to act as leaven to permeate the whole. The transformation of society through this leavening process is precisely the ideal to which those in servanthood are dedicated. It is important, therefore, to clarify the meaning of solidarity and to deepen our commitment to it so that our ministry may be as effective as possible. The following considerations are obviously limited to one person's life experience. Perhaps their publication here will stimulate further discussion of the subject.

It is helpful to begin by making a clear distinction, intended solely within the confines of this presentation, between (1) the poor and oppressed, who live in a deplorable human condition brought about by domination and force; and (2) the voluntarily poor, who have freely adopted a poor lifestyle.

Albert Nolan describes the plight of the poor in a most compelling way. Those who are deprived of the basic physical necessities of life, i.e., food, clothing, and shelter, are among those we first consider to be among the poor and oppressed. But, Nolan says, "the principal suffering of the poor [is] . . . shame and disgrace."

The economically poor [are, he continues] totally dependent upon the 'charity' of others. For the Oriental, even more so than for the Westerner, this is terribly humiliating. In the Middle East, prestige and honour are more important than food or life itself. Money, power, and learning give a man prestige and status because they make him relatively independent and enable him to do things for other people. The really poor man who is dependent upon others and has no one dependent upon him is at the bottom of the social ladder. He has no prestige and honour. He is hardly human. His life is meaningless. A Westerner today would experience this as a loss of human dignity [Nolan, 22].

Nolan goes on to say that the oppressed poor include all those who are dependent upon others for social, economic, or psychological support. Anyone at all in need of the compassionate concern of Christian servanthood is among the poor and oppressed.

And of course, the power that is brought to bear upon them is the power of domination. It is the power of darkness, of the prince of this world, working in opposition to the Kingdom of God. The only thing that will overcome the oppression of the poor and despised is "the power of the spontaneous loving service which people render to one another" (Nolan, 69).

Voluntary poverty is perhaps best understood in relation to the poverty

of those we have referred to as the poor and oppressed. Those who embrace it—religious in vows and other individuals as well—freely choose to accept less for their services to humanity in order that the victimized poor may have more. They do so because they take seriously their obligations to share the goods of the earth and to be concerned for the powerless in the world, while contributing as responsible citizens to the just reform of government structures.

In addition, the voluntarily poor recognize their own sinfulness and need for God's mercy. They have a feeling of being "at one" with the truly deprived citizens of this world. They are the ones Matthew calls "the poor in spirit," who belong to the Kingdom of God.

The Kingdom of God is a promised Kingdom, and yet it exists right now: "The reign of God," Jesus said, "is already in your midst" (Lk 17:21). It is an ideal state in which people live together in harmony with one another and with all of creation. It is the goal toward which all ministry in the Church is directed. In God's Kingdom, there are no violations of human dignity; there is no poverty, oppression, or injustice. Even suffering and death are overcome. As such, it is an event still to come, the eschaton. And yet to the extent that our lives are conditioned by it now, it already exists as a sign of hope for a more perfect Kingdom to come.

Jesus said, "My Kingdom does not belong to this world" (Jn 18:36). So, even though the Kingdom does exist in some respects in the world and the two do overlap, the Kingdom of God stands in direct opposition to the power (of Satan) that exists in a sinful world governed by oppression and hate.

The Church, too, because it exists for the sake of the Kingdom, is in the world and in some ways related to the world. The relationship of these three realities has been explained thus by Richard McBrien:

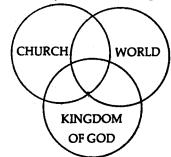
The Church is that part of the world which alone confesses that Jesus of Nazareth is the Lord and which, through preaching, worship, example, and service to mankind, strives to make everyone and everything conform to the will of the Father and thereby enter into the Kingdom of God.

The Church and the world are not the same thing, although they overlap, we because there are many people and institutions in the world which do not acknowledge the Lordship of Jesus.

The Church and the Kingdom of God are not the same thing, although we trust that they overlap, because there are many whom God has that the Church does not have, and many whom the Church has that God does not yet have (St. Augustine).

Finally, the Kingdom of God and the world are not the same thing, although they may overlap, because much of the world is still under the power of evil and refuses to submit itself to the sovereignty of God [McBrien, 24].

This can be further clarified by the use of a diagram:



The center of this diagram shows a place where all three realities come together. It is the point of convergence where the world, the Church, and the Kingdom of God are in solidarity with one another. This is where those who are poor in spirit are found. No one here is concerned about wealth; all share their material possessions. They have a common vision and a mutual concern for the coming of the final Kingdom. They work collectively for the liberation of the oppressed and in solidarity with all people for the sake of the Kingdom of God.

"Solidarity with mankind is the basic attitude. It must take precedence over every other kind of love and every other kind of solidarity" (Nolan, 61). No one can be excluded from this kind of solidarity. The world, on the contrary, fosters an exclusivist—and therefore counterfeit—sort of "solidarity." The challenge to Christian ministry today is to persist in the example Jesus gave: to establish a solidarity in the world that includes the marginal people, those who are despised and whose sense of dignity is violated, those with whom Jesus himself would identify today. His love for them is not to the exclusion of others. His constant effort was to bring about a solidarity of all people everywhere.

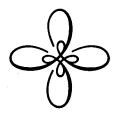
The basis of this kind of solidarity as the condition for ministry within the Kingdom is compassion. It is "that emotion which wells up from the pit of one's stomach at the sight of another man's need" (Nolan, 67).

The experience of compassion is the experience of suffering or feeling with someone. To suffer with man . . . is to be in tune with the rhythms and impulses of life. This is also the experience of solidarity. . . . It excludes every form of alienation and falsehood. It makes a person at one with reality and therefore true and authentic in himself [Nolan, 127].

To rest content with considering oneself in complete solidaring with all of humankind—merely to bask in a sense of well being because one is at the center where world, Church, and Kingdom converge, is illusoring and cannot mean that salvation is assured. The poor and the powerless will there save

us. Simply to be found in their midst may in fact mask another form of domination. At the Last Supper Jesus gave a clear example of the kind of service we must render when, in the washing of the feet, he enacted a kind of servanthood that implied a sharing of gifts. Only a relationship that involves genuine sharing of gifts with the poor fosters the restoration and strengthening of personal dignity. But this is a solidarity that is not easy to to achieve.

Neither does solidarity with the poor mean that all truth is at the center and that anyone found there is automatically in possession of the truth. This is like visiting the Taos Indians to find their secret of life. A whole lifetime would not necessarily disclose a thing, unless there existed a sharing of gifts among friends. To the extent that awareness of the oppressed is realized, to that degree is the capacity to be "at one" with the poor broadened and strengthened. It becomes incumbent, then, upon those who are dedicated to servanthood in the Church, to fill this capacity with acts of justice that are liberating of the oppressed and to share the goods of the earth with all its people. Only in this way will solidarity grow and the Kingdom of God increase.



The world, the Church, and the Kingdom are made up of as yet imperfect human creatures. They are a growing, changing, developing people of God. As growth in compassionate love and truth increase, the sense of solidarity with all people, and all of creation, is strengthened as well. In the meantime, the three realities—world, Church, and Kingdom—exist together. There are no visible boundaries between them. To move from one to the other and in and out of the point of solidarity, as time and circumstances change, is the common activity of the imperfect Christian. To the extent that solidarity is not yet firmly rooted; some people will, like the many seeds that fall upon the ground, be trampled upon, others will be devoured by beasts of prey, and still others will be washed away by the rains. The Taos Indians say.

Do you know what is wrong with the white people? They have no roots.

They are always trying to plant themselves and yet They will blow away in the wind because They are born with wheels [Wood, 61].

To enable ourselves to become rooted in solidarity, we must get rid of our wheels; we must allow the seed to fall into the ground and yield "a hundred-fold" for the Kingdom of God. Ω

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Appalacia

Between Kentucky hills All life moves slowly. In the hollows Deep thick hollows Naked boys wade In cold creeks Innovating innocence On quick bare feet And big eyes.

The morning mist
Lulls the bottom land;
Whippoorwills call
While all lies sleepy
Tucked between
Mountain and mountain.

Andrew Lewandowski, O.F.M.

The Simple Life According to Father Eustace Struckhoff, O.F.M.

PAUL SMITH, O.F.M.

Never HAVING lived in the same house nor even in the same city or state with him, I have admired Father Eustace from a distance for many years. Now that he is gone, it is a matter of satisfaction for me to have attended the last retreat he gave. He did so in the manner of recent years as a member of a team, the senior one.

He spoke in a quiet way, too quietly, which would be the only complaint anyone would ever utter against him. Otherwise, his unassumingly autobiographical presentations made very enjoyable listening. To top that, he provided some original comments that scintillated with perception. One real gem, in particular, occurred in the course of the opening talk on simplicity that I am about to summarize. It went something like this: Our society has beatified production, canonized consumption, and deified profits.

I was so impressed with his talk on the morning of the first full day of retreat that I immediately afterward went to my room and wrote down everything I could remember. Later, I told him that he should publish his talk. He replied, nonchalantly, "I'll leave that up to you." Taking that as an invitation, I offer the version to follow of his spoken word as a little memorial to a good and admirable man and priest.

First, I would like to recall at this point, two months after the retreat, some more of the autobiographical details with which he regaled us retreatants. He was the guinea-pig, he told us, of the new retirement policy of the Province early in the 70's. Having served on the retirement committee he was invited by the Provincial to be the first one to try out the plan: retiring with grace. This he consented to do. At the age of 65, therefore, he became assistant to the man who had been his assistant and who now took his place as pastor.

He told us how he started using the time he gained on being released from pastoral burdens. He was able to be more useful to the friars with whom he lived. He became both cook and launderer. For a hobby he took up garden-

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ing. In general, he made life enjoyable for himself as well as for others. It must have been a real pleasure to live with someone like that. He evidently succeeded admirably in becoming the model pioneer and forerunner of enforced retirement victims. We should make him their patron saint.

Fortunately, he gave retreats now and then, as he had done before his retirement. So, others of us were able to find inspiration in the company of one who worked with the poor for the length of his priesthood in the Mexican parishes of San Antonio. The recent retreat experience confirmed for me the impression of gentle calmness and kind affability he always exuded as far back as I remember him.

Rather than attempt to quote him exactly or try to reconstruct closely what he said, I offer the notes I made just as I wrote them down on the very day he gave his homily. It will be easier for the reader to let his own imagination do the rest. Whatever may be insufficiently or poorly worded in the notes I will add to, briefly, in bracketed insertions. The title for this bit of amateur journalism is mine. The title I wrote down at the time of original writing is: "The Way It Should Be," which, though simple, is too vague. Father Eustace was not concerned with titles of any kind. The title, as it now stands, expresses the theme of this year's compulsory retreat for friars of the Sacred Heart Province. What sweet compulsion!

The Homily He Gave in Word and Deed

[I begin the body of the notes with this brief preface at the head of my notes:] First homily of day at Morning Prayer on first day of retreat, Jesuit Retreat House, [Cleveland, Ohio,] June 30, 1980: after reading of Beatitudes and Woes according to the Gospel of St. Luke.

[Father tells of receiving a] Gift, from a friend and [to be enjoyed] with him, of a visit to Assisi and the Holy Land.

First night after arrival in H. L.—stay in a hospice run by some Sisters on Mount of Beatitudes. Where Jesus began his "campaign."

ound places he wanted to visit: Jacob's well, where the finest example of the working of grace took place in the description of St. John [finest example in the Bible, I believe he said].

On the way up a beautiful blacktop to Jerusalem, sight of a Bedouin along the side of the road: bernousse, long white robe, sandals. That's how our Lord looked (instant thought and impression from the fleeting picture [glimpse that stuck in his mind the rest of his stay]).

Hotel stay in Jerusalem: light switch (Jesus didn't have electric light [he thought to himself]), tiled floor (not that), running water from a faucet (not that), TV set in a corner (neither that). House seen in Nazareth [more

typical of the ancient kind]—very plain, we'd hardly consider it a house, [single room where everybody in the family ate and slept together, dirt floor].

Why did God send his Son, why did Jesus come, at a time when they had

none of these [modern] things? [Because] We don't need them.

St. Francis [we continue, now, on to Assisi from the Holy Land] had lived the good life [in contrast with the evidence of a rather poor style of life that Nazareth, even today, could attest]. [He turned his back on the good life at] Age 24, no longer a teenager. [He gave up all possessions, though] Accustomed to the best restaurants [we speak in modern parlance], the best wines, no Cadillac but a fine horse of his own, good clothes. An associate of his father in the successful worldly man's business. Divested himself of it all before the bishop.

Francis supremely happy [as a result of getting rid of all earthly hindrances]. Satisfied in his whole being. "This is what I want, what I have desired, what I longed for with all my heart." [Such were his words after the famous incident of finding his vocation in the words of the Gospel read at a Mass he attended, words about the sending out of the apostles with nothing but the shirt, again in modern parlance, on their backs].

We hear the call of Christ, too, to follow him in simplicity.

* * *

My notes failed to reflect the point of departure for Eustace's theme of simplicity of life from the Beatitudes. The Jerusalem Bible translation of $\mu\alpha\kappa\alpha\varrho\iota o\iota$ as 'happy' gives us a more meaningful word than the New American Bible's 'blessed'—a stereotyped word used only in pious language, that makes happiness seem something ethereal and unreal. Eustace indicates St. Francis's supreme happiness at his discovery of the simple life in a Gospel passage about the sending out of the apostles.

Was Eustace too carried away by his Holy Land euphoria in saying that we don't need such things as running water, electric appliances, tiled walls, etc.? Ideally, we don't, but ideals bearing little relation to present-day 'facts of life' will only irritate, or, at best, mystify the man in the street or the friar behind the wheel. Besides having living examples among us, such as Eustace or Mother Teresa, we Franciscans, dedicated as we are to Poverty, need more expert explanation as to how we can live simply amid the plague of conveniences and comforts with which advancing civilization and our own acquiescence have bequeathed us since the time of Christ, the time of St. Francis, and even since the time the 76-year old Eustace was a boy.

Is St. Francis's dream lady still alive in the hearts of Franciscans at this point in history, the age of industrialized, mass-culture society? A learned

friar once would not allow me to belittle modern civilization in comparison with an earlier age. Another friar confided how glad he was to live now when he can enjoy the advantages of modern conveniences rather than in the time of St. Francis.

We ordinary friars have been left in the dark with no intellectual interpretation of our 'charism' corresponding to the changes constantly appearing in the world in which we live. We end up being compelled to lead a schizophrenic life between our individual and corporate self or else throwing overboard any remnant of our Franciscan heritage. All the while we are speaking of poverty and simplicity of life we find the pressing 'facts of life' intruding: retirement and hospitalization benefits, debts, sale of property, budgets, funds, deficits, travel expenses, insurance, automobiles, country houses, pleasure boats, liquor cabinets. From a superior's point of view these things may be unavoidable. But how well do our leaders explain any confrontation these matters cause with basic Franciscan principles of poverty and simplicity? Even if they did, would the ordinary friars care enough to contribute their honest thoughts? Each one is on his own and keeps his ideals, if any, to himself. We talk shop and sports and that's it. We have our work to do and all this 'intellectualization' is a waste of time. The house chapter offers the possibility for meaningful dialogue. But its crowded agenda, time limitation, and other obstacles seem to keep it from getting anywhere very far.

I don't see too widespread a belief or enthusiasm for the simple life among Franciscans. We can't even get worked up about far-off peons supplying our tables with lettuce and bananas. As long as this stuff keeps coming why worry about how it gets here? Let the government handle Nestlé Corporation's promotion of infant formula in countries where they have no pure water. Refugees aren't our problem either. Too much mixing in politics to write congressmen.

Is it the clerical nature of the Order that has caused Franciscanism to accommodate to the consumer mentality that we hear so endlessly deplored? As pastors and guardians cleric friars are accustomed to dealing in provisioning, equipping, building, and financing.

I would like to see our Franciscan scholars bring a system of Franciscan principles and ideals abreast of the times. Ignatius Brady's Marrow of the Gospel is about 25 years old, and, though admirable as an explanation of the Rule, is too narrow in scope. Philosophers of history, Scripture scholars, sociologists, economists, and artists, as well as canon lawyers, could shed much light on the whole Franciscan movement if they applied themselves to it with their particular expertises.

We are devoting all our efforts to the praises of St. Francis as if we are not

living in an entirely different society. We are using our encomiums about him and his life as a smoke-screen over our own de facto Franciscan or un-Franciscan existence.

We hear very little about developments in Franciscanism since St. Francis. We vaguely know of some change from the time of St. Bonaventure. We single out a saint here and there, but we get no idea of continuity of the Franciscan spirit from generation to generation. St. Peter said that Christians should be ready to give reasons for their beliefs (1 Pt 3:15). Can we Franciscans give a plausible explanation of our poverty?

Life was simpler and, at times, happier back in the Depressiion years before I knew Franciscanism. We didn't have much, but we did have some simple good times among a lot of people. Now friars hardly get together for a meal. A rather routine Liturgy of the Hours at stated times may or may not attract a quorum. Togetherness is gone. But we do have a lot of those products they call 'the good life.'

I end on a lighter note. I mentioned Eustace's quiet tone of voice that caused difficulty for a few. I don't want to leave the impression with those who didn't know him that he had a weak looking physical appearance. He was tall, trim, and graceful, with a weathered face like a Texas cowboy. His life lent a lot more authority to what he said than I can ever match with my own or with my words. $\boldsymbol{\Omega}$



On Living in the Thirteenth Century, 1981

When the prince of Japan, who loved beauty, Told the gardener he would come, That man cut down all his flowers But one crysanthemum.

On our bridal-wreath hedge in late July Dry seed-pods of spring's perfume—And out of fashion among the green One joy-white sprig in bloom.

Sister Rafael Tilton

Resting Place

With approach of August festival
marking day You took me for Your bride,
day of thanking for Your keeping,
day for vowing all anew,
I set about some little things a woman needs to do.

There were the chapel gardens wanting a trim and festive look.

A waited morning came—
glorious and free for out-of-doors.

As eager as a lover rushing to a tryst,
I went for weeding tools,
reached for a shovel from the hook to clear some rubble
roofers left beside the Church;

discovered there at labor's end, close against the wall—a fallen bird long dead with wings outspread.

All spent after ecstasy of song, I thought, as though it knew Who dwells inside, how You went singing hymns of praise the night before You died of love with wounded wings spread wide.

With reverent push of blade deep under, I lifted, turned Your creature over, fresh, damp earth for cover, raised up and caught my breath—Your kiss upon the unexpected breeze.

O Christ, my Tender, let me live and die like this.

Sister Mary Agnes, P.C.C.

Book Reviews

The Saving Word: Sunday Readings, Year A. By Wilfrid Harrington, O.P., Thomas Halton, and Austin Flannery, O.P. Wilmington, DE: Michael Glazier, Inc., 1980. Pp. xiii-358. Paper, \$10.00.

Reviewed by Father Vincent B. Grogan, O.F.M., J.C.D. (Catholic University of America), a member of the faculty at Christ the King Seminary, East Aurora, New York.

The ostensible purpose of this book is to provide the harried cleric with background material—with aids—to assist him in preparing the Sunday homily. Unlike the various homily services or even other, similar publications on the Sunday Scripture selections, this book offers no homily outline, no homily hints, no homily, period.

Rather, its thrust lies elsewhere—a brief scriptural commentary on each of the three readings for a given Sunday, followed by an excerpt from a Patristic source related to the general theme of the scriptural passages (an obviously difficult task) and one passage from a contemporary magisterial source (chiefly the documents of Vatican II and the encyclicals of Paul VI and John Paul II) for each of the Scripture readings (a somewhat more ambitious undertaking which is generally successful). Seemingly, then, the authors' intent was to provide the homilist with the meaning of a given Scripture text when it was composed and to show how this meaning is applicable to contemporary Church life by utilizing quotations from papal or conciliar sources. If that is its purpose, then the book is successful.

But its overall value to the homilist, I must say, is minimal, especially in its commentary on the scriptural passages, particularly in view of the scholarly Scripture commentaries now so readily available. Its major defect is the absence of any explicit linkage of the general theme that emerges from the particular Scripture pericopes (especially the first and third readings); the reader is left to make that 'leap' by himself. Since most other homily resources do provide this type of explanation and offer, as well, a suggested homily, at least in skeletal form, one wonders why the authors undertook this project at all.

In his Introduction, Bishop Thomas Mardaga of Wilmington envisions the book as a valuable aid for reflection and meditation on the Scriptures—which it certainly can be—and as spiritual reading—which it could possibly be considered by some. If this volume provides the homilist with an impetus to reflect prayerfully on the Sunday Scriptures, before setting out to compose his homily, then it has some value. But if the reader is searching for a 'quickie' pre-packaged homily or for some trenchant themes or key ideas for his own homily, he will find neither here.

It should be noted that companion volumes are planned for Years B and C.

Shorter Book Notices

JULIAN A. DAVIES, O.F.M. AND RAPHAEL BROWN, S.F.O.

Believing in Jesus: A Popular Overview of the Catholic Faith. By Leonard Foley, O.F.M. Cincinnati: St. Anthony Messenger Press, 1981. Pp. vi-185, including index. Paper, \$3.95.

After an introductory chapter on the Bible, Father Foley sets forth the life of Jesus, the Church, the Sacraments, and the Commandments in units of 4 to 12 pages. Aimed at the adult Catholic or inquirer, the explanations are biblical and precise. Believing in Jesus is not "popular" in the sense of being watered down, and they are not reading to be done during television commercial breaks. I see the book's value as a resource for adult education teachers, a possible text for an adult education course, and a good start for one seeking to learn about Catholicism for the first time. Its themes, like the Bible itself, need of course the living faith of a teacher for best articulation.—J.A.D.

Your Question Answered. By Bonaventure Hinwood, O.F.M. Cape Town, South Africa: The Catholic Bookshop, 1980. Pp. viii-188. Paper, R5.80.

"I don't know what to believe," is a statement far too many Catholics have uttered or heard in recent years. Father Bonaventure's work carefully and comprehensively responds to that question by his answers to the specific questions that have been addressed to him as columnist for the Catholic weekly in South Africa, Daily Cross and Crown. Ecumenism, the Mass, the charismatic movement, the problem of evil, sexual morality, purgatory and limbo, confirmation, and baptism are just some of the areas discussed in this clearly written and quite orthodox yet contemporary work. I hope it will be made available in the United States.—J.A.D.

Laudario 91 di Cortona. The Nativity. The Passion: Nonesuch Record H-1086 or H-71086 (mono and stereo, respectively).

Heavenly 13th-century songs of the popular Laudesi (Praise) movement inspired by Franciscans, spendidly performed by Lugano musicians. Try to get this fine record (with Italian and English lyrics) while still available. Price varies, but Nonesuch records are available at most record stores.—R.B.

St. Francis of Assisi: A Biography. By Omer Englebert. South Bend, IN: Servant Books, 1979. Pp. 282. Paper, \$2.50.

This is a reprint of the 1965 Franciscan Herald Press Second English Edition,

translated by Eve Marie Cooper and revised by Ignatius Brady, O.F.M., and Raphael Brown. Note that it contains only the biography, without notes, appendices, or bibliography. The best biography of St. Francis, now in paperback—a must for all Franciscans, lay or religious.—R.B.

Father Gemelli, Notes for the Biography of a Great Man. By Maria Sticco, translated by Beatrice Wilczynski. Chicago: Franciscan Herald Press, 1980. Pp. vii-302. Cloth, \$8.95.

Splendid biography and profile of one of the great Italian Catholic and Franciscan figures of our times: Padre Agostino Gemelli, O.F.M. (1878-1959), ex-socialist, doctor of medicine and psychology, founder of the Catholic University of the Sacred Heart in Milan, editor of several periodicals, author of many books, notably the classic The Franciscan Message to the World and The Message of St. Francis. Indeed "a great man" and (in the original Italian ti-

tle) "a difficult man," or as noted by his biographer, a lifelong disciple: "a battering ram, bear-like, blunt, a fighter, fiery, fantastically active, formidable, uninhibited, gruff, untamed, volcanic, imperious, impatient . . . a genius, a giant." Intimate friend of the saintly professor Vico Necchi and of Popes Pius XI and XII, Padre Gemelli's supercharged fifty years of "slaving away for the Lord God" are a heroic epic of the Church in this century. A fascinating, inspiring epic.—R.B.

The Assisi Underground. The Priests Who Rescued Jews. By Alexander Ramati, as told by Padre Rufino Niccacci, O.F.M. Briarcliff Manor, NY: Stein and Day, 1978. Pp. 181. Cloth, \$8.95.

This is an exciting, well written account of the dramatic saving of three hundred Jews during World War II by Assisi's bishop, clergy, and Franciscans, as narrated by Father Guardian of San Damiano in 1944. This book is "heartwarming" indeed.—R.B.



Books Received

Durland, Frances Caldwell, I Never Feel Old. Cincinnati: St. Anthony Messenger Press, 1981. Pp. x-83. Paper, \$2.50.

Huse, Dennis, and Geralyn Watson, Speak, Lord, I'm Listening. Thirty-nine liturgies for high school students. Notre Dame, IN: Ave Maria Press, 1981. Pp. 175 (8½x11 inches). Paper, \$7.95.

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