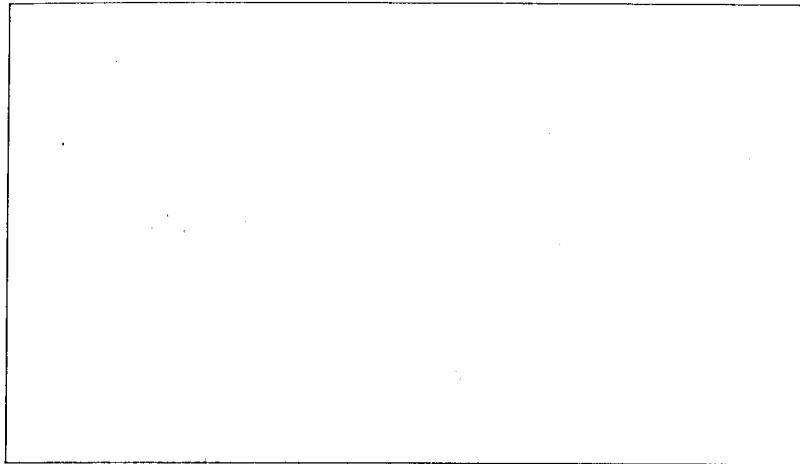


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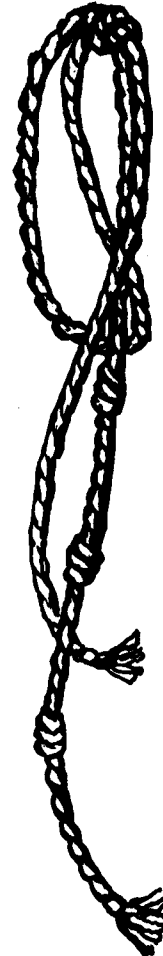
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Volume 33, No. 10

The CORD

A Monthly Franciscan Spiritual Review

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Associate Editor: Fr. Julian A. Davies, O.F.M.

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Standard Abbreviations used in The CORD for Early Franciscan Sources

I. Writings of Saint Francis

Adm: Admonitions
BenLeo: Blessing for Brother Leo
CantSol: Canticle of Brother Sun
EpAnt: Letter to St. Anthony
EpCler: Letter to Clerics'
EpCust: Letter to Superiors'
EpFid: Letter to All the Faithful'
EpLeo: Letter to Brother Leo
EpMin: Letter to a Minister
EpOrd: Letter to the Entire Order
EpRect: Letter to the Rulers of People
ExhLD: Exhortation to the Praise of God
ExpPat: Exposition on the Our Father
FormViv: Form of Life for St. Clare

Fragm: Another Fragment, Rule of 1221
LaudDei: Praises of the Most High God
LaudHor: Praises at All the Hours
OffPass: Office of the Passion
OrCruc: Prayer before the Crucifix
RegB: Rule of 1223
RegNB: Rule of 1221
RegEr: Rule for Hermits
SalBMV: Salutation to our Lady
SalVirt: Salutation to the Virtues
Test: Testament of St. Francis
UltVol: Last Will Written for Clare
VPLaet: Treatise on True and Perfect Joy
'I, II refer to First and Second Editions.

II. Other Early Franciscan Sources

1Cel: Celano, First Life of Francis
2Cel: Celano, Second Life of Francis
3Cel: Celano, Treatise on Miracles
CL: Legend of Saint Clare
CP: Process of Saint Clare
Flor: Little Flowers of St. Francis

LM: Bonaventure, Major Life of Francis
LMin: Bonaventure, Minor Life of Francis
LP: Legend of Perugia
L3S: Legend of the Three Companions
SC: Sacrum Commercium
SP: Mirror of Perfection

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

AB: Regis J. Armstrong, O.F.M.Cap., and Ignatius Brady, O.F.M., ed., *Francis and Clare: The Complete Works* (New York: Paulist Press, 1982).

EDITORIAL



Franciscan Women

THOUGH WE MAY HAVE different feelings about the feminist movement, all of us would agree that it cannot be ignored. We cannot just close our eyes and wish it away. We may question some of its philosophy and strategies for action, but we must acknowledge that it has raised our consciousness about the contribution women have made in history and continue to make in our own times.

As we look into Franciscan history we find that Franciscan women have made extraordinary contributions toward the upbuilding of the Church and the transformation of the world. Throughout the centuries Franciscan women have lived faithfully, trying in each era to translate the vision of Francis into meaningful ways of living and serving the people of God.

This month's issue of *The CORD* presents two articles which deal with two different Congregations of Franciscan women founded in two very different periods of history. One narrates the story of the Franciscan Sisters of Dillingen founded in 1241 in the midst of medieval life. The other, the story of the Sisters of St. Joseph, Third Order of St. Francis, relates the beginnings of a new Congregation in the context of the immigrant Church at the turn of the century.

These are two very different stories; yet each reveals Franciscan women deeply committed to the Church and her people. They acquaint us with Sisters who were serious about being faithful to Franciscan life as they knew it and show us that the Franciscan vision has found and will continue to find new expressions in a variety of Third Order Congregations.

The third article carries us into the present and challenges us to be people of the future, lest we imagine that all the challenges of Franciscan living have been met by our Franciscan ancestors. We sense again the urgency of grappling with the message of Francis as we endeavor to translate that message for our own times.

It is not enough to learn about the past; we need to reflect on it and find inspiration in it as we try to live faithfully and choose with integrity those ministries which are consistent with our Franciscan tradition and identity.

It is not enough to admire the Sisters of the past. We need to pray for the same kind of boldness that marked their lives and motivated them to give themselves to vibrant new forms of Franciscan life and work. It is not enough to be fascinated by Francis' radical response to the Gospel which has inspired our Sisters of the past. We must let it challenge us and move us to action. A faith response is called for; nothing less will be enough. Ω

Madge Karecki, SSJ-TOSF

Earthy Friendship

Silently, soberly awaking Mother Earth,
The first glimpse of light peeps through to see the world.
Tempting me as not to turn away
From God's re-creative rays . . .
I turn to see the magic of the darkened sky,
Absorbed now in the splendor of this new morn.
As rays of warmth from far away
Enflesh themselves into the sinews of my
Shadowed heart, I praise my Lord for Brother Sun . . . and thee.

Sister Mary Dorothy Siegrist, O.S.F.

The Franciscan Sisters from Dillingen: Oldest Third Order of Religious Women

SISTER M. PATRICIA FORREST, O.S.F.

AS WE CELEBRATED the 800th anniversary of the birth of St. Francis, we were reminded that our own history as the Franciscan Sisters from Dillingen spans most of those 800 years, dating back to 1241. The Centenary has been an impetus to look at our own past: where, when, and why we were founded, together with the providential circumstances of our coming to the United States. Our present and our future as the Franciscan Sisters of the Hankinson, North Dakota, Province are rooted in that past, which offers us strength and direction as we move toward the 21st century.

The first seven centuries of our Congregation stretch back in an unbroken line to Bavaria, Germany, in 1241. In that year, Graf Hartmann IV of Dillingen and Kyburg, Germany, and his son, Hartmann V, Bishop of Augsburg and Dillingen (1239-1286), endowed a church and convent for 15 women in Dillingen on the Danube River. A portion of that first convent wall still stands in the courtyard of our Foundation Motherhouse in Dillingen, mute evidence of the 742 years of continuous residence there of the Franciscan Sisters.

Whether these first "barefoot women" who began to lead a community life in 1241 were directly inspired by the Franciscan movement already astir in Germany remains an unanswered question. The Hartmanns themselves were probably well acquainted with the Friars Minor, who were by then settled in Nördlingen, Augsburg, Ulm, and Ingolstadt, all not far from Dillingen. In return for the Hartmanns' gift of the land and convent, the Sisters were instructed in the Deed of Foundation to serve "God our Creator peacefully, prayerfully, and zealously, praising and honoring Him to the consolation of all believing souls."

Sister M. Patricia Forrest, O.S.F., a member of the Hankinson Province of the Franciscan Sisters from Dillingen, teaches at Cardinal Muench Seminary, Fargo, North Dakota.

From our long tradition we have learned to see prayerful contemplation and apostolic work as two sides of the same coin.

Bishop Degenhard of Augsburg (1303-1309), a nephew of Bishop Hartmann V, invited the Sisters to affiliate with the Friars Minor (c. 1303), which they agreed to do. The Sisters promised by an oath to obey in all spiritual matters the Provincial Superior of the Friars Minor in that part of Germany and the Custos in Bavaria, as well as their own elected Mother Superior. Bishop Degenhard gave them the Third Order Rule of 1289, approved by Pope Nicholas IV, the first Franciscan to be elected to the Papacy. In this way the Sisters in Dillingen became the oldest convent of the Franciscan Third Order Regular of Religious Women.

The history of the subsequent centuries reads like a historical novel. On Candlemas Day in 1438, the original convent burned to the ground. In 1464, Cardinal Peter von Schaumberg, Bishop of Augsburg, was finally able to furnish the means for having it rebuilt for the 15 to 30 Sisters who lived there from 1464 to 1500. When the Reformation swept Germany, Cardinal Otto Truchsess von Waldburg issued the Franciscan Sisters of Dillingen a Great Document of Reform in 1566, binding them to strict enclosure as a contemplative Order. Cardinal Otto saw this as one means of protecting them from the Lutheran influence, to which some of the Friars Minor in Augsburg had succumbed. During the Thirty Years War (1618-1648), the enclosure was fractured as the Sisters were forced to flee south to Tyrol. Five remained at the convent in Dillingen, but only one, a leper, survived. The other four died of starvation and plague. Several died in exile, but some returned.

After more than 200 years of strict enclosure, the Sisters were ordered by Bishop Clemens Wenceslaus in 1774 to open a girls' school in Dillingen. In the secularization of Religious Orders in 1803, the Sisters were forbidden to accept more candidates; they were, however, granted the use of their buildings until the last Sister's death. In 20 years, the Order dwindled to five Sisters. Then in 1827 King Ludwig of Bavaria issued them a Decree of Restoration because of their

past service in teaching. The 19th and 20th centuries were a period of flowering. Out of their contemplative-active past, the Sisters grew in numbers from 51 in 1857 to 2127 in 1949.

In the early 20th century, Mother General Innocentia Mussak (1899-1924) was in a position to think of establishing missions outside Germany. The first impetus for a foundation in the United States came from St. John's University, Collegeville, Minnesota. The Benedictines needed 24 Sisters to cook and to work in the dining rooms for the 100 Benedictine monks and 400 resident students at St. John's in 1913. German-born Abbot Michael Ott, O.S.B., of Saskatchewan, Canada, had as a child been taught in Germany by the Franciscan Sisters from Dillingen. He advised Abbot Peter Engel of St. John's to try to get Sisters from Dillingen for the domestic work at the University.

In 1912, Abbot Engel asked Mother Innocentia if she would send 24 Sisters to Collegeville. To the mission-minded Mother General, the invitation was attractive. There was a further factor: Europe was teetering on the brink of the first global war. Mother Innocentia remarked to Sister Fortuna Gunther, a future volunteer for Collegeville: "Yes, a house we should have, a branch of our Congregation transplanted into the New World; so in case something should happen to us here in Germany, we still would have Sisters to keep on serving in another land." The Bishop of Augsburg, Maximilian von Lingg, gave his approval to the Sisters' going to America, putting the seal of obedience upon the new venture.

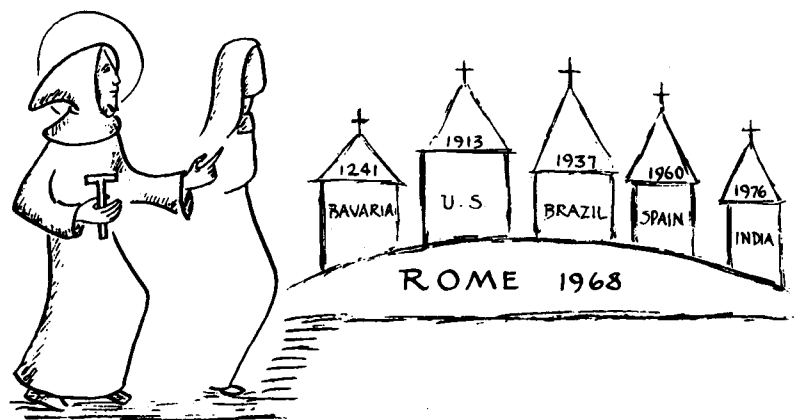
In 1913, Mother Innocentia sent out a general letter to the Sisters, asking for volunteers. The list of youthful volunteers, some of them just out of the novitiate, was soon complete. The Abbot of St. John's, en route to Rome, stopped in Dillingen to sign the contract. The Sisters were to be in Collegeville before September. After eleven days at sea and three days on a train from New York, they arrived in Collegeville on August 23, 1913. This first mission in North America was to last 45 years, until April, 1958.

World War I prevented more Sisters from coming to the United States until 1921. They were badly needed in Collegeville, where the Sisters, with characteristic initiative, had begun to think of the possibility of having a Motherhouse of their own in the Midwest, of staffing some schools, of recruiting new American members. Mother Innocentia sought twelve volunteers, three of them teachers, to go to America in 1921.

When Mother General Laurentia Meinberger visited Collegeville in June, 1926, the Sisters' most urgent question was that of building a

motherhouse in the Midwest. Father Alfred Mayer, O.S.B., the Prior of Collegeville, who had established a mission in Canada, was the Sisters' adviser in choosing a site. Ideally, this should be in a predominantly German Catholic farming area, close to a railroad, and at some distance from the motherhouse of another Congregation. Hankinson, North Dakota, seemed to be the most promising site in terms of the conditions sought. Reverend Joseph Studnicka, the Pastor of St. Philip's Church in Hankinson, invited Mother Laurentia to come and see the location in person. Bishop O'Reilley, the Local Ordinary, welcomed a new motherhouse in the Fargo Diocese. By the time Mother Laurentia left for Germany on September 3, 1926, things were well under way for the construction of the motherhouse in Hankinson. The Sisters were able to move into the building, still in the finishing stages of construction, on December 10, 1928. As part of the motherhouse, St. Francis Academy opened its grade school on September 9, 1929, with an enrollment of 142 in eight grades.

The next 50 years saw our ancient Bavarian Order reach out to the world, while the Hankinson Province grew to over 200 Sisters by 1954. With the closing of religious schools in Nazi Germany and the expulsion of religious teachers from the state schools in Germany, a group of Sisters left Dillingen for Cabo Frio, Brazil, in 1937. By 1964 the foundation in Brazil had grown to two provinces: a South Brazilian Province with a motherhouse in Duque de Caxias, a suburb of Rio de Janeiro, and a North Brazilian Province with a motherhouse in Areia. In 1960 our Congregation started its first local house in Spain; and in 1967, the first young women from India, after having received their professional education and religious formation in Ger-



many, professed their vows as Franciscan Sisters from Dillingen. Two of these returned to India in 1976 to begin a mission there. In 1983, we have 14 native Indian Sisters forming a region of our Congregation in the poverty-stricken area of Gandhi Nagar, Mangla Post, Bilaspur, North India.

Having become a Congregation of Papal Right in 1943, with Sisters now living on four continents, the Franciscan Sisters from Dillingen decided to transfer their general motherhouse from Dillingen to Rome. The General Council moved into a new generalate in La Storta, Rome in 1968. The large South German Province, numbering about 1800 Sisters, was divided into three provinces in 1973.

As a Congregation, each year we become more aware of our international character. The 1972-1973 General Chapter decided that the Superior General and her Council would meet annually with the six Provincial Superiors, each time in a different Province. Our Provincial Motherhouse in Hankinson hosted this international meeting on September 13-18, 1976, and again hosted the meeting in September of 1983. This annual meeting, together with a General Chapter every six years, keeps our Sisters united in spirit, close to our ancient Franciscan contemplative-active tradition, and alert to the needs of the Church throughout the world.

Although each Province has the autonomy to adjust to the needs and customs of its own people, as a Congregation we are united in many things. Our Constitutions, revised and enlarged by the General Chapter in August, 1981, and approved by the Sacred Congregation for Religious and Secular Institutes in January, 1982, spell out the Franciscan ideals we try to translate into our everyday lives.

Our history shows us that our Sisters survived through seven centuries largely because they were obedient to the Church, obeying their Bishops unconditionally, even when this meant radically altering their manner of life. At a Bishop's command, they changed from an active community to a cloistered Order; and 200 years later, in response to another Bishop's wishes, they began the teaching that led to their becoming an active apostolic Congregation. In all this, they accepted the circumstances of changing centuries as the sealed orders of God.

Today, too, we in the Hankinson Province try to respond wholeheartedly to the Holy Father's expressed wishes for the renewal of religious life, attempting to meet the needs of our rural area in a variety of ways: in teaching, in health care, in pastoral ministry, in serving one another. We try to live in Franciscan community in simplicity, joy, and hospitality, sharing what we save through hard

work and simple living with the poor in India and Brazil and other parts of the world.

Seeking to live the Gospel unconditionally, we give prayer and contemplation priority in our active apostolic life, with special devotion to our Lord's Presence in the Eucharist and in Sacred Scripture. We seek to respond to God's love by serving the poor—not only the materially poor, but also our own Sisters, often poor in their needs and limitations; as well as the handicapped, the ill, and the elderly; the unborn, the migrant, the separated, and the suffering. We seek to add beauty to the Liturgy by sewing liturgical vestments for many parishes and by composing music and growing flowers for our own liturgical celebrations. Living in a rural area, we stay close to the soil by gardening and by other manual labor outdoors. We try to make our motherhouse a house of hospitality for whoever comes, often inviting guests to participate in the Eucharistic Liturgy and to pray the Divine Office with us.

From our long tradition we have learned to see prayerful contemplation and apostolic work as two sides of the same coin, which we daily seek to render to "God our Creator peacefully, prayerfully, and zealously, praising and honoring Him to the consolation of all believing souls." His faithfulness is our assurance as we face the changing circumstances of coming centuries. Ω

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Schreyer, Sister M. Lioba, O.S.F., *Geschichte der Dillinger Franziskanerinnen*. Reimlingen: Missionsdruckerei Mariannhill, 1982), 2 vols.

The Hidden Hearth

When six flickering flames
gradually hush the quiet noise of intellect,
beacon home the wandering heart
to rest in You;

when dawn-light eases dark from this room,
earnest with the stillness of prayer,
these walls become the walls of the world
over Your house of gold.

Listening, I know Your love is
greater far than our desire,
great enough to take the look
of bread and weakness
to be our food and power.

Godhead gazing from this open door,
You know what destinies hinge
on this hearth fire gathering,
what sparks fly to kindle new fire
across the face of earth.

What You do to unresisting
wheat and wine,
O, work in us.

Sister Mary Agnes, P.C.C.

The Call In Retrospect

Who nurtured the seed that was destined to grow
—deep in the soul of you?

Can anyone know?

An angel of Heaven with folded wings?
(Who can know the heart of things?)

Parent or teacher, pastor or friend?
What matter?

They served the great End:

To foster the love, full blossomed that day
at the altar of God!
—so still you lay

to offer your life in the service of Him
Whom we joyfully hail as Christ, our King!
Roll back the years and hear once again:

"Come, follow me"

Hark! the echo!

Here I am, Lord!

Amen!

Sister M. Colette Logue, O.S.F.

The Founding of the Sisters of St. Joseph—A Franciscan Response

SISTER JOSEPHINE MARIE PEPLINSKI, S.S.J.-T.O.S.F.

FRANCIS AND HIS early brothers and sisters can be understood only in the context of Assisian society at the turn of the thirteenth century. A strikingly original mystical genius (Underhill, 460), Francis expressed his response to the Transcendent-Immanent God through Gospel community lived in dialogue with society. Likewise, the pioneer Sisters of St. Joseph founding their congregation must be understood as a community responding to their experience of God through dialogue with their social milieu: the American Midwest at the turn of the century. In the founding event the Sisters sought to act in a Franciscan spirit. They could not define that spirit in words, but they lived it in action fitting for their times.

Francis in his mid-twenties emerged from imprisonment, sickness, and solitude a changed person. As he aspired to union with the Most High God, he experienced the sacred at the center of all being and the oneness of all creation in God. Moved to response, he cried out, "What will you have me do, Lord?" Embracing the crucifix at St. Damian's Church and the leper cast off by society, he discovered the poverty of the historical Jesus as love's reply to the Creator. And so he followed in the footsteps of the poor Jesus as he found them in the Gospel. Gospel poverty invalidated the values of possessiveness, privilege, and power of the Assisian commune, which Francis was being taught as an apprentice to his father. The group with Francis chose resocialization in accord with Gospel values.

Thus Francis and his followers became a sacrament of Gospel poverty and community to society. They disciplined themselves against the self-destructive practices of their culture. Seeing reality anew in love beyond the self-centered vision of their contemporaries, they refused social security that depended on exploitative relation-

Sister Josephine Marie Peplinski is the past President of the S.S.J.-T.O.S.F. Congregation and author of the history of the Congregation, A Fitting Response.

ships. In reflection and dialogue on their daily experiences, they learned concretely the way of Gospel poverty, minority, and servanthood that opened them to an ever deeper contemplative attitude. They created an alternative prosperity in a community of love where the sacredness of each creature was recognized and affirmed. All shared bread and life's necessities as gift rather than possession; the sick knew excellent care, like a mother's; and lepers were acknowledged brothers and sisters. Simplicity, peace, and joy characterized the Gospel communities. The Franciscans were marginalized as fools for determining an alternate humanizing social system, but their action made them heralds of the kingdom for their time and place.

The Sisters could not analyze their founding action, but they did not doubt that their response in the problematic social situation was truly Franciscan.

Likewise, in 1901, founding the Congregation of the Sisters of St. Joseph, the pioneer Sisters were inspired to make a response as Franciscans in poverty and servanthood to the God of History. The need for such a Congregation in the American Immigrant Church, specifically in the Polish-American Community, was urgent. A call to found one was inevitable. Like Francis, desiring greater union with God and His saving Will, the Sisters heard the call through the conditions of the social situation, and they followed it courageously.

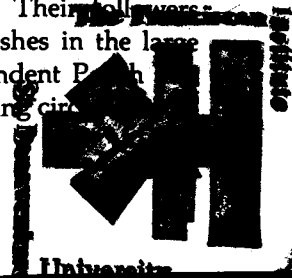
The founding Sisters of St. Joseph inherited many Franciscan characteristics from their ancestors. Francis had to make himself poor to learn the saving lessons taught by his Lady Poverty. The Sisters came of a poor immigrant people whose traditions rooted them in land, family, and Church. Their peasant heritage handed down in language patterns and customs included a sense of God's presence in creation, reverence for all life as gift, a desire to fulfill the Will of God and the laws of nature through mutual service marked by the name and cross of Jesus Christ, and a devotion to the Mother of God as giver and nurturer of life. From childhood, Polish peasants were train-

ed in habits of hard work, thrift, sharing responsibility, courtesy, and hospitality. Their heritage included a deep sense of family loyalty across generations, strength of spirit, concern for honor and equality within their underprivileged class, trust in God's Providence, and a love of freedom.

The nineteenth-century Polish immigrants suffered a unique poverty; they were a people without a native country. Late in the eighteenth century, Poland had been deleted from the maps of the world, having been partitioned by its neighbors: Prussia, Russia, and Austria. Most of the founding Sisters had emigrated as children or young adults from the Prussian (German) sector, where even their language and customs were being denied the Poles in a process of Germanization. Crowded off the land because of the nineteenth-century population explosion in Europe, many Poles sought new homes in the Midwest of the United States. Here they found themselves as an ethnic group among the least (the *minores*) of American society, in danger of losing their identity.

The immigrants from Poland had a twofold identity problem in the New World. A Slavic Catholic people, they needed to integrate into an English Protestant democracy, where Irish and German immigrants who preceded them were exercising economic, political, and ecclesial leadership. To complicate matters, Polish intellectual patriots followed the masses of uneducated immigrants to the large cities of the United States to continue a movement that had begun in the Polish partitions in the last third of the nineteenth century. The patriots came to America to instill in the masses Polish national consciousness and a sense of responsibility for Poland's resurrection as an independent European nation. To the immigrants whose ancestors had been predominantly of the peasantry, Poland had not been the nation as a whole but the vicinity of their village. Throughout centuries, the peasantry—the underprivileged 90%—had not been citizens of the nation. They had not developed a patriotic attitude based on Poland's national greatness before the seventeenth century nor its humiliation in the partitioning at the end of the eighteenth century. Their loyalty and their sense of history had been restricted to a local area. And now as Polish immigrants they were roused to develop a Polish national consciousness while they were being Americanized.

In this double process, conflict arose between the leadership groups: the intellectual patriotic laymen and the pastors. Their followers suffered confusion and even violence. Several parishes in the large cities moved to the extreme of forming an independent Polish national Church in the later 1890's. Under such distressing cir-



the immigrants worked out their definition of "Polishness" and a Polish-American ethnic consciousness. It is not surprising that they underwent a period of confusion.

The noted Chicago sociologist, William I. Thomas, who collaborated with Florian Znaniecki early in this century in writing his classic history (Thomas and Znaniecki), described his subjects thus: "They were the most incomprehensible and perhaps the most disorganized of all immigrant groups" (Blumer, 104). He predicted that the Polish-Americans would undergo widespread family disorganization. In mid-century, another Chicago sociologist concluded that "the predictions have not been realized primarily because of the efficiency of the Polish parish organization and the religious faith of the immigrants" (Thomas, 578).

Parishes were more than places of worship; they were primary communities for resocialization. In these parish communities the immigrants preserved their intrinsic basic identity in the process of extrinsic cultural assimilation. Affirming and supporting one another in the various parish organizations, they adapted norms of conduct, dress, language, and behavior patterns to their new environment while they recommitted themselves to their religious beliefs, practices, and ethical norms and retained certain customs. The parish schools cared for the second-generation Polish-Americans, many of whom were seriously alienated and drawn to crime. They had become too American for their homes while they remained too foreign for their social environment. Teachers were needed to help parents transmit values of their Old World heritage while cultivating understandings and skills necessary for moral, dignified life in the New World. The parish teacher was at the heart of the neighborhood Christian community building process.

The Third Plenary Council of Baltimore (1884) had decreed that within two years each parish was to establish a school for its children. Yet at the turn of the century a great majority of the Polish immigrant children attended no parish school and a relatively small number attended the public schools. According to a report given in 1905, only 70,000 of the 250,000 children were enrolled in parish schools (Kruszka, II, 10, 16). Far too few teachers were available for the Polish schools of the Midwest, particularly in central Wisconsin. Bishop Messmer of the Green Bay Diocese wrote in 1901 that there were more Polish parishes, especially poor rural ones, in his Diocese than in any other throughout the country. Religious women of other ethnic Congregations, notably German, offered their services. But the need was



urgent for a Polish-American Congregation of teaching Sisters who would attract vocations from the Midwest Polish parishes for this ministry and satisfy the growing demand for adequately prepared parish teachers.

The call to satisfy this need came in 1901 to a group of youthful Polish-American Sisters (temporary professed and novices) in the Milwaukee-based German-American Congregation of the School Sisters of St. Francis. When that Congregation began to accept Polish missions about 1890, it attracted many Polish postulants eager to dedicate themselves to God in prayer and service to the schools. After several years, however, problems emerged in the Congregation relative to the Polish members and the Polish school apostolate. Increasingly, the School Sisters of St. Francis, among them the Poles, were missioned to serve the middle class and the wealthy in sanatoria that were used also as vacation resorts. At the same time, as the Polish Sisters became more numerous, they suffered ethnic discrimination within the community and a lack of preparation for their special ministry. These Sisters began to feel that a branching off of their ethnic group would become necessary to promote their personal development and commitment to the Polish parish schools, especially the poor rural ones. Many were ready to give a positive response when invited to form a Polish teaching Congregation in central Wisconsin. The movement for the founding was initiated by the Rev. Luke Pescinski of Stevens Point and was supported by other Polish priests.

The pioneering era in the American Immigrant Church often called forth innovative responses to major pastoral problems. Bishop Sebastian Messmer of the Green Bay Diocese in Wisconsin, renowned

canon lawyer, seconded and advanced the project, creating a situation of decision and action for the Polish members of the School Sisters of St. Francis. He approved of their separating and forming an independent ethnic congregation as a just response to the "honest and legitimate aspirations" of the Polish people (Letter to Archbishop Katzer of Milwaukee, April 23, 1901). In founding an ethnic community they were seeking to establish the means for wholesome integration of the Polish immigrants into American society. The Sisters believed that God, manifesting Himself as Father of all nationalities, shaped this *καιρος* moment for them to act toward that goal.

Sister Cleta (later known as Clara) Bialkowska, Superior and Principal at St. Mary of Perpetual Help Parish in Chicago, accepted the priests' invitation to organize the new Congregation of the Sisters of St. Joseph at St. Peter Parish convent in Stevens Point, Wisconsin. She chose as her companion Sister Felicia Jaskulska, who replied, "If we do not act, what will happen to the children?" The two were grateful, loving persons. They were pained to grieve the major superiors who were not open to what their Polish-American Sisters needed to do in faithfulness to their identity and their call to mission. This faithfulness demanded a great trust in Providence. The 46 pioneer Sisters had nothing to offer the cause but themselves. Penniless and in need of food and clothing during the summer months before the parish schools opened, some of the Sisters went out to beg among the parishioners.

Material want was not their greatest poverty. For over nine months after the founding on July 1, 1901, the pioneer Sisters were uncertain of their status within the Church. When the separation process began on April 23, 1901, neither Bishop Messmer nor the Polish priests and Sisters were aware of the papal approbation granted the School Sisters of St. Francis by the Sacred Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith in January, 1900. Because of the approbation, canon law did not recognize the approval of the bishop over the religious superiors' objection to the transfer of the Sisters. But too much was at stake for withdrawal from the project. Canonical approval of the separation and the new foundation eventually was granted through decrees from the Sacred Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith (February 15, 1902), the Apostolic Delegate in Washington D.C. (April 9, 1902), and the Ordinary of the Diocese of Green Bay, Wisconsin (May 1, 1902). During the insecurity of the waiting period, some people affirmed the members of the new Congregation; others denounced them as rebels and schismatic Independents. The Sisters experienced

the stigma of being considered fools for Christ. Meanwhile, they trusted more firmly in Providence as they set about becoming who in faith they said they were. While developing their Franciscan religious community life, they continued to serve with recognized zeal and enthusiasm in the six Polish parishes where they had been missioned as School Sisters of St. Francis: three in central Wisconsin (St. Peter in Stevens Point, Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary in Pulaski, and St. John the Baptist in Menasha), one in Chicago (St. Mary of Perpetual Help), and two in Detroit (Sweetest Heart of Mary and St. Francis of Assisi). Within the first three months, by September, 1901, the Lord sent the new community ten postulants.

Sisters Cleta (Clara) and Felicia guided the Congregation safely through the difficulties of the first year—assisted by Rev. Luke Pescinski, who was assigned spiritual director pro tem, and their other Polish pastors. Bishop Messmer and the priests assumed responsibility in ecclesial and civic legal matters; the priests initiated the construction of the motherhouse in Stevens Point in January, 1902. It is not known which of the two Sisters was appointed major superior by Bishop Messmer on July 1, 1901. Together they directed the Congregation, Sister Felicia from Stevens Point and Sister Cleta from Chicago, where she continued to be Principal until she moved to Stevens Point on April 9, 1902, when ground was broken for the motherhouse. The two in leadership complemented each other. Sister Cleta, the taller and stronger, excelled in organizational and administrative tasks, which included begging among the poor and hard work with her hands such as supervising the building project, landscaping stumpy and rocky grounds, and gardening. Petite Sister Felicia devoted herself with simplicity and compassion to the more immediate needs of the Sisters.

On May 20, 1902, the cornerstone of St. Joseph Convent and Academy was laid. The Polish-American Community around Stevens Point came out two thousand strong to celebrate the hope and promise for their schools. About ten weeks later, in early August, all the Sisters of St. Joseph and the postulants came to St. Peter Parish in Stevens Point, gathering together as a community for the first time. They made a retreat preached in Polish by the Rev. Anthony Wisniewski, O.F.M., of Pulaski, Wisconsin. Then on August 13, 1902, Bishop Messmer admitted the Sisters to the next phases of religious life respectively: novitiate, first temporary vows, renewal of temporary vows, and perpetual profession. That afternoon the eight perpetually professed Sisters, each having active and passive voice, formed a Chapter to elect the first Superior General. Sister Clara, recognizing

the highest office in the Congregation as a mother-role, advised the others that, not she, but Sister Felicia was the more suited for that office. Neither of the two, who are called co-foundresses, sought recognition; both rejoiced in what God had wrought thus far. Now they were eager for the community to grow in holiness and in numbers to fulfill its mission under whatever leadership. The Chapter elected Mother Felicia Superior General and Mother Clara her Assistant. The two who had led the founding Sisters from the beginning were called to continue their service of leadership in the development of the Congregation.

While the Sisters of St. Joseph shared prayer, bread, and companionship in community for those two weeks in early August, 1902, they affirmed one another in their response to the God of history a year earlier. They were happy that through them He was manifesting Himself as the Father of all nations. And they were eager to be sent out again among the Polish-American people in the parishes to share and to facilitate the communal struggle to be faith-fully alive in the New World: true to themselves, to one another, to the Catholic Church, and to God. The Sisters could not analyze their founding action, but they did not doubt that their response in the problematic social situation was truly Franciscan. In truth, Franciscan conversion fits the needs of promoting the kingdom of God in one's time and place. Ω

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The Sea of Loneliness

The stark land,
the loneliness,
the stretches of barren acres;
the ground hard,
unyielding,
made fruitful by a gentle rain from heaven,
and the touch
of a human hand.

The stark land,
the loneliness,
the stretches of barren faces;
the heart hard,
unyielding,
made fruitful by a gentle rain from heaven,
and the touch
of a human hand.

Robert Barbato, O.F.M.Cap.

A New Kind of Fool (1983)

SISTER NANCY SCHRECK, O.S.F.

"THE LORD HAS revealed to me to be a new kind of fool the likes of which this world has never seen."

Ages of Franciscan women have been living these words, sometimes spoken, mostly unsaid, as we sought to follow in the footprints of Jesus. They have meant for each generation redefinition, painful letting go, feelings of betrayal, exodus, new hope, and powerful witness. Both the accomplishments and the pains of the past, however, are little consolation in this day of new discovery. Stories about doing it before and doing it again wax pale in the face of questions about where this road will take us and how we can believe enough to create a new future. "God, rouse your power and come," we call feebly from our tents of uncertainty. Yet hope runs deep in us that feminine Franciscan presence has a place in the world of 1983.

What that place might be is the conjecture of this article. Based on the themes common to the Rule and the Testament, it is written to encourage other visions of the way Franciscan women are called.

The starting place and the primary gift of Franciscan women is their contemplation. To be a Franciscan woman today is to ponder the Christ, the revelation of God in one's own inner life as well as in all creation. It is to offer to each other, our Franciscan brothers, the Church, and the world the gift first given Clare and her sisters, the wisdom of our contemplation. For hundreds of years Franciscan women have been faithful stewards of this gift of contemplation, but the gift has been only partially given and received because the fruit of that contemplation has for the most part been silenced by our patriar-

Sister Nancy Schreck, O.S.F., is Director of Formation for the Sisters of St. Francis, Dubuque, Iowa.

chal Church. Words born of the deepest movements of God in women's hearts have been whispered, written in secret journals, or mostly left unsaid.

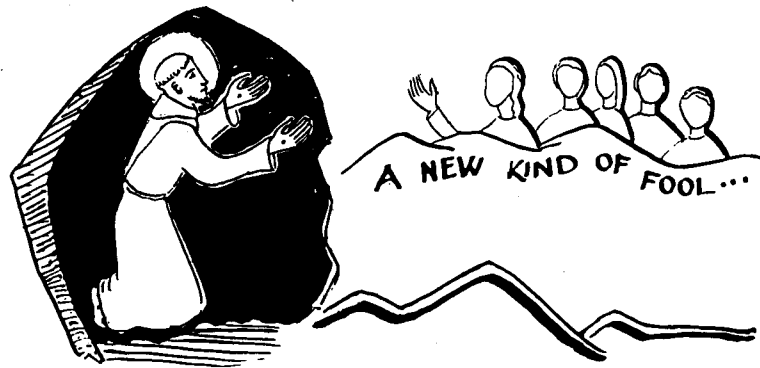
There is an urgent need for Franciscan women today to articulate what contemplation leads them to know.

There is an urgent need for Franciscan women today to articulate what contemplation leads them to know. There is need for Franciscan women, shaped and purified by their contemplation, to preach the Gospel, to do theology, to write, to speak, to make public the revelation they have received . . . to have the courage to proclaim, "The Lord has revealed to me. . . ." The Franciscan family needs to hear of a penance, conversion, peace, and poverty shaped by women's contemplative experience.

Francis, in the experience of embracing the leper and admonishing his followers to care for the sick, gives a second vision for Franciscan women today. Perhaps from their post as leprosy in a male dominated world Franciscan women have another vantage point for noticing the lepers and finding the sick. In solidarity with other oppressed peoples Franciscan women find themselves in a unique situation of embracing the little people of our society and understanding their lot. Bonded together with others in oppression, women are close to lepers; so while embrace may not be easy, it is perhaps more accessible and clearly demanded.

To be able to speak the famous "Adoramus Te" ("We adore You, O God"), is also what it means to be a Franciscan woman today. Simple words perhaps, but they cannot be said faithfully until the false gods clouding the image of God are dispelled. Patriarchal interpretations of God's name and face need to be purified from their domination in our faith so we can more clearly know and thus more fully adore our God. Although both men and women need to set themselves to this task, it is often the women touched by another experience of God in their contemplation that speak this reminder.

Francis' devotion to the Eucharist cannot be ignored when discerning the charism of Franciscan women's lives today. Thus one of the



tasks for Franciscans is an exploration of what Eucharistic devotion based on sound theology means for 1983. It seems academically well founded that Francis' great love of the Eucharist was at least in part due to a faith supported by the common belief of the day that whoever looked at the Host would not lack food for the day, or die suddenly, and if he or she should, God would look at the person as having received the Eucharist (Esser, 32). "For Francis the visibility of the sacrament is the place where he meets his invisible Master and comes close to him" (ibid.). Francis was radically faithful to what he knew of the Eucharist, and Franciscan women have an obligation to the same kind of faithfulness. This means a faithfulness that is inventive, not only imitative. A faithfulness that asks of the believing community what Eucharist means and then responds with radical abandon. As we study Eucharistic theology today we are coming to an understanding that Eucharist has as much to do with rendering Christ present in pouring out our bread for the hungry as it does with Sunday morning prayer. Eucharist is the sign of the Kingdom where people gather in justice, recognizing one another, seeing to each other's need by giving their lives for one another, remembering Jesus with grateful hearts. What would we look like if the same passion Francis had for what he understood of Eucharistic presence pulsed through our veins?

Because Francis loved the Eucharist so much he had the deepest respect for the ministers of the Sacrament. Unlike other contemporary groups who rejected sinful priests and would not recognize the sacraments administered by them, Francis trusted in them. Who are the ministers of Eucharist today? Do we come to each of these people, be they Bishop or poor peasant sharing bread, with the same kind of reverence? As Eucharistic understanding today focuses less on the role of the presider and more on the believing community, a profound

respect for each member of the community becomes the hallmark of Franciscans faithful to the spirit of Francis' loyalty. Creating an environment of care for each member of the Eucharistic community becomes a way by which Franciscans keep alive Francis' great respect for the ministers of the Sacrament. Supporting each member's gifts for Eucharist, be they men's or women's, renews the care Francis had for those he knew made the Eucharistic Lord available to him.

As with Eucharist Francis understood the Word of God and the priests who spoke it as bearers of Christ in his life. Franciscan women in 1983 need to have the same concern that the Word of God be preached and the same devotion to listening. Both are fruitfully enhanced as we commit ourselves as theologians, scripture scholars, reflectors on, and preachers of the Word. Like Francis we have a raging desire that the truth of the Word of God be proclaimed and honored. Just as carelessness and lack of respect for the Word and priests threatened the availability of the Word for the people of Francis' time and caused a response in him, so today's Franciscan women faithful to reverence for the Word of God need to challenge anything that stands in the way of proclamation, be that sexism, clericalism, materialism, or carelessness.

A sixth issue: In the warlike times in which Francis lived he took a stance of speaking peace to those he met. Esser says that it seems Franciscans understand themselves as messengers of peace in a hostile world: "a world in which the great ones are pitted against the little people, the rich against the poor, city against city, country against country . . . the Friars Minor were to complete the work of reconciling enemies and their greeting was a constant reminder of their mission" (ibid., 58). What peace-making and reconciliation involve today seems both the same and radically different from Francis' time. But to the degree that peace words, peace alternatives, peaceful solutions, and peaceful resistance mark the lives of Franciscans, we will be faithful to the gift for the Church that the Spirit bestowed upon Francis.

Francis' exhortation to his followers to work but not for wages, and to avoid idleness has been a hallmark of Franciscan women throughout the ages. How else the hospitals and schools, the children taught, the sick healed, the food served, the mission roads trampled smooth? Would that we could follow his other words with such abandon! Perhaps these are days for a renewed understanding of work and wages. Questions about the truly mendicant nature of the Order as it might contrast with the minorite ideal of life cause a rethinking about

the nature and style of our ministry and what we do with what we have. The virtuous quality that Francis ascribed to poverty and begging make Franciscan women today ask questions about security and dependence. Coupled with the early emphasis on living in poor dwellings among the outcasts, the question of poverty explodes at the roots of the self image of Franciscan women today.

We are asking ourselves where we live both in terms of where our homes are located and in terms of the other dwellings we build for ourselves, be they houses of friendship, service, or personal security. Among what people, both literally and figuratively, are we making our homes? If they be castles among the poor or huts among the rich we are daring to play games with the charism. Poor dwellings among poor people. Seldom does a founder leave such a clear legacy for the followers. Franciscan women today grapple with our poverty in understanding of the Lady Francis was devoted to. We are about calling up our courage and struggling to know how to be poor.

There is an additional theme to be addressed here in regard to the life of Franciscan women today. Francis seemed to have a resistance to monasticism or the religious life as it was understood in his day. This was not because he rejected it as a way of responding, but simply because he envisioned another style. Franciscan women know the strain of monastic models imposed and chosen in our past. As we are set free by deepening knowledge of our founding experience, it is our lot to evolve a more truly authentic Franciscan model. Here it feels as if there are no roads trodden before us, for early Franciscan women were cloistered and more recent identities were merged with that of other Orders. It feels like the Spirit is doing something new among us. The way is not clear, the vision comes slowly, and we wait. But waiting with Franciscans and with women has never been merely passive.

There is much tending to the vision happening among us, and we believe that with God we are creating of ourselves a new kind of fool the likes of which this world has never seen. Ω

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Book Reviews

Sign of Reconciliation and Conversion: The Sacrament of Penance for Our Times. By Monika K. Hellwig. Message of the Sacraments Series, n. 4. Wilmington, DE: Michael Glazier, Inc., 1982. Pp. x-152. Cloth, \$9.95; paper, \$6.95.

Reviewed by Father Daniel A. Hurley, O.F.M., M.A. (English), Assistant to the President for Community Relations at St. Bonaventure University.

The fourth in a series entitled "Message of the Sacraments," this book attempts to respond to the challenge of the Church presented by the extraordinary number of Catholic people who absent themselves from the confessional. Monika K. Hellwig, the author, is the General Editor of the series and is Professor of Theology at Georgetown University.

In the Introduction, the author states what she considers the three basic reasons why people do not go to confession as frequently as they used to: the lack of a sense of sinfulness and need of reconciliation and conversion; the lack of an understanding of mediation and especially the role of the priest; and the lack of a perception and interpretation of the penitential rites themselves (p. 2).

In a series of chapters comprising a historical investigation, the author shows that the patristic age of the

Church featured public penance and public reconciliation for those who departed from the way of life embraced at Baptism. After the patristic age, there was a movement toward private confession and private reconciliation, beginning in the monastic communities and continuing, in the English and the Welsh Church, outside the monasteries. The merger of the two traditions: public penance and private confession, led to the penitential rite that has remained somewhat continuous up through the Council of Trent to the Second Vatican Council.

In the remaining chapters, Dr. Hellwig discusses "The Efficacy of the Sacrament: Reconciliation and Conversion," "Grace, Satisfaction, and the Problem of Indulgences," "The Ministry of the Sacrament: Role of the Confessor," and "The Worldly Dimension: Reconciliation and Social Justice." The author's inference from these four chapters seems to be stated in her sentence: "Sacramental reconciliation in the Church can never be an individual affair only, but must be a community experience with personal, ecclesial, and wider social dimensions" (p. 146).

Sign of Reconciliation and Conversion is an interesting and a challenging book. The author's explanation of the problem of fewer people going to confession is worth serious consideration. The historical development she traces of the Sacrament is most interesting. The ex-

planation of the theology of the Sacrament leaves a number of questions unanswered but gives much food for thought. This reviewer recommends the book to all who want to understand the Rite of Reconciliation as promulgated by the Church after the Second Vatican Council.

Light for My Path: The New Code of Canon Law for Religious. Digest, Source Material, Commentary. By Austin Flannery, O.P., and Laurence Collins, O.P. Wilmington, DE: Michael Glazier, Inc., 1983. Pp. 160, including Glossary and Index. Cloth, \$15.00; paper, \$10.00.

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

The very title of this brief publication signifies the contemporary theological approach to the role of law in the Church community. The title does not bespeak an arid juridicism but reflects the overall purpose of canon law—to be a guide, an aid; truly, "A Light for My Path," and, I might add, "for my ministry."

The authors begin with a succinct history of the revision of the religious law section of the Code; in doing so, they wisely include the special principles underlying the composition of the canons on religious life (these, in addition to the guidelines for the entire Code as formally approved by the 1967 Synod of Bishops). One such principle worth noting here: no

discrimination between male and female institutes. While the actual Code represents a vast improvement over the 1917 Code in this regard, there was a failure to apply this in the actual task of revision—no women religious sat on the subcommittee revising religious law.

The history section also relates the criticisms of the initial draft of 1977 (insufficient distinction between religious and secular institutes; the classification of the various types of religious communities; failure to respect the charism and nature of each institute; and an overly uniform approach reflected in the general norms applicable to all institutes).

At this juncture, it is helpful to note that the term *institutes of consecrated life* in the new Code includes both religious and secular institutes, while societies of apostolic life are treated separately—distinguishing them both from religious institutes properly so-called (absence of public vows) and from secular institutes (the observance of common life).

Another preliminary segment lists the principal conciliar and post-conciliar documents relevant to religious life which will be quoted in the course of the commentary itself.

There follows the body of the book—namely, canons 573-746 of the revised Code, with a very brief canonical commentary on selected canons. It was the explicit intention of the authors to leave a more in-depth, detailed study to others; likewise, much of what is worth commenting upon is found in the ecclesiastical documents often quoted after a given canon.

And this brings us to what, in my judgment, is the fundamental value

and contribution of the book: providing a theological, ecclesial, and ascetical context for many of the revised canons—a setting so necessary, if one is properly to understand, interpret, and live by the norms of the new Code, especially those laws guiding the living of religious life in the post-conciliar Church. Also of tremendous assistance is the system of cross-references, in the commentary, to other canons and documents that are linked to the canon under discussion.

Some highlights of the actual commentary: a succinct theological rationale of the relationship between Baptism and the profession of religious vows; the role of the Church in authoritatively interpreting the evangelical counsels and in regulating their practice; an interesting explanation for the different religious institutes: different gifts of the Spirit; a reiteration of the theory that the Pope may command a religious under the vow of obedience; preliminary discussion on candidates for office is not excluded, so as to ensure that the more qualified persons are elected; at a canonical visitation, a manifestation of conscience cannot be required by the visitor (i.e., a revelation of internal acts or acts not known to others, though external in nature); a concise explanation of the concept of alienation of property and occasions when permission of the Holy See is required; the competency of an institute to add its own requisites for valid admission (beyond those of common law) and also to append "conditions"—i.e., norms for licit admission.

There is an interesting excerpt from one of the ecclesiastical

documents on the power of religious superiors (cited under canon 569, ¶1): the role of the superior is likened to the threefold pastoral ministry of teaching, sanctifying, and governing (cf. the document of the Holy See, "Directives for Mutual Relations between Bishops and Religious in the Church," April 23, 1978).

I found it surprising that no commentary was offered on two topics in particular, given recent developments in these twin areas: the duration of novitiate (canon 648) and activities prohibited to religious (canon 672).

The book concludes with an Appendix, excerpting canons from other sections of the Code that are pertinent to religious life (elections and the general norms of ecclesiastical governance) and with a helpful glossary of technical canonical terms.

I feel obliged to raise a few minor criticisms of the work: the use of the term *Norms on Religious Life* instead of its more customary designation *Ecclesiae Sanctae* when referring to the 1966 *Motu Proprio* of Paul VI implementing four of the conciliar Decrees; the needless reduplication of quotations from the supplemental documentation within a few pages of each other (e.g., pp. 117 and 123). Finally, the American reader might be taken off guard by the use of some words common in the British Isles but rare in the U.S.: e.g., fortnight, visitate.

All in all, this book will be worthwhile for the ordinary reader (certainly not for the specialist), particularly for its English rendering of the canons on religious life and above all (as previously indicated) for the inclusion of background documenta-

tion. This is, indeed, a worthy first step in the on-going task of popularizing, interpreting, and understanding the role of religious life as reflected in the Code of 1983.

Walking with Loneliness. By Paula Ripple, R.S.P.A. Notre Dame, IN: Ave Maria Press, 1982. Pp. 159. Paper, \$4.95.

Reviewed by Father John C. Frambes, O.F.M., M.Div (Christ the King Seminary, East Aurora, NY), Vicar of the Siena College Community and Director of the Career Resources Center at Siena College.

Loneliness is a factor in every person's life. Given that, Paula Ripple invites her readers to receive loneliness as a mystery that calls each of us to personal growth. One expects that *Walking with Loneliness* will not describe loneliness as a brooding evil to be avoided at all costs, and it does not. Loneliness is more than a backdrop providing a contrast for good times and making us grateful; loneliness is rather a "demanding companion."

This companion on our journey is the sister of fidelity and responsibility. Without them the Christian does not grow in maturity. Loneliness demands an ever deepened commitment to our baptismal vocation. Baptism means not only that we are irrevocably embraced by the love of God, but also that we are ordained as companions to every person. This companionship is rooted in Christ.

Ripple does not dwell excessively on the theological or metaphysical, although her insights are clear and

pleasing in their simple expression. The real virtue of this book is its practicality. Ripple views the commonplace with a penetrating vision. Her experiences are common to us all, and her insights make us want to look deeper into the events of our own lives.

In recent years, storytelling has achieved new prominence as a didactic tool in spirituality and popular theology. Accordingly, Ripple's book is filled with anecdotes. Airport stories abound. Always to the point, they tend to be too perfect, like the stories provided by homiletic services. Despite this characteristic, *Walking with Loneliness* is worthwhile reading for those trying to understand the place of loneliness in their lives.

Day by Day: Reflections for Each Day of the Year. By Pope John Paul II. Edited by Angelo Pisani. New York: Paulist Press, 1982. Pp. vi-224, including index. Paper, \$5.95.

Reviewed by Friar Michael J. Taylor, O.F.M.Conv., a student for the priesthood at St. Anthony-on-Hudson, Rensselaer, New York.

In yet another publication, the public is treated to the intimate spiritual insights of Pope John Paul II. This collection of meditations for every day of the year was originally published in 1980 in the Italian language and translated into English in 1982. The majority of the meditations stem from the Holy Father's personal reflections, while in other parts of the book, the editor deemed

it appropriate to include parts of John Paul's addresses during his visits to Brazil, Germany, and the United States.

The strengths and richness of this book are various. The Holy Father draws on his experiences as pastor, scholar, and chief shepherd of the Church to give the reader a daily insight into the spiritual life from a variety of perspectives. A number of the meditations center directly on the liturgical seasons of the year, especially the seasons of Advent and Lent. Other meditations emerge in more of an extemporaneous fashion that keeps the reader alert to the varied facets of any person's spiritual journey through life.

Among the variety of themes that the Pope seems to be fond of reflecting upon are the primacy of Christ, the role of the Blessed Mother within the life of the Christian, the dignity of man, and the Eucharist. Some revelations and life experiences of John Paul shine forth in parts of the book, such as on February 26th as he writes of his love of song as a means of praising the Lord and on May 2nd as he shares some thoughts on motherhood from the cultural viewpoint of his native Poland.

Each meditation is written in a short, concise, and easy-to-read style. With a topical index in the back of the book, this work might prove to be helpful as a resource for weekday homilies or for those who are looking for a way to take a few moments out of a busy day to spend some reflective moments with the Lord.



Contemplation. By Francis Kelly Nemeck, O.M.I., and Maria Theresa Coombs, Hermit. Ways of Prayer Series, n. 5. Wilmington, DE: Michael Glazier, Inc., 1982. Pp. 151, including bibliography. Cloth, \$8.95; paper, \$4.95.

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

Volume 5 in the "Ways of Prayer" series is an instructive and lucid account of the normal route to contemplative prayer. Beginning with the "Universal Call to Holiness," the authors discuss the spirit of prayer, progress in prayer, true and false contemplation, the role of the faculties of the soul, and principles of discernment (two chapters). After a pause to consider the question of the role of meditation in a prayer state that is habitually contemplative, the difficulties experienced by contemplatives undergoing the transition from discursive to contemplative prayer are described. Successive chapters take up the problem of reconciling the actual desire for solitude and achieving solitude in the light of responsibilities in community, the relation of contemplation to asceticism, the fruits of contemplation, the integration of prayer and life, and contemplation as ministry.

The authors draw heavily on John of the Cross and Thomas Merton, but their bibliography indicates that they have consulted a wide range of authors, including some in the Fran-

ciscan tradition. Spiritual directors can well profit from this work, as can many individuals aspiring to the call to holiness in the practice of contemplative prayer.

Addendum

In the review of *Call to Discipleship*, on page 253 of our September issue, the author's name was unfortunately omitted. The book was written by Father Augustine Stock, O.S.B.

Franciscan Prayer Life: The Franciscan Active-Contemplative Synthesis and the Role of Centers of Prayer. By Ronald M. Mrozinski, O.F.M.Conv. Chicago: Franciscan Herald Press, 1981. Pp. xv-186. Cloth, \$12.50.

Reviewed by Sister Mary Therese Sedlock, O.S.F., Director of Our Lady of Solitude, diocesan contemplative House of Prayer in Phoenix, Arizona.

After a period of shifting some externals, Vatican II's renewal of religious life has entered a cyclic inward movement, and words such as "integration" and "synthesis" have taken on new meaning not only as words but as life values. *Franciscan Prayer Life* investigates this call to a deeper life of prayer. Because this call is not restricted to Franciscans alone, this book has a quiet, impelling message which re-echoes the living Word praying within each of us. We,

like Francis, are called to adoration, praise of the All-Holy. We, like Francis, are called to that integration of allowing communion with the All-Good, ALL-Holy to flow into apostolic ministry: contemplation in that Mystery is the source and overflow of outreach to others.

Fr. Ronald wrote this book as a thesis for his doctorate of spiritual theology, but rather than appear as a dissertation readable only by scholars in the field, its structure makes for clear, thoughtful, and inspiring reading for all.

The first chapter or sector is "Francis of Assisi before the All-Holy God," a prayer-provoking exposé of Francis' life, his evangelical, incarnational spirituality. The next section, "The Notion of a 'Holy Place' as a Place in which to contact the All-Holy God and Its Importance to St. Francis of Assisi," researches what sacred space meant to the monk, canon and hermit, and compares that to Francis' conception of sacred space. Francis, the pilgrim, chose relative sacred space over the absolute, and thus the lifestyle of the early friars remained open to both the Holy and the world. This mobility enabled them to have the world as their cloister. Human nature being what it is, Francis himself founded over twenty hermitages for purposes of renewal and interiorization of the Gospel message, for fidelity to one's sacred space within.

The author then devotes some twenty pages to considering the role hermitages play in the active/contemplative synthesis, taking special care to elucidate Francis' *Rule for Hermitages* by an exegetical study of this "Rule." His strong thesis is

that the hermitage for the Friar Minor was not a place for a recluse life, but was still world-affirming. Within its womb of fraternity and love, "contemplative living" summed up the active/contemplative synthesis in the Franciscan tradition and gave new life to eremitical solitude and contemplation of the Word Incarnate in the marketplace. The hermitage had an important place in Francis' life, for it was the means to achieve that attitude of St. Francis: the contemplative approach to life, the milieu of communion with the Trinity for the sanctification of the world.

Not only Franciscans but all will find that link joining penance, prayer, and preaching characteristic of their own life with God which renders one pure of heart. This daily continual life of penance (*μετανοια*), Fr. Ronald writes, disposes one to becoming possessed by God in contemplative communion. This union overflows in preaching the Word and ministering Jesus to others, thereby calling for even deeper *μετανοια* and one's acknowledgment as sinful creature before the All-Holy. Living this way is contemplative living; activity is not in opposition but joins in the marriage of the active/contemplative synthesis.

The second half of the book deals with Franciscan houses of prayer (which the author prefers to call Centers of Prayer) and their fidelity to Francis' vision. In answer to the what, the why, of houses of prayer, he draws heavily from the first house of prayer movement in Monroe, Michigan, and Fr. Bernard Häring's writings on the matter. The theological perspective of Franciscan

Houses of Prayer should be trinitarian, incarnational, affective, he maintains, if it is to be true to Franciscan spirituality, which means an openness to and solidarity with the world. He then offers his first-hand observations as a past member of a Franciscan House of Prayer.

The concluding chapter, "Towards Franciscan Centers of Prayer," is quite in keeping with the Franciscan ideals set forth in the preceding pages. "Open," "closed" centers of prayer, "temporary," "permanent" types of Franciscan houses of prayer are evaluated. While Fr. Ronald acknowledges that these speculative ideas remain to be tested and while he maintains that permanent closed centers of prayer aid in the Franciscan active/contemplative synthesis, his research was limited by taking into consideration only the Friars Minor houses of prayer. Franciscan Sisters' houses of prayer in the "cloister of the world" are noticeably overlooked here, and thereby this research is impoverished.

This particular lacuna does not, however, take away from the fact that this book is an excellent and much-welcomed active/contemplative synthesis of Franciscan Prayer Life. For years Franciscans have been attempting to spell out the active-contemplative dimension of their lives. It is now here in a thought-provoking book which tends to call the reader to accountability and to call forth the enfleshing of its message in his or her own life/prayer. Fr. Ronald offers his "bit of research as the beginning to the renewal of Franciscan contemplative living in the world today," and he challenges us, in the words of Francis, "while we

have time let us do good, for up until now we have done nothing!" We are grateful for this invitation to a rediscovery of the Gospel-life of penance, prayer, preaching, and the integration of the active and contemplative dimensions of life with and in the All-Holy Triune God.

This is a worthwhile addition to all

libraries of Franciscan convents and friaries. Those not of the Franciscan family will also welcome the book because Francis' "spirituality" is so universal in its evangelical emphasis and Christocentrism, and because his charism of integrating the active and the contemplative is that for which all hearts thirst.

Books Received

- Bagiackas, Joseph, *The Future Glory: The Charismatic Renewal and the Implementation of Vatican II*. South Bend, IN: Charismatic Renewal Services, 1983. Pp. x-130. Paper, \$3.95.
- Bonansea, Bernardine M., O.F.M., *Man and His Approach to God in John Duns Scotus*. Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 1983. Pp. vii-249, including Appendix, Bibliography, and Index. Paper, no price given.
- Burke, John, O.P., ed., *A New Look at Preaching*. Good News Studies, n. 7. Wilmington, DE: Michael Glazier, Inc., 1983. Pp. 163. Paper, \$6.95.
- Crews, Clyde F., *Fundamental Things Apply: Reflecting on Christian Basics*. Foreword by Paula Ripple, F.S.P.A. Notre Dame, IN: Ave Maria Press, 1983. Pp. 104. Paper, \$3.95.
- Curran, Dolores, *Family Prayer*. Cincinnati: St. Anthony Messenger Press, 1983. Pp. vi-137, including Index. Paper, \$5.95.
- Fourez, Gerard, S.J., *Sacraments and Passages: Celebrating the Tensions of Modern Life*. Notre Dame, IN: Ave Maria Press, 1983. Pp. 165, including Appendix. Paper, \$4.95.
- Hanley, Boniface F., O.F.M., *20th Century Christian Heroes: No Strangers to Violence, No Strangers to Love*. Notre Dame, IN: Ave Maria Press, 1983. Pp. 224; photos. Paper, \$6.95.
- Hinwood, Bonaventure, O.F.M., *More Answers to Your Questions*. Cape Town, South Africa: Human and Rousseau, 1983. Pp. 119. Paper, no price given.
- O'Neill, Dennis, *Lazarus Interlude: A Story of God's Healing Love in a Moment of Ministry*. Notre Dame, IN: Ave Maria Press, 1983. Pp. 80. Paper, \$2.95.
- Ranaghan, Kevin and Dorothy, *Catholic Pentecostals Today*. Revised ed. South Bend, IN: Charismatic Renewal Services, 1983. Pp. x-196. Paper, \$4.95.
- Tillard, J.M.R., O.P., *The Bishop of Rome*. Theology and Life Series, n. 5. Wilmington, DE: Michael Glazier, Inc., 1983. Pp. xii-242, including Index. Cloth, \$17.95; paper, \$12.95.

Fool's White

by John Alexander Abucewicz

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Correction

We regret the typographical error which, on our October cover, resulted in the substitution of Sister "Mary" Celaschi for the author's correct name, Sister Nancy Celaschi.