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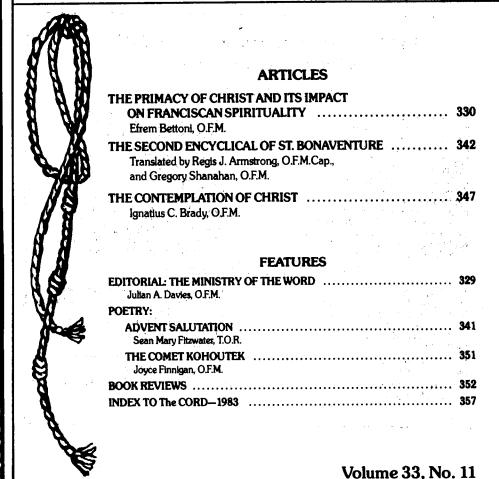
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#### FRANCISCAN PATHWAYS

The Franciscan Institute St. Bonaventure University St. Bonaventure, NY 14778 DECEMBER, 1983

# The CORD

## A FRANCISCAN SPIRITUAL REVIEW



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The drawings for our December issue have been furnished by Sister Jane Madejczyk, O.S.F., a native of Chicago and Wheaton Franciscan who holds a Master of Fine Arts Degree from the University of Pennsylvania.

## 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
Form Viv: 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
RegBr: 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 Fior: Little Flowers of St. Francis LM: Bonaventure, Major Life of Francis LMin: Bonaventure, Minor Life of Francis LP: Legend of Perugis 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** 



## The Ministry of the Word

THIS PAST SUMMER, while praying the Office of Readings for Saint Lawrence, the following text leaped out at me: "It is not right for us to neglect the word of God in order to wait on tables" (Acts 6:2). The context, of course, is the appointment of the first deacons in the Church to take over the daily food distributions to the needy, so that the apostles, as Peter continues, might "concentrate on prayer and the ministry of the word."

I hear a reminder to myself that as an ordained priest I have a responsibility, a charism given to me, an office for which I have been set aside: the preaching of God's Word. That means that whether I am in the classroom teaching, at a bedside in the hospital consoling, or in the parlor counseling, I am offering to people the Good News of Jesus Christ, at least by my style if not by explicit content. It means, furthermore, that important as these other ministries are, they must not so absorb me that I have no time to preach a Day of Recollection, give a retreat, or prepare homilies.

If I take on service of the poor, whether by offering them lodging, or food, or comfort, I must not fail to deliver to them—and to all I can—"the Gospel of Salvation." A "preferential option for the poor," to which Franciscans are invited today more than ever, does not mean an option away from preaching, or even less an option away from administering the Sacraments, especially the Eucharist and Reconciliation, which sate the deepest hunger of man and alleviate the worst poverty, that of the spirit.

We friars need to remember that Francis put aside the service of lepers in order to be an itinerant preacher of the kingdom and part time contemplative as was Jesus Christ. And he wrote into his Rule a special chapter about preachers and preaching. Liberation from the

Continued on page 346)

## Duns Scotus' Doctrine on the Primacy of Christ and its Impact on Franciscan Spirituality

EFREM BETTONI, O.F.M.

THE INTENSE AND deep-rooted love for the God-man, which has  $oldsymbol{1}$  played such an important role in Franciscan piety, reaches its summit, as well as its full expression, in Duns Scotus' doctrine on the primacy of Christ. It was logical, if not inevitable, that the sons of Saint Francis, after having devoted so much time to the discovery of the most fascinating aspects of the humanity of the Son of God to make them known to the Christian people, would rise, by a spontaneous movement of their souls, to ever more profound and daring reflections on the unfathomable mystery of Christ. This was the result of their Father's insistence on the need of focusing their lives, their preaching, and their devotion on the Incarnate Word. It was to be expected, in other words, that the Christocentric piety of Saint Francis and his immediate followers, expressed at first in the popular and refreshing poetry of the "Lauds," would become the source of constant theological meditations as soon as it had been implanted into the hearts of intensely intellectual men.

It is no surprise, therefore, that John Duns Scotus, who from an early age had been initiated into the Franciscan way of life and was endowed with a powerful speculative mind, took upon himself the task of developing to their ultimate consequences the religious intuitions that lay at the basis of the spiritual and theological tradition of his Order. In so doing, he arrived logically at the doctrine of the absolute predestination of Christ that sums up and justifies, on a theological level, all the Christocentric themes of Franciscan life and spirituality.

Father Bernardino M. Bonansea, O.F.M., translator of this essay, has taught philosophy, especially its theological aspects, for many years at Villanova University and at the Catholic Univerity of America. His most recent books are God and Atheism, already reviewed in our pages, and Man and His Approaches to God in John Duns Scotus, recently received for review. This essay originally appeared in Quaderni di spiritualità francescana, vol. 12: "La vita spirituale nel pensiero di Giovanni Duns Scoto" (Assisi: Tipografia Porziuncola, 1966), 38–51. It is here reprinted in its entirety (except for two final paragraphs on Roger Bacon) with permission.

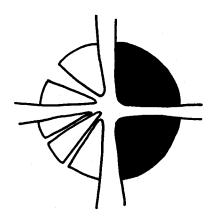
## 1. Christ at the Center of the Creative Plan

FOR THE BENEFIT of the reader, I would like to present a brief outline of the Scotistic thesis and illustrate some of its implications. As is well known, the principal novelty of this theological doctrine consists in dissociating the Incarnation of the Son of God from the unhappy event of original sin. At Duns Scotus' time, theologians used to present the question in the following terms: If Adam had not sinned, would the Son of God have become man? The answer to this question was, with few exceptions, in the negative. The principal argument advanced to justify such a position was that both Sacred Scripture and Patristic Tradition seem to indicate that the Incarnation is the way chosen by God to give man the means of offering him adequate reparation for the sin committed by his first progenitors. This, it was felt, was also the means by which, according to the original plan of the divine will, man could restore his friendship with God and show once more his love for him.

The Son of God, the Incarnate Word, on whom the entire edifice of the material and spiritual universe is built as on its cornerstone, is present and acts among us as a leaven that permeates, saves, and transforms everything.

This view of the mystery of the Incarnation has, in my opinion, several disadvantages. The first is the placing of man at the center of God's creative plan. In fact, in this conception God's operations "ad extra" would converge on man, who would thus not only sum up in himself and give meaning to all forms of life and all values within the sensible universe, but would also appear to be the point toward which the entire supernatural order would gravitate. Thus everything would have been disposed for the perfection and happiness of man. When Adam refused to cooperate with the plan of his Creator, God would have had recourse to the Incarnation and sacrifice of his only begotten

Son as a form of reparation for the infraction of his plan. In this view, the primary end of God's operations "ad extra" no longer seems to be the manifestation of the divine goodness but rather the salvation of mankind. In other words, God would have decided to achieve the end of creation, i.e., his own external glorification, only through the praise and love of human creatures.



Now if we consider the fact that no created good is comparable to the supreme work of God (summum Opus Dei) which is the Incarnate Word, and that the least act of love and adoration of Jesus Christ surpasses in merit and glory all the acts of praise and adoration that men and angels together could offer to God, then we will see that the hypothesis of the Incarnation as willed by God to repair the

damage caused by sin becomes altogether improbable. For, if that were the case, we would have to conclude that God subordinates a greater good to a lesser one and that the incommensurable good of the Incarnation—the supreme manifestation of God's infinite love—would have been occasioned by sin. Would not this be tantamount to saying that man, by sinning, instead of calling upon himself a punishment, would have merited not only a reward, but a reward of inestimable value?

There are many other incongruities that could be brought out in connection with a plan of salvation in which the predestination of Christ is subordinated to the reality of sin. Let us assume, with the common teaching of theologians, that the malice of sin is intrinsically infinite and that only a reparation of an infinite value could adequately atone for it. Then we may ask: How can God be called infinitely good if he subordinates the forgiveness of sin to the offering of a proportionate and perfectly adequate reparation? Is it not repugnant to our sensibility to say that God "gave to the world his only begotten Son" only to place him in the hands of his creatures as a victim to be offered in expiation for sin? Only on one condition, it seems to me, could the love that induced the Father to send his Son into the world be reconciled with his will to make it possible for a creature to offer him a valid and worthy sacrifice. And that is, if it were altogether evi-

dent that, in order not to forego any of his infinite perfections, God ought to demand of man an infinite reparation. But, to the best of my knowledge, no theologian has dared to advance such a theory.

He who properly evaluates the difficulties encountered by a theologian who, in his attempt to discover, as far as is possible for the human mind, the impenetrable harmony of the divine mysteries, weighs and considers all the implications of the traditional view of the mystery of Christ, will not be surprised to find out that in the course of the centuries some theologians have tried to rethink and perhaps to understand better the whole plan of salvation. This they did in a way that appears to be more acceptable to human reason and Christian sensibility. Among such attempts, the one by John Duns Scotus is particularly noticeable because of its impact on the history of theology, its exquisitely Franciscan inspiration, and, above all, because of the solidity of the theological principles on which it rests. Scotus' primary merit consists in his reformulation of the problem by shifting his attention from a purely hypothetical issue to a concrete, realistic one. Instead of asking, as was commonly done in his day, "Whether the Son of God would have become man if Adam had not sinned," he proposed the question in the following terms: "Why was the Incarnate Word, this masterpiece of the creative Wisdom, willed by God?" In his answer, Scotus looks at the issue from the point of view of the God of the Gospel, as a theologian should do, and not from the viewpoint of the God of philosophers. Now since the Gospel presents us with a concept of God as substantial and unfailing love, the answer to the guestion can be only this: Christ was willed by God because God is infinite love.

In fact, if we admit, on the one hand, that the end of all God's operations "ad extra" is the manifestation, on a level other than the Trinitarian, of the infinite plenitude and incommensurable fecundity of his essence; and if we admit, on the other hand, that God, in creating, could have no other objective than the bringing of other participants into the ecstatic dialogue of love that goes on from all eternity within the bosom of the most holy Trinity, it is absurd to think that in decreeing the Incarnation and predestination of Christ God could have had a different purpose.

The following reflection may help support this view. Christ, as the God-man—that is, as the human creature hypostatically united with the Divinity, realizes in himself two absolute and unrepeatable primacies. First, he is the creature to which the Divinity communicated itself in its fullness and in which the creative act of God

reaches its absolute summit. Secondly, he is the creature that, by virtue of the hypostatic union, is able to know and love God in the most fitting and perfect way possible. This double primacy seems to indicate that at the origin of Christ's predestination there was a decree of the divine will by which a being would be brought into existence that would, at one and the same time, be the supreme terminus of God's communications "ad extra" and the best interlocutor in the loving dialogue that, by creation, God intended to extend beyond the Trinitarian circle.

The certainty that God is love by his very essence forces us to admit not only that at the root of all divine operations there is always and solely a motive or intent of love, but also that God, precisely because he loves in a divine way, must love in a wise and orderly manner and with due consideration to the hierarchy of values. From this it seems to follow that God would not be rationabilissime volens, i.e., willing in a most reasonable way, and his love would not be in accord with the laws of his wisdom, if he had not willed and predestined Christ prior to and independently of any other creature; in other words, if Christ were not, as Saint Paul calls him "the Firstborn of all creation" (Col. 1:15).

Since Christ is as man the created being capable of loving God to the supreme degree and of glorifying the Father in an adequate, infinite manner, it is only logical to say that he occupies the first place among all creatures. He is thus the foundation and cornerstone of all creation and the very reason for the divine plan manifested in it. These are the reflections that led Duns Scotus to lay down with a certain audacity the decree of the divine love in a remarkable theological text that shows not only a profound insight but also a great synthetic power:

Therefore, I argue this way: First, God loves himself; in the second place, he loves himself in others, and this is pure love; in the third place, he wants to be loved by another who can love him to the highest degree, inasmuch as that is possible to a being outside himself; and finally, he foresees the [hypostatic] union of that nature which ought to love him to the highest degree even if man had not fallen.

This is then the order in the foreknowledge of God: First, God knows himself as the supreme good; secondly, he knows all other beings and creatures; thirdly, he predestines to glory and grace [those who are to be saved], while in a purely negative way he does not predestine the others; fourthly, he has foreknowledge of all those who would fall as a result of the sin of Adam; and finally, he foresees and preordains the

remedy [for sin], namely, that men would be redeemed through the passion of his Son. Thus the Christ-man, as well as all the elect, was foreseen and predestined to grace and glory even prior to foreseeing his passion as a remedy against the fall, just as a physician has a greater interest in the health of a patient than in prescribing medicine for him

Authorities [to the contrary] can all be explained in this sense: namely, that Christ would not have come as a Redeemer if man had not sinned. Perhaps, too, he would not have come in a body capable of suffering, since there would have been no need for his soul to be united to a passible body if no Redemption were necessary. The soul of Christ was, in effect, glorified from its very beginning and predestined by God not only to the highest glory but also to a glory that is coextensive with its existence [Scaramuzzi, 174–76].

In the Scotistic perspective of the two unshakable theological principles that God is love and is the most perfectly and orderly love, the Incarnate Word is willed directly and before everything else; he marks the beginning of God's operations "ad extra." He is the foundation of the creative and redeeming plan of God and the center on which both the natural and supernatural orders converge. Only of a Christ so understood can we truly say, with Paul, that he is "the only Mediator between God and man," "the Firstborn of all creation,"



and "the Head of the Body, i.e., the Church." Only of a Christ so understood can we affirm that "in him everything in heaven and on earth was created, things visible and invisible . . .; everything was created through him and for him; he is before all else that is and in him everything continues in being" (Col. 1:16–17). Finally, only of a Christ so understood can it be said that God, in his infinite mercy, "chose us in him before the world began . . ., predestined us through him to be his adopted sons . . ., that all might praise the glorious favor he has bestowed on us in his beloved" (Eph. 1:4–6).

## 2. Theological Implications of the Christocentric Doctrine

THE DOCTRINE according to which God's manifestations "ad extra" are focused on the predestination of the Incarnate Word from whom and

through whom they irradiate over all other creatures, i.e., angels, men, and the infinite variety of the beings that make up the universe, has many and profound theological implications. Specifically, all the truths that we, as Christians, accept by revelation, when seen in this perspective, seem to acquire a new light and a greater degree of plausibility, because they appear to us as the moments of a coherent and unified plan. Some factual examples will help us explain my point.

On many occasions, when trying to explain that the existence of a multiplicity of beings distinct from God can be understood only in terms of an act by which God decides to share with others the joy of existing, knowing, and loving, I was asked this question: "If God creates out of love and in order to manifest his goodness outside of himself, how can you explain the existence of so many imperfections and so much unhappiness in the world? Why is man so limited, frail, and miserable to the point of falling victim to evil and sin?" This objection is not to be taken lightly. The experience of sin and suffering, as we all know, has always been a stumbling block to those who want to embrace the Christian faith. The objection loses its strength, however, once we accept the view that, according to the plan of God, creation is centered on the mystery of the Incarnation. What, indeed, is the meaning of the Incarnation? It means that God is so close to his creation and so much involved in it, that he shares the vicissitudes of the life of his creatures by offering to them, at the very moment in which, through creation, he sets them apart from himself, the means to overcome the ontological and moral deficiencies that result from their metaphysical distance from him. In other words, God offers his creatures the means to return, through a conscious and earnest desire, to the bosom of his beatifying Divinity.

Another consideration is in order. Christian revelation teaches us that God treats his creatures not only as a Creator but also as a Father. To know the extent of God's love and care for us, we must remember that, in Saint John's words, we are called and we really are children of God (filii Dei nominamur et sumus); we have been created for a supernatural end and, as Saint Peter says, we are destined to become sharers of the divine nature itself (divinae consortes naturae). Even this extreme condescension, by which God deigned to throw a bridge of grace across the infinite abyss that separates him from his creatures and willed to join man to himself by the most intimate bond that could possibly exist between the finite and the infinite, even this condescension, let me repeat, becomes much more understandable in the

perspective of the Scotistic doctrine.

The following statement by a prominent contemporary theologian will help illustrate this point.

God willed that the interior communication of His nature and essence should be projected and continued outside of Himself in all its infinity. He willed that a bearer of created nature, and in particular of human nature, which is the epitome of all others, should also be the bearer of His own divine nature and essence. Since this could be done in no other way than that the Son, who had received the divine nature from Him, should assume a human nature, He willed that a bearer of the divine nature should become also a bearer of human nature. Thus God extended to a man the relationship of natural fatherhood in which He stands to the Son of His bosom, in that He begot His Son not only in the interior of His bosom, but also in the outer world, in a created, human nature. . . .

But only the Son, identical in nature with the Father, is able to honor and glorify God in His entire greatness. He alone, as the Father's essential Word, can express the entire majesty of the Father; He alone, as the Father's substantial image, can manifest the Father; and He alone can return the Father's infinite love with equal love [Scheeben, 358].

Thus the Fatherhood of God becomes the foundation of the possibility of the supernatural order. From this truth another follows immediately: viz., that the carrying out or actualization of this supernatural design will have the same foundation. It will be the actual existence of a Son generated, not only within God's bosom but also in a created human nature, that will initiate that form of communication of the divine nature to creatures, in which God manifests the infinite generating fecundity that is being consumed within the mystery of the Trinity.

The reason why the miracle of the Incarnation has become the condition for our supernatural vocation has been made known by Christ himself when he said: "No one knows the Father except the Son and anyone to whom the Son wishes to reveal him" (Lk. 10:22); "No one comes to the Father but through me" (Jn. 14:6). What do these statements amount to? They amount to saying that our predestination to the sonship of God would have been ineffective, so to speak, (1) if the only-begotten Son of the Father had not become our brother and teacher, (2) if he had not come down from heaven to earth to disclose to us the loving plan of God and made us aware of our supernatural destiny; and (3) if he had not taught us, both by his example and by his word, the way to attain to heaven and thus to be united with him and his Father.

It must be admitted that many people, when confronted with this new and challenging theological perspective, are somewhat perplexed. They are afraid that the prominence given to the mystery of the Incarnation might diminish the importance of the redemptive sacrifice of Christ. Is not the commonly accepted thesis that Christ was sent by the Father to bring men back to the right path and offer himself as a victim of expiation for their sins a more comforting and inspiring doctrine? After all, do we not profess in the Creed: "Who for us men and for our salvation came down from heaven and became man"?

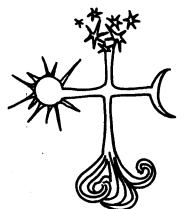
Yet, if we approach the mystery of the Redemption from the point of view of the Christocentric doctrine of Franciscan theology, we can see that, far from losing its appeal to the Christian and religious soul, the Redemption may have an even greater appeal. We must look at it, however, from a different perspective. Whereas, in the traditional view, the Redemption was considered primarily as a drama of justice, in this new theory it becomes a drama of the purest and most unselfish love. This means that, instead of a demanding God who, even in his love, does not hesitate to sacrifice his beloved Son in order to restore the rights of justice, we have now a Father who in his infinite wisdom devises a perfect plan of salvation that is not only unshakable but also impervious to any external influence. Likewise, instead of a Son who, out of love but also for reasons of justice, offers himself as a victim for the sins of the world to the point of seeing in it the only reason for his existence, we have a Son who, perfectly aware of the infinite goodness of his Father, endures the Cross freely to show his brothers the extent of his Father's love for them. In other words, Christ makes reparation for the sins of men by dying out of love and thus teaching them the incommensurable superiority of heavenly joys over earthly goods.

In this conception, we see the gradual disappearance of those aspects of the mystery of the Redemption that make it appear like the fulfillment of a reparation willed by divine justice, while those positive aspects are properly emphasized that turn the Redemption into a drama of love. We also see in it the meeting point of God's love for creatures and of the creatures' love for God, or, even better, the intertwining of two loves that, while equally free, absolute, beneficial, and universal, are mutually agreeable and combine to form a perfect unity.

## 3. Ascetical Implications of the Primacy of Christ

FOR A FRANCISCAN SOUL the program contained in Christ's

affirmation, "Only one is your teacher, the Messiah," has a permanent vitality, with all the implications that Saint Bonaventure has clearly pointed out in one of his sermons (cf. Opera omnia V, 567–74). But the last and definitive justification of the uninterrupted attention given to the mysteries of the life of Christ that so well characterizes Franciscan spirituality, is offered to us only by the Christocentric doctrine of Duns Scotus. In it the God-man becomes the center of the divine operations and the starting point for any attempt to understand the divine nature and "God's secret plan . . . unknown to men in former ages" (Eph. 3:3–5) that is being gradually unfolded in the universe and in history.



Christ is not only the model and inspiration for a pious person whose concern is the sanctification of every instant and every act of his or her everyday life. He is not only the interior teacher to whom every serious person, who wants to preserve the meaning of religious and moral values, must continuously listen. He is also the point of reference for philosophers and scientists who, in their quest for the meaning of the cosmos, are anxious

to know the ultimate reasons of the historical events in which we are all involved, as well as the ultimate purpose of our existence. Thus in the Scotistic theory the title of "medium scientiarum" (center of all sciences) that Saint Bonaventure attributed to Christ, acquires a new, unsuspected meaning that fits perfectly into the role of Christ as the center of the universe. And even Saint Francis' optimistic attitude toward creatures receives confirmation and strength in such a theory. Furthermore, the conviction that God's creative plan is centered on the absolute predestination of Christ, along with the certainty that the God-man controls, and is somehow responsible for, all events, cannot but inspire a high degree of confidence and joy and preserve us from discouragement and despair.

No matter how tortuous and devious human ways may appear, caught as we are in a social and political environment that can be very painful and confusing; no matter how dim the prospects may be for the future on account of widespread incomprehensions that, along with all forms of egoism and pride, obstruct the march of truth and

love, nothing will be able to extinguish the interior flame of our hope. We take comfort, in fact, in the firm belief that the power of God is, and always was, at work in creation; that the Son of God, the Incarnate Word, on whom the entire edifice of the material and spiritual universe is built as on its cornerstone, is present and acts among us as a leaven that permeates, saves, and transforms everything. We believe that the Father has given him power over all creatures, that he may bestow eternal life on all those who have been given to him (Jn. 17:2), just as we believe that there is in all things a kind of reflection of Christ's grace that needs only to be discovered and used for building up the kingdom of God.

It is precisely because of this conviction that, for us Franciscans, the invitation of the Second Vatican Council to look at the world with sympathy in the quest for the sacredness of all human values, is not so much a discovery as it is a confirmation. Indeed, not only the supernatural life, but all life, from that of man to that which manifests itself under different forms in other beings, is countersigned, as it were, by the God-man, consecrated by his presence and influenced by his power. Besides, the conviction that the whole of creation converges. by a kind of spiritual gravitation and in some mysterious way, toward Christ, makes it easier for us to feel and understand the ecumenical spirit that once more pervades the Church and all Christian consciences. He who shares this conviction has no difficulty in admitting, or, should I say, accepts as a matter of fact, the teaching that "whatever good or truth" is found among those who, through no fault of their own, do not know the Gospel of Christ or his Church, must be considered to be "a preparation for the Gospel and given by him who enlightens all men that they may at length have life" (Lumen Gentium. III.16).

The sons of Saint Francis cannot fail to notice that this newly revived ecumenical attitude has always been congenial to the Franciscan spirit. The apostolic zeal that drove Saint Francis and his Order to launch anew the missionary activity of the Church, could not have been kept alive except by a renewed mystical intuition of the intrinsic universality of Christianity and the firm conviction that all peoples are journeying toward Christ. It is Christ they expect to recognize in those who give witness to him through a humble, poor, and unselfish way of living, or, more simply, through a real and genuine evangelical life.  $\Omega$ 

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#### **Advent Salutation**

Rejoice, Mary, full of grace! The Lord is with you! Your blessed children greet you. The hallowed ancient promise of a Saviour Has long kept our hopes alive. In the secret chambers of your love He has forever reigned. Hidden now in the gleam of your eyes, His splendor brightly shines. The warm delight of your smile assures our weary hearts, As we stand in the advent of His great love. Your whispered "Yes" to Gabriel's prayer Has given voice to His heart's unending hymn. Blessed are you among women. Blessed is the fruit of your womb. O Daughter of Sion, you have given breath and life To the very dreams of God—EMMANUEL!

Sean Mary Fitzwater, T.O.R.

# The Second Encyclical Letter of Saint Bonaventure

TRANSLATED BY

REGIS J. ARMSTRONG, O.F.M.CAP., AND GREGORY SHANAHAN, O.F.M.

#### Translators' Introduction

THERE IS A SPAN of nine years which exists between the first and second letters of the Minister General, Saint Bonaventure. During those nine years, three General Chapters had taken place: Narbonne (1260), Pisa (1263), and Paris (1266). Throughout these years, Bonaventure had traveled extensively throughout France, Italy, and Germany. He had also written some of his most important works: Itinerarium mentis in Deum (1259), Legenda major and Legenda minor (1263), and, with the cooperation of the friars, the Constitutions of Narbonne (1260).

Throughout the writings and sermons of these years, Bonaventure emerges as a friar eager to see the spirit of the charismatic Founder of the Order of Friars Minor strengthened and extended in his brothers. The renewal and reform of the Order was a constant preoccupation of the Minister General, as this text manifests.

Although some of the measures which Bonaventure suggests as remedies for abuses seem harsh, e.g., chains, prison, expulsion from the brotherhood, these must be understood against the backdrop of religious communities of this period. Such disciplinary actions were accepted as common procedure for such intransigence. Nonetheless, the tools of renewal cherished by Bonaventure are easily discerned: prayer, poverty, respect for the clergy, and consciousness of the great tradition entrusted to the brotherhood.

Fathers Regis and Gregory are Consulting Editors of this Review. The former teaches at the Antonianum in Rome; and the latter, specializes in retreats to religious and mission preaching in Ireland and Britain.

1. Brother Bonaventure, Minister General and servant of the Order of Friars Minor [sends greetings of] health and eternal peace in the Lord to his dearly beloved in Christ, Brother B. de la Saucelle, Minister of the Province of N.<sup>1</sup>

A prelate's anxious task of caring should attend above all to the flock in his charge, so that he prompts worthy virtue to grow, prevents the entrance of vice, and gives instruction in correct conduct. After careful deliberation, the definitors of the General Chapter and myself thought that I should send letters to each of the Ministers on certain matters [which were] examined and discussed at the Chapter. The idea was that I should draw their attention especially to some abuses that must be obliterated, abuses that are spoiling the Order's integrity, lowering high standards of perfection, and clouding the splendor of holy living.

Study these things, dear Brother, and carry them out. . . And I, surely, will be able to praise your prompt obedience, your watchful care, and your zeal for this holy Order.

Until now, the height of the evangelical perfection [which] we practiced captured the hearts and the attention of the world and won for us every respect and honor. But now, what do we see? Vast numbers of a downward trend, an ever greater laxity in the behavior of those in charge, ugly defects springing up like briars. These are the things that cause many, to whom we have become an object of dislike and a burden, to despise this holy and respectable fraternity, and that turn into a scandal what should be a pattern for all to follow.

2. Now, too much running about and importunate begging are making us cheap and base. Because, you see, when we are no longer content with few things and start erecting costly buildings, what we are doing is setting our whole mind on the worthless, while carelessly missing out on the truly superior things. The obtrusive construction of

<sup>&#</sup>x27;Written after the Pentecost Chapter of 1266, which was held in Paris, this letter was sent to all the provincials, each with his own title.

walls brings about the destruction of morals.<sup>2</sup> Raising houses on high causes souls to lie in the dust.

I shudder at the audacity and insolence of certain friars who, contrary to the teaching of our holy Father, get up before lay people to preach against the bishops of the Church.<sup>3</sup> By taunting the behavior of prelates, they are only sowing the seeds of scandal, ill-will, and strife. They thus incur the anger, not of the prelates only, but of God Himself; for the divine law forbids us to speak evil of the deaf or put a stumbling-block before the blind (Lev. 19:14).

A quarrelsome and greedy trespassing in the area of burials and legacies amounts to a hindrance to those to whom the care of souls properly belongs, and has made us rather hateful to all clergy. Personal experience has shown us that this is true; and His Holiness himself, the supreme pontiff Pope Clement, has expressed the wish to warn all friars, through me, to be on their guard in this matter.<sup>4</sup>

3. The chief reason and underlying cause of all this is, in my opinion, that what was laid down by the General Chapter, as it sought to provide for the needs of the whole Order, is being minimized and ignored by the friars. Yet the transgressors are not being punished in the proper manner; and so, the divine judgment has its way with them: for, little things despise and little by little you shall come to ruin (Sir. 19:1). If discipline is neglected, insubordination increases. This is followed by the interior neglect of the practice of virtues, resulting in the open scandal and fall of those whom people considered upright. And so it happens that the shining splendor of religious life pales, and beauty of its holy state fades, the fragrance of its reputation stinks, and the very name of God becomes a reproach (Rom. 2:24).

Those souls that have been committed to our care, and all others, tread the way of salvation that leads to the light of holy religion. Let us not, then, be called to account for their undoing. Insofar as I am able, I have attempted in this letter to rouse the ardor of your charity, by issuing a stronger type of command: I solemnly entreat you by the blood of the Crucified and the marks of his passion—which, in the sacred body of our holy father, shone out in undoubtable brilliance—that like a wise and faithful servant of Christ, you gather every ounce of energy you have, to root out the pernicious abuses mentioned above. Enkindle all your fervor of spirit, and attend to this

<sup>a</sup>Literally: "mural construction brings moral destruction."

 with all your mind.

4. The first thing to do is urge the friars in your care to apply themselves to prayer. Use inducement as well as constraint to bring them to a pure observance of the Rule they have promised to keep. Do not be afraid of those who are detrimental and insubordinate. It is for you to root up and pull down, to waste and destroy (Jer. 1:10). You may have to put them in chains and lock them up in prison. You may have to expel them from the community of holy brotherhood. Both kindness and justice demand this. For it is a cruel pity that spares a rotten member, while corruption is allowed to spread and infect the welfare of the whole body.

And since poverty is the great prerogative of our Order, let us not allow this precious pearl to be cheaply exposed and trampled under foot by swine (cf. Mt. 7:6). The cause of all this running about begging is the high costs incurred by buildings, books, clothes, and food. Try to curtail this, so that the way we live if not out of harmony with the high profession we have made. Ugly, common, and fallacious it is for one who voluntarily professes the highest poverty not to be willing to put up with want; who at home enjoys the affluence of the rich, and still goes out to beg as poor people do.



You should forbid strictly and in the strongest terms the friars to criticize before the people the lives of the prelates. This is something prohibited by divine and canon law. Rather, they should show all respect, not only to those who are kind and considerate, but to those who are hard to please (1 Pt. 2:18). This is also called for by their sacramental anointing. You are also to order all the friars to maintain all possible peaceful relations with all the clergy over legacies and burials, so that they may not have occasion to enter into disputes with us; and that the whole world may see clearly that our interests lie, not in any earthly commodities, but in gaining souls.

5. Finally, since the passing of these and many other ordinances through the Order's Constitutions is now precluded, I want you carefully to put them down in writing for the various friaries, have them read aloud, and have them preserved. So may we, who are regarded as foremost practitioners of the virtuous life, never be dubbed the ultimate in disordered conduct.

Study these things, then, dear Brother, and carry them out. God will be pleased with that. And I, surely, will be able to praise your prompt obedience, your watchful care, and your zeal for this holy Order. That this may be all the better achieved, I wish the contents of this letter to be explained, by yourself or by the Custodians, as often as it is opportune, to all the friars of your Province.  $\Omega$ 

The Staff of the Franciscan Institute joins the Editors in wishing you a very blessed Christmas and every grace and good from our heavenly Father throughout the new year.

#### The Ministry of the Word

(Continued from page 329)

chains of ignorance and vice was a liberation Francis saw that he could bring to people by delivering to them what Jesus did and taught. Do we think we can do better some other way?

Given the proper distinctions, the point I am making applies, not just to priests, but to most religious in an active ministry. Religious formation has equipped, and should equip, all to minister God's Word at least at a person to person level, to share with others their faith perspective on events, and to explain to them the basics of the Catholic religion: the life, death, and Resurrection of Jesus, the Creed, the Sacraments. Contemporary spirituality encourages us to share our humanity with others, to let them see that we feel, hope, and fear like the rest of humanity even as the Incarnate Lord did. Since faith is a gift that is given to us in our humanity, then sharing of ourselves ought to mean sharing of the faith that nourishes our practice of love.  $\Omega$ 

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## The Contemplation of Christ

IGNATIUS C. BRADY, O.F.M.

WHEN I LOOK BACK over fifty and more years of Franciscan life, I thank the Lord for what the Holy Spirit has done in the Church and in the Order—i.e., in all three Franciscan Orders—in guiding us to a much more spiritual approach to our Way and Life than we had when I made profession.

Bluntly, our novitiate training (at least in the classroom) consisted in a long study of the law of Church and Order, in a kind of catechism of questions and answers drawn up by past Novice Masters of the Province, on do's and don'ts, with all too little on the spirit of the Order or the role of the Spirit in our lives. Alternating with such an array of legalism was a handbook, the Tyrocinium Religiosum, which was to form us in asceticism according to monastic tradition (as I remember it), with nary a word on the Franciscan way or the ideals of St. Francis. Without doubt we imbibed something along the way, even if in the refectory we were treated for part of the year to the Latin texts of papal documents and decrees on the Order from ages past.

As a result, perhaps, we turned out to be legalists at a moment in our lives when we needed much more of "the Spirit of the Lord and His work in us," which Saint Francis so ardently bids us pursue, in his Rule, chapter X:

Above all else the Brothers are to desire to have the Spirit of the Lord and His holy presence in us and His action upon us, to pray always to Him with a pure heart, and to have humility, patience in the face of opposition and our own weakness, and to love and pray for those who may persecute or ridicule us.

But enough of that. We somehow managed to survive because the Spirit dwells where He wills, His graces to bestow. Yet hardly a word was said of the writings of Saint Francis, though a copy or two was to

Fr. Ignatius C. Brady, O.F.M., is well known throughout the Franciscan world for his teaching and research, earlier at The Franciscan Institute (St. Bonaventure, New York), and later at the Collegio S. Antonio in Rome. His series of conferences on St. Clare, originally published in the early volumes of this review, have been reprinted and are still available in paperback from The Franciscan Institute. The present article is a meditation on Article 8 of the General Constitutions of the Order of St. Clare.

be found in the library. Later, in the clericate, we discovered the writings of the Benedictine, Dom Columba Marmion (half Irish, half French). His writings, somewhat the rage at the time, truly answered our needs for positive ideals and especially for a deeper understanding of Christ in our lives. Add to this, thank God, the beginnings of a deeper knowledge of Saint Francis and his tremendous insights, by the grace of God, into the meaning of the Incarnation of the Son of God, His life, His teaching by action and by word. Thus, by the grace of the Spirit He became alive, so to speak, in our human lives as the Way, the Truth, and the Life, in Himself and for us.

Let us begin . . . with swift pace and light step, that we may arrive at intimate union with Christ and the delights He holds out for us.

On my own part I thank the Lord that He revealed Himself by such means and still does; and that He used and uses our Holy Father Saint Francis as a model, our model, teacher, and guide in knowing and contemplating Christ and growing in Christ! Indeed, more than that! With Saint Paul we are to put on, be clothed in, the Lord Jesus Christ (Rom. 13:14; Eph. 4:24; Col. 3:10, 12; Gal. 3:26-27). This is true from our very Baptism: "Each one of you is a son of God because of your faith in Christ Jesus. All of you who have been baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Him" (Gal. 3:26-27). We have cast aside the old self, the old rags, to put on a new garment as the sign of a new self and of our duty to acquire a fresh, spiritual way of thinking that marks the new man (cf. Eph. 4:22-23).

With all believers, then, we know Christ as truly the Way and the Truth and the Life (Jn. 14:6). All schools of spirituality emphasize this threefold role of Christ as basic to Christian thought, prayer, and action.

Yet we can claim without a doubt that there is something special and perhaps more human in the Franciscan outlook than in other spiritual traditions, something more concrete at least in the acts and aspects of Christ's life in which Saint Francis, and therefore Saint Clare, took great delight; and far more than that, took greater care to imitate.

Concretely, as is evident from his writings and sayings, Saint Francis took great delight in the Crib, the Cross, and the Eucharist.

#### The Crib

THE MARVEL OF THE Incarnation and of the Life of the Son of God on earth never ceased to move Francis. His constant (or at least his frequent) prayer, one might say, was for the grace to be inwardly cleansed, inwardly enlightened and set afire by the Holy Spirit that we (Francis and all of us) may follow the footsteps of the Beloved Son of the Father, and so by the grace of God come ourselves to the Most High in Perfect Trinity and undivided Unity (cf. the prayer after EpOrd).

What is this, from our human viewpoint, save a cry of love and petition that we be faithful in emptying ourselves of our own self-will, our self-love, our very self-centeredness, that with Christ as He came into the world at the Incarnation we too will cry: Behold, I come to do Your Will, O God! (cf. Ps. 39:7–9; Hbr. 10:7, 9). May I with Christ do always the things that please the Father!

#### The Cross

If I THUS PLEASE the Father, I will have life and have it to the full (Jn. 10:10). Yes, but that life comes to us only because Christ died on the Cross that we might live with Him unto the Father. To please the Father as Christ Jesus did, meant for Saint Francis the daily acceptance, in joy of spirit, of the Cross of Christ: because the Lord Himself demands it of us, according to Saint Luke's version: "Whoever wishes to be My follower must deny his very self, take up his cross each day, and follow in My steps" (Lk. 9:23).

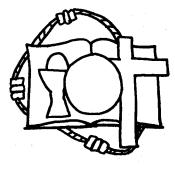
Hence Saint Bonaventure can say, in commenting on this verse: "Christ says: Take up the Cross daily, because daily the penance of the Cross must be nova et recens, ever new, ever fresh" (In Luc., Opera omnia VII, 228a). He goes on to tell us that this was the thought and counsel of Saint Francis: "Brothers, let us begin and go forward, for up to now we have done but very little" (cf. LM I.xiv.1; 1Cel 103; and the Legend of Julian of Speyer, 67).

#### The Tabernacle

MOST APPROPRIATELY the Constitutions go on to speak of the Most Holy Eucharist as of great concern for Saint Francis. There is more history behind this than we can speak of here. Suffice it to say that his great faith in the Eucharist coupled with some decrees of the Fourth Lateran Council (1216) on reverence and care of the Blessed Sacrament, decrees which Pope Honorius III (1219) commanded to be observed, led Francis to form, if you will, a crusade of his own on behalf of the Eucharist.

More than one letter to his friars and lay followers, to Christians, to Rulers, repeats and emphasizes what the Council and the Pope had said, but also reveals to us his lively faith and deep love and reverence for the gift of the Body and Blood of the Lord, a faith and love he sought to inspire in others and to carry out himself in practice: cleaning churches, putting the Mass books in fitting places (and not on the floor), and preaching, no doubt, to make others, priests and laity, conscious of their frequent neglect of the precious gift of the Eucharist. (Sometimes I think Francis should come back and renew that crusade, starting with the friars themselves, at least in Italy. But let that be!)

ON THE PART of Brother Francis and Sister Lady Clare there is still more to say on our contemplation of Christ. Without a doubt, other schools of spirituality also emphasize the need to look at Jesus Christ, the Way, the Truth, and the Life. Indeed, can there be a school of Christian life that could or would do otherwise? I shall not attempt a survey of other schools, for I



cannot claim any great familiarity with them. Happily, by example even more than by word our Seraphic Father and our Mother Saint Clare have put their stamp on our Franciscan way; or, to phrase that thought more justly: they have been and are today living examples and models of what we must strive to be.

The second paragraph of Article 8 adequately, or rather, abundantly and clearly describes the goal of our desires. I as a friar can and should likewise make my own the ideals set before us in the text. (I have combined the two versions of the Constitutions):

Our contemplation of Christ should rouse us to imitate His life, especially by those virtues which our Father Francis and our Mother Clare cherished (and cultivated) as particularly their own (as examples to us!): seraphic love, the spirit of prayer and devotedness (=dedication), a deep sense of fraternity, zeal for souls, poverty, simplicity, penance, until we come (with swift pace and light step

[Letter II to Bl. Agnes]) to intimate union with Him and the delights He holds out to us.

In brief, our two great guides, Francis and Clare, are living examples and models of our goal: to follow Christ and His holy Mother, our Lady, as they did. Their every action, their every deed, is in some way our guide, our norm, our ideal. To be truthful, I am here accommodating to them what Saint Bonaventure says of our Lord (following a phrase of St. Augustine): Omnis eius actio est nostra instructio: His every action is a lesson (and model) for us. Whether Francis and Clare ever heard of this axiom, I know not, but it was carried out to the letter by them, so that they are truly guides for us in our own Franciscan imitation of Christ: a great seraphic love of God; a deep spirit of prayer and utter devotedness (whence, let us hope, a true and faithful intimacy with Christ in the Spirit); a genuine self assessment ("What a man is before God, that he is and nothing more"-St. Francis, Adm 19/20, acc. to different editions); a great zeal to bring all men to God, by prayer, penance, example, humility, kindness, and charity; and to have in our own lives a constant spirit of μετανοια, of daily renewal: "Brothers, Sisters," Saint Francis says to us today, "Let us begin to serve the Lord our God, for up till now we have done little or nothing (1Cel 103; LM I.xiv.1).

Let us begin indeed with swift pace and light step, that we may arrive at intimate union with Christ and the delights He holds out for us.  $\Omega$ 

#### The Comet Kohoutek

I dreamed that you would be for me A Christmas tree of brilliant light, To shone upon an aging world, Dispelling darkness and the fright. But softly glows your spectral form, A secret wonder in the sky, A pilgrim to some far-off world; A pilgrim, too, O Lord, am I.

Joyce Finnigan, O.F.M.

## **Book Reviews**

Francis and Clare: The Complete Works. Translated, with an Introduction, by Regis J. Armstrong, O.F.M.Cap., and Ignatius Brady, O.F.M. Preface by John Vaughn, O.F.M. New York: Paulist Press, 1982. Pp. xvi-256, including Appendix, Bibliography, and Index. Paper, \$7.95.

Reviewed by Father Vianney M. Devlin, O.F.M., Ph.D. (English, University of London), Co-ordinator of Adult Education at Saint Anthony Shrine, Boston.

Readers of The CORD continue to be grateful to the Paulist Press for including important Franciscan writings in their series The Classics of Western Spirituality. So far we have been provided with superb editions of Saint Bonaventure's The Soul's Journey into God, The Tree of Life, and The Life of Saint Francis: Jacopone da Todi's The Lauds; The Franciscan Spirituals; and now The Complete Writings of Francis and Clare. This latest addition maintains the same high standards of scholarship and readability which we have come to expect from this series as a whole.

This volume represents the first attempt in the English-speaking world to combine the writings of both Saint Francis and Saint Clare in one volume. It is our hope that this presentation will deepen the appreciation of the spiritual vision of both saints and will enable readers to perceive the penetrating depths of their love of

God. A study of the writings of these two saints of Assisi, presented in such close proximity, will provide tools for demythologizing many of the popular stories that have developed concerning their relationship [p. xvi].

This reviewer applauds that intention and hopes that a careful, meditative reading of these two saints' writings will show how Franciscan spirituality rests upon a solid double pillar which sustains a holistic approach embracing both masculine and feminine.

The present translation is based upon the scholarly texts assembled by Fr. Kajetan Esser, O.F.M. (Saint Francis) and Fr. Ignatio Omaechevarria, O.F.M. (Saint Clare). The introductions that precede each text reflect the scholarship of these two as well as many other friars who have been studying the writings of these saints "with a renewed enthusiasm within the past few years." The footnotes are succinct and informative without being ponderous or distracting.

With Fr. John Vaughn, O.F.M., Minister General of the Order of Friars Minor, one hopes that this handy volume "will be a means whereby both Francis and Clare will bring many today closer to Christ and to His Church" (p. xiii).

The Assumption of Mary. By Kilian Healy, O.Carm. Wilmington, DE: Michael Glazier, Inc., 1983. Pp. 174. Paper, \$5.95.

Reviewed by Father Valentine Long, O.F.M., a member of Holy Name

Province and well known author of books on the spiritual life.

This is the fourth book so far, and a competent one, in The Marian Library. It joins the worthwhile company of Mary Immaculate in the Divine Plan, by Michael Meilach, O.F.M.; Life in the Spirit and Mary, by Christopher O'Donnell, O. Carm.; and Understanding the Mother of Jesus, by Eamon R. Carroll, O.Carm., the general editor of the growing series.

In his ten chapters, Father Healy treats of the Assumption of Mary as a revealed truth in Scripture and Tradition, taking plenty of time to explain its meaning, its theology, and its relevancy to the Pilgrim Church, the Suffering Church, and the Heavenly Church. Before Vatican II, the author points out, we used different terms: the Church Militant, the Church Suffering, the Church Triumphant. Call it by whatever terms, however, it remains the same Mystical Body of Christ, the same unified Church on earth, in purgatory, in heaven. Its threefold unification in all the genuine catechisms is still described as the Communion of Saints, an article from the Apostles' Creed.

Throughout the book, Father Healy keeps in mind its prospective non-Catholic readers and admirably avoids offending their sensibilities without, at the same time, playing down the full beauty and significance of the dogma. For example, he quotes Martin Luther and John Calvin in their praise of Mary, praising them in turn for praising her: and if they stop short of allowing her assumption into heaven, body and soul, it is because

they think the doctrine would transform this blessed creature into an adorable goddess, all but an intruder into the closed membership of the Holy Trinity. The doctrine does nothing of the kind. It abhors idolatry. And the book, knowing this, makes it clear beyond any misunderstanding that the divinely chosen Mother of the Incarnate Son God has received her glorification—not from the Church-from indeed the Holy Trinity.

Nor is that the end of it. The later chapters have much to say of a further ordinance from her Divine Son, whereby Mary became the spiritual mother of the whole human race and in heaven uses her unique influence to intercede for even those of her children who do not know her, who in their misunderstanding begrudge God's supreme creature her due prerogative. Deny Mary what God has bestowed on her, what God has given her, and you insult the Giver.

Let any non-Catholic read the book with an open mind, and I dare say the reaction will be one of happy surprise. The educated Catholic who would rather die than surrender a single truth of the Faith will find in the familiar material of *The Assumption of Mary*—no surprise, certainly, but a happy reassurance.

The book has its shortcomings, but they are few. "When God chose to reveal his plan of salvation he did not speak in words; he sent his Son, Jesus Christ"—this statement on page 47 strikes one as a glaring half truth. Surely God first sent his prophets into the world to speak indeed of the coming Savior. Again, to say that we look in vain to unaided philosophy

for a proof of human life after death, as it says on page 124, is to ignore Aristotle's as well as Plato's proof for the soul's immortality. Then, having cited the common opinion that Mary's indeed sacred body suffered a brief death but no corruption in the tomb, the author draws attention to the unsettled dispute as to whether her tomb stood in the area of Jerusalem or of Ephesus. Whereupon Father Healy produces two pages of evidence in favor of the former, yet none whatever of the evidence in favor of the latter, site.

Such incidental flaws cannot destroy the general excellence of the book. It has many qualities to recommend it. Perhaps it attains its strongest appeal when explaining the Assumption in a way likely to endear the dogma to the reluctant non-Catholic reader. May I here slip in a final example? To the objection that Pope Pius XII defines the dogma in words not easy for the modern mind to grasp, Father Healy does not lose his temper to blurt out: "Well, suppose you look up the words in the dictionary. They and their meanings are all there." Instead, with cool benevolence, he replies that it is what words mean that counts, not how they sound to the contemporary ear. One must be careful in formulating a dogma, he playfully cautions nobody in particular, "lest the unchanging truth itself be distorted."

The book deserves a wide reading from Catholics and non-Catholics alike. It appeals to the humanity of both. After all, the holy angels had to come to our earth to find and take with them their chosen queen, one of our race, God's own mother.

Becoming Human Together: The Pastoral Anthropology of Saint Paul. By Jerome Murphy-O'Connor, O.P. Good News Studies, n. 2. Wilmington, DE: Michael Glazier, Inc., 1982. Pp. 224, including index. Paper, \$6.95.

Reviewed by Father Cassian F. Corcoran, O.F.M., L.S.S., S.T.D., Professor of Sacred Scripture at the Washington (D.C.) Theological Union.

This is a fascinating book. It presents the theology of Paul with several contemporary examples and existential theological terms. The Pauline concepts that this book highlights challenge anyone who takes his or her Christian faith seriously. "The purpose of the book," Murphy-O'Connor affirms, "is to show that community is the key element in [Paul's] thought" (p. 13). This goal is achieved through a consideration of three topics: Human Being, Society, and Community.

The first topic, Human Being, focuses on anthropology and, among other questions, brings up the issue of the divinity of Jesus. One of the weaknesses of this book is exemplified in the manner in which Jesus' divinity is handled. In the Preface, Murphy-O'Connor states that the book is a second edition resulting from his research and detailed studies that have appeared in scientific biblical journals. Becoming Human Together, therefore, is a synthesis or an abridgment of the author's scholarship. For example, Jesus' divinity is discussed in terms of titles such as "Son of God" (pp.

62-64), "Lord" (pp. 64-65), and "Wisdom" (pp. 65-68). Each of these titles needs further theological clarification with respect to the way in which the theology of these terms relates to the divinity of Jesus as Paul understands it. Since the book is a popularization of profound Pauline theology, and considering the importance of the divinity of Jesus, the presentation of this subject is curt and might leave some readers questioning rather than being confirmed in their faith in this basic article of Christian Faith.

The second topic of major consequence is Society. Here one sees the relevance of the problems of Paul's world with respect to the human situation of contemporary times. Sin, alienation, and egocentric isolation are discussed in existential terms, and helpful suggestions are given in formulating a Christian attitude and vision of life. The presentation is scholarly and clear, centering around the meaning of inauthentic person.

The third and final major topic of this book comprises an explanation of how in Paul's mind freedom is the fundamental characteristic and linchpin of an authentic Christian Community. The insistence that women have a place equal with men in Paul's vision of authentic Christian community is one example that shows the contemporary character and interest of this book.

There is a misspelling on page 66, line 15, where one reads "though" instead of "thought." The book, however, written by an internationally acknowledged and honored biblical scholar, is a well thought out analysis and presentation of Pauline theology and has an engaging style.

It is, moreover, thought provoking and will spur a serious reader to search for more. Above all, it provides sound guidelines and mature Christian ideas from which one can form a pattern of authentic gospel living.



Blessed and Broken: An Exploration of the Contemporary Experience of God in Eucharistic Celebration. By Ralph A. Keifer. Message of the Sacraments Series, n. 3. Wilmington, DE: Michael Glazier, Inc., 1982. Pp. viii-148. 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.

Dr. Ralph A. Keifer is on the faculty of the Catholic Theological Union in Chicago. With this book he intends to relate traditional Eucharistic doctrine to the everyday living experience of people (p. 4). He does so, after giving some historical information on the development of Eucharistic doctrine, by relating what people believe about the Eucharist to what they experience in their everyday relationships with one another.

In the chapter entitled "Blessing and Breaking," the author compares the Eucharistic experience of today with that of the pre-Vatican II period of the Church. The basic difference as revealed in the Eucharistic rites (pre- and post-Vatican II) is the mindset taken for granted on the part of the people. The earlier rite emphasized that the priest and people approached the Eucharist from the viewpoint of sinners begging mercy from a just God. The present rite has the priest and people approach God as "lover and friend and companion of the Human race" (p. 19).

In the second chapter, "Before an Empty Sky," the author describes our experience of God as different now from what it used to be. Formerly, God was viewed as separate from the world and we called upon him to intervene, to come into the world from wherever he is and to help us. Today, the experience of God expresses the union between God and ourselves.

In subsequent chapters, Dr. Keifer explains the changing attitude of the people toward God and toward the Eucharist. The whole "ecology" of faith is changing. Salvation tends to be seen more in terms of coming to full human wholeness, as original sin is seen less as an act than as a condition which militates against that wholeness (p. 48). The author refers to the General Instruction on the Order of the Mass: "The celebration of the Mass is the action of Christ and the people of God hierarchically assembled . ..... (p. 59). The author cites the writers of Scripture for this point: "For New Testament writers . . . the eucharist is simply a meal with sacrifical significance. To share in the eucharistic meal is to share in the sacrifical event of Christ's death . . . (p. 71). Again, the writer goes back to the General Instruction on the Order of the Mass:

"The meaning of the eucharistic prayer is that the whole assembly offers the sacrifice" (p. 80).

A realization of the "new" attitude of God's people toward the Eucharist helps one to understand many of the changes in the Mass since the Second Vatican Council. The changed attitude toward God and toward the Eucharist accounts for the "reforms" in the Eucharistic rite. The separation of the Liturgy of the Word from the Liturgy of the Eucharistr emphasizes the Scriptural content of the Eucharist as a "remembering" of the action of Christ. The use of lav readers stresses the fact that the action is that of the whole assembly. The changed position of the priest at the altar (facing the people) accentuates the oneness of all those assembled for the Eucharistic action. The use of the vernacular language allows all present to understand the words of the liturgical action. The fact that there are several Eucharistic prayers permits some adaptation to different circumstances of coming together for the Eucharistic action.

Blessed and Broken is a book that will prove most helpful for an understanding of the Eucharist today. This reviewer found the presentation clear and direct. He takes some exception to what he considers a polemical approach to the subject, an approach that might offend those who hold onto a devotional attitude toward the Eucharistic Presence. On the whole, however, the reviewer liked the book and feels that this book will be welcomed and appreciated by all those interested in understanding the changes in the Eucharistic rite and the basic reasons behind such changes.

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