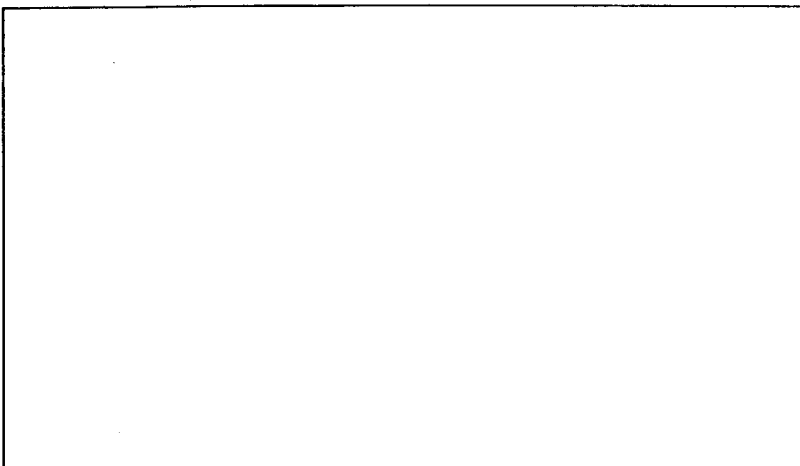


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APRIL, 1983

The CORD

A FRANCISCAN SPIRITUAL REVIEW

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The CORD

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Standard Abbreviations used in The CORD for Early Franciscan Sources

I. Writings of Saint Francis

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

II. Other Early Franciscan Sources

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

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



The Optimism of Easter

“JESUS LIVES, NO MORE TO DIE.” This line from an Easter hymn gives us an insight into what is really unique about Jesus' resurrection and our own: their newness of life—transformation of life—is final, permanent, eternal. Easter doesn't just celebrate the renewal of the earth—after all, its renewal is only temporary, lasting until the arrival of fall and winter—but the renewal of mankind by God's grace. The hope that we have and which is the special fruit of Easter is first of all a confidence that we are on a winning team, that Christ has won victory over sin and death, and that we benefit from that victory. Equally special about Christian hope is that it looks to God's workings on this side of the grave and includes the confidence that he will give us what we need—nay, more than what we need—to overcome temptation and to live a Christian life. Christian hope says that this year “we can sing a new song to the Lord,” that growth in intimacy with Jesus, and love of neighbor, and conquest of self are real possibilities. And these things are a possibility, not only for ourselves, but for other humans as well.

Followers of Jesus must be optimists, because they trust in the power of God to make all things new. Pessimism is possible only through fixation on merely human weaknesses and limitations and on the fatalistic assumption—shattered by Jesus—that “what always has been will be.” Christian optimism doesn't mean we smile all day long and constantly prattle that all will turn out well. It does mean that “hopeless” is a word seldom on our lips, and that we tackle each day and its tasks from strength—God's strength.

Hope and its fruit optimism are not just a springtime virtue, for the prime source of hope for us is available to us daily in the Eucharist, which re-presents Jesus and commemorates the one mystery of Jesus' death—and resurrection. Ω

Fr. Julian Davies OFM

The Apostolate of Worship according to St. Bonaventure—II

BONAVENTURE HINWOOD, O.F.M.

THE DIVINE OFFICE AND THE MASS, we pointed out in the March issue, go hand in hand. Indeed, the Office can be viewed as the setting which holds the jewel of the Mass in its center; or, in the reverse direction, the Mass can be seen as the light, whose rays are the Office lighting up successive periods of the day. So now, let us take a look at this center.

Speaking in the context of the Sunday Mass liturgy, Saint Bonaventure gives us this neat outline of the Mass in terms of Christ as the Master of his house, which is the Church. It is the place of the reconciliation we long for, where our affections are cleansed of sin's filth. It is a place of knowledge we need in order to be saved, and which enlightens and guides our minds, keeping them from the error that could lead us astray. It is the place where we get refreshed by the Blessed Sacrament, which perfects us and quiets down our other desires by its greater sweetness. "And so in the Church the faithful person ought to be cleansed from the evil of sin, enlightened by the word of doctrine, and refreshed and perfected by the food of the Eucharist" (*Dom. 9 post Pent. sermo I, 1; 9, 388a*).

For this reason Saint Bonaventure would agree with Vatican II that the faithful need to be fed in the Mass "from the table both of God's Word and of Christ's Body" (DV 21). The importance of this Word, which is communicated to them by the preacher, he highlights in this sentence:

Father Bonaventure Hinwood, O.F.M., who lives in Pretoria, South Africa, is the author of Your Question Answered, reviewed in our June, 1981, issue. His last contribution to our pages was "Justice' according to Saint Bonaventure" vol. 31 (1981), 323-35.

The laity make the uncreated Wisdom their own, when they open their ears to hear and their hearts to understand the preacher's well chosen words, so that carefully paying attention to what is said, they desire it with all their being, and are eager to carry out in practice what they understand [*Dom. 9 post Pent. sermo I, 1; 9, 388a*].

Consequently, Saint Bonaventure sets a high standard for friars who are to preach.

Bonaventure's insights, then, help us to see why Francis . . . was so concerned about the Liturgy . . . and how Vatican II could see the Liturgy as the heart of the Church's internal life and the source of all its evangelizing activity.

First, the preacher must have the authority to preach (*ibid.*). No Franciscan has the right to preach, but must wait patiently until God inspires his superiors and fellow religious to consider him ready to preach, so that he does it with the proper permission (*Determin. quaest., 2, 4; 8, 361b*).

Secondly, he must have God's grace.

Besides this, however, Bonaventure further lists a number of qualities he considers important:

- a. He must not be under thirty years of age, because young people produce puerile things.
- b. He must not be boyish in looks or behavior, because this takes away from his prestige among the people.
- c. He must not be physically unsightly, for example unusually short or fat, hump backed, or otherwise deformed, in case his preaching be greeted with ridicule or disrespect.
- d. He should not be physically weak, since he will then not be able to preach with *vigo*: and vitality.
- e. He must be a competent speaker so as not to produce a negative or rejecting attitude in his hearers.
- f. He must be sufficiently educated in language and theology to be

able to state the truth to the people and clergy without error or confusion.

g. His life and behavior must be such that the truth he preaches does not suffer loss either among the friars in his community or among others outside. For this reason he must be disciplined, trained, and tested just as carefully as a medical doctor's skill is before he is allowed to practice.

h. He should be hardworking.

i. He must be willing to preach, if not spontaneously, at least with cheerful obedience (*ibid.*; 8, 360b).

Perhaps all this can best be summed up in Saint Bonaventure's own idea that the preacher must have in him the truth of the Gospel and also the ability to make other people listen to it (*Dom. 9 post Pent. sermo 1, 1; 9, 388b*).

While some people would see the well prepared and meaty sermon as having an evangelizing value, probably fewer would think the same about the rest of the Mass. Vatican II produced this clear statement about the role of the Mass in the Church's life: "The Liturgy is the summit towards which the activity of the Church is directed; at the same time it is the fountain from which all her power flows" (SC 10). It is doubtful if many people really believe this statement; and even the reasons given by the Council which produced it are not a hundred percent satisfying. Saint Bonaventure, however, has some thoughts about the apostolic value of the Mass which throw light on the Council's claim for it.

For God to be able to work in the faithful so that they can be effective witnesses to Christ, and for that witness to be effective in others so as to draw them to Christ, it is necessary first of all that the obstacle of sin be removed. It was already mentioned earlier that to cleanse people from the filth of sin and reconcile them to God was one of the three activities which Saint Bonaventure ascribes to Christ in the Mass. It is this that makes the Mass "a sacrifice putting right human transgression because of man's tendency to sin" (*Feriae 5 in coena Dom. sermo 2; 9, 252a*). Bonaventure explains this as follows:

Christ did not have to die several times (Heb. 7:27; 9:25-26): his one death made up for all sins, past and future. Hence, it was enough that at his death, he left us with the one Victim, his own body, once sacrificed for us, now to be sacramentally offered by us every day to the Father for the remainder of our sins, to redeem us from the death which we daily deserve because of our sins [*Tractatus, 10; 8, 102b-103a*].

The obstacle of sin having been removed, the way is open for the Mass to have its evangelizing effect. About this Bonaventure has no doubt. He writes:

Take away this sacrament from the Church, and what is left in the world besides error and unbelief? The Christian people would be scattered like a herd of pigs and given over to idolatry, as so clearly happens to other unbelievers. But by virtue of this Sacrament, the Church stands firm, faith is strengthened, the Christian religion and divine worship flourish [*Tractatus, 3; 8, 100b*].

For this reason,

you should see to it that even God's name is kept holy within us by our regularly taking part in divine worship, that it is glorified in the world around us by the holiness of our lives, and that the worship and honor of God increase on earth, so that the whole world may know that we are genuine worshippers of the one true God and of our Savior Jesus Christ [*Tractatus, 18; 8, 105b*].

The very nature of the Mass as it has been given to us in the Church is such as to make this result possible, provided we all enter into it as we should and allow it to have its effect upon us. So Saint Bonaventure teaches that God instituted this sacramental rite precisely

so that Christ's members might have a sign reminding them of the Lord's passion because the memory forgets, food for the road strengthening against dropping out because of nature's weakness, and a bond uniting human affection because of divergent wills [*Feriae 5 in coena Dom. sermo 2; 9, 252a; cf. De sex alis, 7, 6; 8, 149a*].

The Mass is not, however, only the occasion for stimulating the love which binds the faithful more closely to Christ and to each other. It is also the occasion when that love should reach out in its concern for the needs of all and the common welfare of society. So Saint Bonaventure says to each of us:

You should intend to assist the whole Church, as you bring before God your prayers for the Pope, the cardinals, patriarchs, archbishops, bishops, doctors, superiors, priests, clerics, monks, religious, monastic communities, and all who serve Christ; for kings, leaders, princes, and other noblemen; for virgins, widows, orphans, travelers, captives, those being badly treated, the weak, the sick, and for all God's people; also for pagans, schismatics, and heretics, that they may be converted to the true God and to the unity of the holy Church. Furthermore you should pray particularly for certain special intentions, for your beloved parents, relatives, friends, those who are faithful to you, those for

whom you have been asked to pray and who are hoping for your prayers. You should also pray most particularly for yourself. Should it happen that, especially through hatred or bitterness, you exclude any of the faithful mentioned from sharing in such great benefits, you sin mortally, because you perform the sacred mysteries with hatred in your heart [Tractatus, 19; 8, 105b].

From what has been said it is evident that Saint Bonaventure does not see sharing in the Mass merely as a visit to a spiritual garage to get filled up with sacramental fuel to keep one's own Christian life moving a little bit longer. For him it is an activity in which the honor due to God, as well as the welfare of one's fellow Christians and of non-Christians, the welfare of the Church and of civil society are at stake. It is not difficult to imagine him enthusiastically supporting Pope Paul VI's call to priests to celebrate Mass daily, when you hear what he has to say to priests who do not say Mass without a serious reason:

When a priest who is free from mortal sin, who has the right intention and no legal impediment, misses out celebrating Mass, not out of reverence but from negligence, then, as far as it is possible for him, he takes praise and glory away from the holy Trinity, joy from the angels, pardon from sinners, support and grace from the just, relief from the souls in purgatory, and spiritual benefits from Christ's Church. He also denies himself the necessary medicine and remedy against his own weakness and daily sins. . . .

Likewise, a priest who fails to celebrate Mass deprives himself of all the effects of holy Communion: remission of sin, calming of the passions, enlightenment of mind, interior refreshment, incorporation into Christ and his mystical body, strengthening of the virtues, arming against the devil, certainty of faith, building up of hope, enlivening of charity, increase of devotion, and the company of the angels. . . .

Furthermore he throws away the food for his journey, putting himself in danger of death, for, unless he receives the food of Christ's body and the nourishment of his life, he becomes like a withered limb that no longer receives the nutriment of physical food. Finally, in as far as it lies within his power, he withdraws the divine worship and adoration due to his Creator, as someone who has not gratitude for the good things God has given him [Tractatus, 9; 8, 102a-b].

Of course what is said here about the priest's Communion is true also of Christians other than ordained ministers. From the above list of the bad effects that follow from not receiving Communion it is not difficult to see some of the positive effects of the Sacrament.

Saint Bonaventure brings the negative and positive aspects together neatly in the course of commenting on Mk. 8:1-3. He sees the crowd

that will collapse on the way if they do not get food, as members of the Church who will suffer from the coldness of weakness and lack of energy if they are not fed with the Eucharist:

See how very necessary it is to eat this food. If someone is not united by it to Christ's mystical body, which is the Church, he will not be able to receive the influence of the life of its head, namely, Christ, who says: "Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood remains in me and I in him" [Dom. 6 post Pent. sermo I, 1; 9, 379a].

We see here the all important effect of receiving the Eucharist. The person who receives it worthily, that is with faith and love, is not only more clean and fed in his inmost being, but he is more fully drawn into Christ's mystical body (*Brevil.*, 6, 9, 1; 5, 273b-74a). In more detail Bonaventure writes about this as follows:

As God takes care of every animal's body by providing it with suitable food, so also he feeds his most noble mystical body, the Church, whose Head is Christ the Son of God. This Mystical Body must not be fed on or live from anything but its Head, so that all its members, that is all upright people, united and adhering to one another in Christ the Head, may be nourished by his spirit and love through this Sacrament of union and peace. As the body cannot live without absorbing suitable food into itself, so also there can be no spiritual life for the rational soul unless it absorbs and digests this spiritual food which is suited to it. . . . This is the difference between natural and spiritual eating: in the case of natural eating the food eaten passes into the substance and growth of the consumer, whereas in the case of spiritual eating the consumer is incorporated into Christ, and passes into the union and love of Christ's spirit [Tractatus, 13; 8, 103b-104a].

Saint Bonaventure describes the importance of this union and love for the life and work of the Church in words of great power. He writes:

Because it fits in well with the time of grace that the Sacrament of union and love not only signify this union and love, but also be a means of inflaming the heart towards them so as to bring about what it represents; and because what chiefly inflames towards mutual love, and chiefly unites the members is the oneness of the Head from whom mutual affection flows into us by the power of love that spreads out, unites, and transforms: consequently this Sacrament contains Christ's true body and immaculate flesh in such a way that it spreads itself throughout our being, unites us to one another, and transforms us into him through that burning love by which he gave himself to us, offered himself up for us, and gave himself back to us, to remain with us until the end of the world. . . .

Now . . . nothing is a more suitable symbol of the unity of Christ's body, physical and mystical, than the one bread made from many of the cleanest grains moulded together and the one wine from many of the purest grapes pressed together. It was, therefore, right that this Sacrament should be handed over to us under these outward forms rather than any others [Brevil., 6, 9, 3-4; 5, 174a-b].

For Saint Bonaventure love is essentially something that is active and produces effects. So he next shows how this love works on the three levels of self, others, and God. He says:

Christ's body is presented to us under the image of rich food, and quite correctly so. Christ's body is given to us to conserve divine fervor in our hearts. This is conserved in three ways: by delight within oneself, love towards others, and devotion to God. Delight within oneself comes from the refreshing food for the traveler; love towards others by means of the Sacrament making for union with each other; and devotion to God from our entering into the sacrifice offered [Sermo de Ss. Corp. Christi, 22; 5, 560a-b].

As our concern here is with Communion in the context of apostolic activity, we shall look at devotion to God as it is reflected in the other two dimensions of Christ's love at work within us.

The one who is to bear witness to Christ must first be built up into Christ, by making the share in Christ's love, received in Communion, real in his own life. Bonaventure's thoughts about this start with a useful warning:

The Lord invites "all who are wearied with laboring" (Mt. 11:28) to his rest. Just as the person who is able to, knows how, and ought to work, but will not, does not deserve to be fed (2 Thess. 3:10), so also the person who flees from spiritual labor does not deserve to be fed spiritually. This is because spiritual labor ought to go before spiritual refreshment [Feriae 5 in coena Dom. sermo 5; 9, 256a].

This spiritual labor consists in four exercises by which a person trains to be a good witness to Christ. The first is learning to be deeply sorry for his sins. Together with this goes striving like a good soldier to defeat his enemy the devil by keeping on faithfully doing the Lord's work, and avoiding anything that could take him away from doing good to others. Then must come growth in virtue; and along with this the patient bearing of troubles, even while he asks God to remove them. It is to people like these that the Lord says: "You are the men who have stood by me faithfully in my trials; and now I confer a kingdom on you, just as my Father conferred one on me: you will eat and drink at my table in my kingdom" (Lk. 22:28-30).

Developing one's Christian personality along these lines is possible in virtue of the special ways in which the divine life grows in the person who receives this Sacrament worthily. This takes place in four ways. First, his mind is enlightened, because as he receives this Sacrament regularly the fervor of devotion makes his mind day by day grow in understanding, an indication that love, through the insight it gives, is a good teacher. Then the affections are kindled so that he has a more burning desire for the Supreme Good the more he tastes God's delightfulness within himself. In the third place his aggressive tendencies are aroused to root out all evil for the sake of having eternal life. Lastly, he tends to die to the false values and stifling ambitions of the worldly person so as to be able to live according to God (Sermo de Ss. Corp. Christi, 22; 5, 560a-b).

The happy outcome of this development is expressed in Saint Bonaventure's own words in this way:

The first thing that the devoted soul draws from this Sacrament is that it is strengthened for action. . . . Secondly it is raised up to contemplation. . . . Thirdly it makes one ready for the revelation of divine secrets. . . . Finally it enlivens one to put the things of earth in second place and desire the good things of heaven [ibid., 13-16; 5, 558a-b].



entire Church:

The love communicated in the Blessed Sacrament not only builds the Christian up within, but also makes him reach out on all sides to others. Saint Bonaventure uses this delightful image to illustrate the point: "Just as fat stretches the skin, so Christ's body stretches the soul, which devoutly feeds on it. It stretches it in all directions." He then expands upon this, taking the priest as his example. What he says about the priest would, however, also apply in its own way to the rest of the faithful. He holds that the Sacrament of the altar inflames the priest with a love that expands his soul in all directions, that is, towards the

For after the priest's soul has been filled by the power of this Sacrament with the rich nourishment of love, he straight away fills the whole Church with good. Out of the abundance of love it is expanded upwards even to heaven as he makes an offering to God in honor of the saints reigning in heaven. It is expanded downwards even to purgatory, since he offers for the release of those who are there. It is expanded to the right, because he offers for the salvation of friends and benefactors. It is expanded to the left, since he offers for the salvation of enemies and persecutors. It is expanded to the rear in offering for the salvation of those who belong to the past. It is expanded to the front, because he offers for the salvation of all those destined, right up to the future day of judgment [ibid., 5; 5, 555b].

Exciting as are Saint Bonaventure's insights into how the Mass and Communion make of the Church a community of people capable of witnessing to Christ, there is another very down-to-earth aspect of his thinking about the Eucharist which deserves mention.

Of our five senses, the one which picks up information with the greatest force is sight. As a matter of fact it has been worked out that two-thirds of the impact of a television program comes from what is seen, and only one-third from what is heard. It is much the same in the Liturgy. If the Liturgy is to get its meaning across effectively, care must be taken about the externals, so that the value of what is being done and handled may be immediately plain to all.

It has already been mentioned a couple of times that devout and attentive reception of the Eucharist is necessary for it to achieve its full effect in the person receiving. This is the reason Saint Bonaventure gives why

it is also commanded that, in the celebration of Mass, this Sacrament be surrounded with special solemnity, of place as well as of time, of words and prayers as well as of vestments, so that both the priest who brings it about and those who receive it may lay hold on the gift of grace through which they are cleansed, enlightened, perfected, refreshed, enlivened, and most fervently swept up into Christ by a love that knows no bounds [Brevil., 6, 9, 7; 5, 275a].

We saw right at the beginning Saint Francis' concern that the circumstances of Christ's eucharistic presence should be worthy of the One present. We find the same practical concern in Saint Bonaventure. So he insists: "Be very careful that altar linen and holy vessels are bright and clean, so that He who is held in awe and honored by the angels and archangels may be treated with all possible honor and attention" (Tractatus, 7; 8, 101b).

On the other hand, Bonaventure, in true Franciscan spirit, is against unbecoming extravagance and ostentation in the Liturgy. The General Constitutions of the Chapter of Narbonne thus contain this regulation:

Any gold or silver thuribles, crosses, cruets, and other vessels, or statues, must be removed in virtue of obedience, and under the same obedience they are not to be had in future. The only exceptions are relic containers and pyxes or other vessels which customarily carry Christ's body. Chalices are to be simple and not heavy [Definitiones; 8, 466a].

Here there is room for a real apostolate for all members of the Franciscan family. Priests and all other religious, as well as secular Franciscans involved in liturgical celebration, can have special care that the churches they serve are clean and decent, and the ceremonies carried out with dignity and devotion. They can also try to persuade others to do the same, because one has to admit that in many churches the physical circumstances and ceremonies are not worthy of divine worship. Religious and seculars not directly responsible for liturgical celebration can offer themselves as sacristans. This is a very necessary function, more especially in those places where the linen and vestments are dirty and uncared for. An important task for enclosed nuns and housebound seculars with the necessary skill can be making new vestments and linen, especially for poor congregations, so that the people's poverty does not take from the dignity with which they offer worship to God. By contributing in this way to the external and visible aspects of the Liturgy, we can help to increase its spiritual effect on those who take part in it along with us.

What Saint Bonaventure says about the Office and Mass applies with due variation also to the other liturgical rites—the Sacraments. There is not much purpose, therefore, in going into each of these in detail. Suffice it to say that every one of the Sacraments has a crucial place in the Church's apostolic activity. The variety of the effects of Christ's saving work and the power of the divine life shared with men are too great to be expressed by a single sign. That is why there are several Sacraments providing for people's different needs (Brevil., 6, 2, 3).

These signs heal men's sinfulness and weakness, as well as communicate that share in the divine life which we call grace. In addition, however, they also teach by portraying the grace they give in signs and gestures that can be seen. They have a humbling effect, because they make us realize our total dependence on God in overcoming sin

and growing in holiness. They furthermore arouse us to action, each Sacrament according to the purpose for which Christ gave it to us (ibid., 6, 1, 4 and 6; 5, 265a).

The Sacraments, then, are a further liturgical contribution to the active life of the Church in its task of making Christ present in the world and carrying on his work. Saint Bonaventure puts this neatly when he writes:

There can be no perfect healing without preservation of the health brought back. In the heat and battle of life, this health cannot be preserved except in the ranks of the Church, terrible as an army with banners (Sg. 6, 9), and by means of the sevenfold armament of grace. Hence there must necessarily be seven Sacraments. This army consists of destructible parts. In order to be thoroughly and continually strengthened, it needs Sacraments that will strengthen, uplift, and revive. They do this by strengthening those engaged in battle, uplifting the fallen, and reviving the dying [ibid., 6, 3, 4; 5, 267b].

Saint Bonaventure's insights, then, help us to see a little more clearly why that apostolic man, Francis of Assisi, who lived not for himself, but so that others might advance towards God, was so concerned about the Liturgy in his writings to the friars and others. They have hopefully also helped us to understand how Vatican II could see the Liturgy as the heart of the Church's internal life and the source of all its evangelizing activity. Ω

Francis

The cavern's hallowed space
held its prisoner for release.

Once a refuge for his restlessness,
it now purged him with a balm of baptism.

His soul branded by a leper's touch
leaps laughing into love's embrace.

This fool comes dancing on the wings of fire
and rebirths creation with a new genesis song!

Sister Lorraine Wesolowski, O.S.F.

Bible Interpretation by Francis and His Followers: Some Hermeneutical Principles—II

KNUT WILLEM RUYTER, O.F.M.

III. Francis' Exegesis

ALTHOUGH FRANCIS' ACCESS to the Bible was limited, he, nevertheless, encountered it and that encounter transformed his life radically. It was, indeed, something so evident that it struck his contemporaries. Thomas of Celano describes him as the "new evangelist" (*novus evangelista*).

a. **Literal Observance of the Gospel.** Francis is often presented as the man who, having heard the words of Jesus, immediately puts them into practice. At first sight this is what Francis did. Twice in the Testament he strictly commands all his brothers, cleric and lay,

not to place glosses [*sine glossa*] on the Rule or on these words, saying: they are not to be understood this way. But as the Lord has granted me to speak and to write the Rule and these words simply and purely so shall you understand them simply and without gloss [*sine glossa*], and observe them with a holy manner of living until the end [Test 38-39].

Thomas of Celano is full of admiration and astonishment over this new form of response to the Gospel. After Francis had listened to the words of the Gospel in the church of St. Nicholas, he and his followers immediately adopted the Gospel way of life (Test 14), that is the shorthand for observing the message of all the writings of the Bible, not only the four gospels in the narrow sense.¹⁸ He followed in the footprints of Jesus, Thomas says (1Cel 84), because Francis "was not a deaf hearer of the Gospel, but committing all that he heard to praiseworthy memory, he tried diligently to carry it out to the letter" (*ad litteram*—1Cel 22; *Omnibus*, 247; cf. LP 69; *Omnibus*, 1046).

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In fact, this literal way of reading the Scriptures was in stark contrast to the contemporary allegorizing and moralizing exegesis.¹⁹ The exegetes inherited their method of exegesis from the early Fathers and often interspersed versions of the Bible with glosses,²⁰ written in the margin and between the lines of the text in an attempt to elucidate the sense or bring out points of doctrine. Master Anselm of Laon († 1117) is probably the central figure in the compilation of the *Glossa* on the different parts of the Bible, which later expanded and became known as the *Glossa Ordinaria*, i.e., a systematic compilation of glosses from Latin translations, patristic writings, and medieval glossatores. The influence of the *Glossa Ordinaria* was great on biblical and philosophical studies, and its authority from the 12th to the 16th century has been compared to that of the works of Aristotle in philosophy, the *Sentences* of Peter Lombard in theology, and the decrees of Gratian in canon law.²¹ It became the standard text for medieval exegesis. Saint Francis' repeated insistence that his writings should be copied *sine glossa* and that the Gospel should be followed *ad litteram* shows, however, how the glosses had acquired a pejorative meaning, which implied "glossing over" instead of stating frankly the intended literal meaning.²² To be able to appreciate the newness of Francis' interpretation, we should note carefully the medieval exegesis of Mt. 10:7-10 which was predominant in his time:²³

v. 7: *The reign of God is at hand.* The reign of God is at hand through faith. For just as the sinner may be earth, so the just man may be heaven, where God dwells. It is for this reason that Scripture says: *The reign of God is already in your midst.* Note the necessity of preaching: *The reign of God is at hand.*

To live the way of the Gospel literally and without gloss did not mean a legalistic and prohibitive interpretation, but rather to live the whole Gospel according to its spirit.

v. 8: *Cure the sick.* The Church comforts the sick by its posture of charity; it raises those who are dead in sin or who are without faith; it

heals those who are defiled by the leprosy of error; it puts demons to flight through exorcism. *The gift you have received, give as a gift.* Lest Judas who held the purse should want to accumulate money by way of all this power, the Lord checks such remissness by saying: *The gift you have received, give as a gift.* The Lord condemns the perfidy of simony. To set a price on spiritual gifts is to cheapen them.

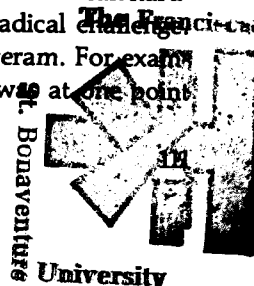
v. 9: *Provide yourselves with neither gold nor silver.* Whoever possesses these would seem to be preaching not for the salvation of souls, but for profit. Nor copper in your belts. Necessities can be considered in two ways: first, as that by which what we need can be bought, and second, as the necessities of life themselves. Money in the belt signifies that by which necessities are bought; and traveling bag signifies where what is bought is reserved. At the time of his passion Christ spoke this: *When I sent you without purse and bag, were you ever in need of anything? And they answered: No.*

v. 10: [*Provide yourselves with*] . . . no shoes. Plato says that the two extremities of the body should not be covered, and that we should not become accustomed to effeminacy in head and feet. When these are strong, the other parts of the body are healthier. [*Provide yourselves with*] . . . no walking staff. Matthew and Luke say no walking staff; Mark says but a staff only. By this word and by the others is shown how one ought to set out on a missionary journey. Etc.²⁴

Other glosses are even more allegorical and moralizing, distinguishing between true gold and false gold, representing respectively the wisdom of God and earthly wisdom, which is diabolical. The sandals, which are made from the skin of dead animals, signify fraudulent execution of wills, etc.²⁵

In stark contrast to this type of exegesis Francis heard the text in a new key, unheard of before, as it were.²⁶ That morning at St. Nicholas those words from St. Matthew acquired a new and different meaning. The words of God spoke directly to him. No mediation was necessary by those upon whom was conferred the power to unmask the truth of the Bible. Francis' literal—or better, realistic—reading was simple, honest, and straightforward. His reading was applied to his situation and experience.

Let us now look at a few examples to see if and to what extent the biblical texts required a literal observance. Some radical passages, to be sure, are simply quoted without commentary (Mt. 5:39; 6:34; Lk. 6:29; 14:26). They stand in the texts as open demands which can hardly be circumscribed in the letter. But they offer a radical challenge. Sometimes this challenge was taken literally—*ad litteram*. For example, Mt. 6:34: "Take no thought for the morrow," was at one point



taken seriously in a radical manner: the brothers did not follow the usual custom of putting their beans to soak in warm water the day before they were to be eaten. Similarly, they did not accept more alms than they could use in one day. These customs were held for a long time, it seems, especially by friars in rural areas (see SP 19; Omnibus, 1144; and LP 4; Omnibus, 980). Another example may also be found in the Legend of Perugia: Looking nostalgically back to the origins of the Order, the Legend depicts Bernard as the ideal friar who "fulfilled the perfection of the gospel to the letter by distributing all his goods to the poor" (according to Mt. 19:21; cf. LP 107).

But on the points where Francis required that a text be concretely put into practice, we discover several interesting distinctions.

i. As to the counsel, "Go and sell what you have" (Mt. 19:21), the candidate who seeks admission to the Order is invited "to sell all his possessions and strive to give them all to the poor," the Rule says; but it adds a significant condition, "if he wishes and is able to do so spiritually and without impediment" (RegNB 2.4). If he cannot give up his possessions, while wishing to do so interiorly, he should "leave those things behind, and this suffices for him" (RegNB 2.11; cf. RegB 2.6).

ii. The prescription from the missionary discourse, "Take no bag for your journey, nor two tunics, nor sandals, nor a staff" (Mt. 10:10) is emphasized in the Testament: "[the brothers] were content with one tunic, patched inside and out, with a cord and short trousers. And we had no desire for anything more" (Test 16-17). Notwithstanding, the two Rules allow for a second tunic "if necessary" (RegNB 2.13; RegB 2:14). These regulations should be followed "unless at some time it seems [proper] to these same ministers before God to make other provisions" (RegB 2:10). "Those who are forced by necessity" may wear shoes (RegB 2:15). In any case, they should wear poor clothes and avoid expensive clothing. The point of all this is, I think, that Francis refused to be defined in an accepted social category (even as a hermit). Rather, his plan implies some desire for a marginal social status.

iii. The refusal of money (Lk. 9:3) is strongly emphasized in the Rules:

. . . none of the brothers, wherever he may be or wherever he goes, should in any way carry, receive, or have received [by another] either money or coins, whether for clothing or books or payment for any work—indeed, for no reason . . . [RegB 8.3].

In spite of this emphatic statement, the Rule envisages situations in

which one can receive money to provide for the evident needs of the lepers (RegB 8.10), of the sick brothers (RegB 8.3), and of other friars, taking into account the diversity of places, seasons, and cold climates (RegNB 4.2).

b. **An Exegesis of Faith.** These examples bring out the permissive and personal character of Francis' interpretation of the Bible. To live the way of the Gospel *ad litteram* and *sine glossa* did not mean a legalistic and prohibitive interpretation, but rather to live the whole Gospel according to its spirit.

Francis' relationship to the Bible was of a spiritual nature. The reading of the Scriptures always took place in the context of prayer and worship. Francis himself connected the discovery of his life, not with the text of passage of Scripture but with a direct intervention of "the Most High himself," who revealed to him that he should live according to the form of the holy Gospel (Test 14). The expression he used was *revelatio*. It is this profound faith in God that also guided his reading of Scripture. Apart from this experience of God and Jesus Christ, there is, as far as Francis is concerned, no valid interpretation. We can say this on the basis of the seventh Admonition. There Francis drew up something like a hermeneutical treatise. He says, on the basis of 2 Cor 3:6 ("The letter kills, but the spirit gives life") that "religious are killed by the letter who do not wish to follow *the spirit of Sacred Scripture*, but only wish to know [what] the words [are] and [how to] interpret them to others." On the other hand, "those are given *life by the spirit of Sacred Scripture* who do not refer to themselves any text which they know or seek to know, but by word and example return everything to the most high Lord God to whom every good belongs" (Adm. 7.3-4; italics added). The interpretive key for Francis is not the letter as such, but the spirit of the words and message of Jesus, the Christ.²⁷ By the experience of conversion these words became spirit and life (Jn. 6:63) for him and the community. It is this spirit that forms the basis for his gospel project. It is a spirit that encourages life and imagination. This is expressed most emphatically in Francis' Letter to Brother Leo: "In whatever way it seems best to you to please the Lord God and to follow His footprints and His poverty, do this with the blessing of God and my obedience" (EpLeo 3). This advice leaves a lot of freedom for each Franciscan in the manner he or she responds to the spirit of the Sacred Scriptures.

c. **An Innovative and Practical Exegesis.** In addition to this it must be emphasized that Francis' interpretation was a novelty in his time. The biographers fall over themselves in stressing this. It was only by

means of dispensations that the Pope guaranteed the Franciscan Orders a place within the Church. For a long period of time scholarly theology resisted the pastoral practice of the mendicant friars with dogmatic and scriptural arguments. Truly, we can say that Francis displayed an innovative understanding of Sacred Scripture. His exegesis was a matter of the heart, a *recordatio* (2Cel 102), far removed from the detailed, abstract, anemic, and allegorical exegesis of the *glossatores*. Very often this kind of exegesis was purely academic. Francis rejected this exegesis of the gloss passionately. To illustrate this point, Celano says in a chapter on holy simplicity:

This is that simplicity that . . . chooses to act rather than to learn or to teach. This is that simplicity that . . . leaves wordy circumlocutions, ornaments, and embellishments, vain displays and curiosities, to those who are marked by the fall. [The] habit [of simplicity is] more ready to be used by those who are poor as regards learning (2Cel 189; italics added).

This for Francis is also what is meant by the uncomplicated immediacy of the Gospel. It demands to be interpreted in practice in one's life. Francis' negative attitude to learning and scholarship becomes more understandable when we know something about the intellectual milieu of the time of which Arnaldo Fortini gives a vivid and shocking description in his *New Life of Saint Francis*. It was often characterized by a lavish lifestyle, pride, and greed, and also exploitation of the poor. This is why Saint Francis was so fond of the friars, Riccieri and Pellegrino, two scholars who renounced their positions at the University of Bologna, remained lay brothers, and walked on the way which Francis called "the way of humility."²⁸ "We made no claim to learning," Francis says in his Testament, but he still allows some friars to study as long as the spirit of prayer and devotion is not extinguished (RegNB 5.1-2).

This is so, because ultimately the Gospel is interpreted only in Christian living. A practical application of this was, for example, to give away the only Gospel book they had to a woman who was in need. "I believe, indeed," Francis said, "that the gift of it will be more pleasing to God than reading from it" (2Cel 91). His interpretation was a practical way of life. It meant concretely that the brothers "should rejoice when they live among people [who are considered to be] of little worth and who are looked down upon, among the poor and the powerless, the sick and the lepers, and the beggars by the wayside" (RegNB 9.2). Interpretation of the Bible is for Saint Francis a matter of

the heart, realized in Christian living: "The Most High himself revealed to me that I should live according to the form of the Gospel . . . so you [brothers] too must live by them, doing good to the last" (Test 14, 39).

IV. Some Hermeneutical Principles for Franciscan Living Today

SECTION III HAS ALREADY DESCRIBED the hermeneutical principles of Saint Francis' reading of Holy Scripture. His reading is subjective, personal, and innovative, based on the situation in thirteenth-century "Italy" and on his own conversion. It is also literal, guided by a profound faith. Finally his reading is practical and realistic, oriented toward down-to-earth action. In sum, that is for Francis the the radical following of Jesus Christ.

a. *Principles in the History of the Order.* It must be noted that Francis' interpretation differs from that of his followers and biographers. They were familiar with the scientific methods of their time. In this framework they tried to preserve the literal interpretation to which they were so strictly admonished in the Testament.²⁹ Here one example must suffice. The use of the expressions *ad litteram* and *sine glossa* in the *Legend of Perugia* is, in reality, a means of disparaging the state of the Order at the time of its writing. When some Ministers Provincial declined to be bound by the literal observance of the Rule, especially in regard to poverty, the voice of the risen Christ was heard in the air: "Francis, nothing in the Rule comes from you; everything comes from me. I wish their Rule to be observed to the letter, to the letter, to the letter, without gloss, without gloss, without gloss" (LP 113). Here we have projected onto Christ a passionate concern for the fundamentalist or literalist observance of the Gospel. Wrenched from the personal and faithful exegesis of Saint Francis, this proved disastrous to the Order in many ways, especially in the disputes over the glosses of poverty, which have split the Order many times.³⁰ This literalist reading has, I am afraid, haunted the Order down to our own time and even given rise to a constant guilty conscience among many Franciscans. In our century, this was intensified by the influential *Vie de S. François d'Assise*, in which the Protestant scholar Paul Sabatier drives a wedge between the pure Gospel observance of Francis and the corrupt lifestyle of his followers. Be that as it may: as far as I am concerned, no apology is needed and, even less, a guilty conscience.

b. *A Return to the Exegesis of Saint Francis.* In the aftermath of



Vatican II's call to renewal in religious Orders, the Franciscans have accomplished a lot in the rediscovery of the original charism. One of those rediscoveries is the proper reading of Scripture. Personally, I believe that Francis' principles of interpretation are applicable, with a few modifications, to a Franciscan reading of Scripture today.

c. **Literal Interpretation.** Undoubtedly, the Bible is today readily accessible (though it is fair to say, I think, that many Catholics are not familiar with it). Among those who are familiar with the book, the critical reading is widely accepted. Honestly, I do not think Francis would have had any problems with modern biblical criticism. For me it is striking to notice how similar Francis' use and exegesis of texts are to those of modern critical commentators. Francis' literal sense of the Scripture is in keeping with the understanding of Raymond Brown: ". . . the literal interpretation is what was originally intended by the author."³¹

In recent years this literal reading has often been equated and compared to a similar understanding of Scripture by the various evangelical and fundamentalist movements. This similarity is, however, only there at first sight. In a masterly fashion Anton Rotzetter has shown the radical contrast of interpretation between a Franciscan reading and a fundamentalist reading of Scripture. The former is, he says, committed to a literal, personal, permissive, progressive, sacramental, and commemorative interpretation, while the latter defends an objectified, prohibitive, regressive, absolute, and dogmatic interpretation of the Bible.³²

Thus the surefootedness of Francis' "critical" understanding of the Bible must be emphasized. I do think, however, that he would have had problems with the technical and highly sophisticated aspects of modern biblical scholarship. Possibly, he would have scorned some of them for limiting scriptural studies to linguistic and intellectual finesse, leaving the reading of the Bible spiritually sterile, lifeless, and dreadfully boring because it has lost all basis in faith and daily life.

d. **Subjective Interpretation.** In any case, the literal sense as Francis understood it went farther than assessing the original intention of the author (of which he probably knew very little, if anything!). In practice, Francis lived out the hermeneutical principle of appropriation or application, simply the discerning of the meaning of the text for the contemporary reader. The theories of Paul Ricoeur and Hans-Georg Gadamer,³³ applied to scriptural exegesis by Sandra M. Schneiders,³⁴ may be affirmed and proven valid in the exegesis of Saint Francis and the contemporary Franciscan reading of the Bible. Their principle says that the interpretation of the Bible is not static and limited to the *Sitz im Leben* of the texts, but it is dynamic and open-ended—i.e., it says something to the present as if it were said specifically to it.³⁵ In a new context and situation, the encounter with the texts—in private prayer, in worship, in the community—transcends their meaning and applies it to one's present experience.³⁶ It is as though the understanding consists of a fusion of horizons between the world of the reader and the world of the text.³⁷ This is, I believe, what happened to Saint Francis when he heard the Gospel text from Mt. 10:7-10. The fusion took place: "This is what I want, this is what I seek, this is what I long to do with all my heart." In other words, it is the reponse to the texts which reinterprets and applies the meaning of the text. Francis was such a respondent, whose charismatic and radical gospel way of life still inspires people to respond to the tradition in the situation of today.³⁸

This hermeneutical principle is crucial for the reading of Scripture as a way of life. It frees the friars from slavishly imitating the Gospel and the Rule. No Franciscan is—or should be—a copy of Saint Francis. On the contrary, each Franciscan (as every Christian) must reinterpret the texts in his own situation and experience based on his/her own experience of conversion and faith. This is the reason why it is so important that every Franciscan be consciously aware of his or her own spiritual autobiography. Conversion and faith are, it seems to me, the prerequisites for "theological exegesis."³⁹ Theological exegesis releases, mediates, and transcends the meaning of the scriptural message. The inherent surplus of meaning is revealed in the context of one's life. The gap between the tradition, which is both the New Testament writings and the writings of Saint Francis, is bridged by this kind of interpretation, i.e., a theological interpretation which is in continuity with the tradition (*ibid.*, 728). Without discarding the objective value of interpretation in its original *Sitz im Leben*, we must realize that it is the subjective interpretation of the tradition that is life-giving. "Subjectivity," says Schneiders, "is that personal

authenticity which comes from the new self-understanding which is given to us by and through our reading of the text."⁴⁰ The personal and subjective encounter with the texts of Scripture is the challenge offered to every Franciscan and every Christian. This principle of subjectivity touches the heart of the believer and transforms our lives. This also means, in my opinion, that we must allow for a pluriformity of interpretations, because when we incline our ears to the voice of the Son of God (EpOrd 5-6), it is very likely that we shall hear and also respond in quite different ways.

e. **Orthopraxis as the Goal of Interpretation.** This is, I think, the key hermeneutical principle in the writings of Saint Francis. Inspired by God, his encounter with the gospel texts served as a catalyst of action.⁴¹ It is beyond doubt that Francis was also concerned about orthodoxy (cf. RegNB 9.1), but his main objective was to live the life of the Gospel. The theory (orthodoxy) is useless in itself if it does not lead to action in faith (orthopraxis). It seems to me that it is this praxis that validates any interpretation of Scripture. As far as I can see, action is part of the very intentionality of the biblical texts discussed in Sections II and III. In my experience the radical orthopraxis has retained its provocative power today. In his outstanding book, *Zeit der Orden? Zur Mystik und Politik der Nachfolge*, Johannes B. Metz has described this potential dynamite available in religious life. The radical orthopraxis should function as innovation and shock-therapy in the Church and in the world.⁴² The basis of this provocative power has one source only: God. It is the encounter with God which transforms us and enables us to follow in the footprints of Jesus Christ. If this is so, and I believe it is, it is possible to dispense with theoretical hermeneutics and even the historical-critical method.⁴³ Outstanding persons of our own time witness to this by their lives: Maximilian Kolbe, Charles de Foucauld, Mother Teresa, Abbé Pierre, O. Romero, and numerous unknown lay and religious men and women around the world. The interpretation of Scripture as a practical way of life is not dependent on scholarly exegesis (though I consider it a very helpful and indispensable tool for myself).⁴⁴ The example of these witnesses urges us to see the relative importance of scholarly exegetical work. For believing Christians, the Bible is the Book of Life and of the Church, whose interpretation is foremost a matter of the heart. For Francis, the Franciscans, and every Christian, the words of the Lord are spirit and life (cf. Jn. 6:63).

This approach, unmarred by the exegesis of the Middle Ages or by fundamentalist simplification or by the sophisticated finesse of

modern scholarship, appears close to us and challenges us, each in his or her own way, to live according to the form of the Gospel and follow in the footprints of our Lord Jesus Christ. Ω

Notes

¹⁷Some of the following points are taken from Anton Rotzetter, "Mysticism and Literal Observance of the Gospel in Francis of Assisi," *Concilium* 149 (1981), 56-64.

¹⁸Cf. Duane V. Lapsanski, "Vivere secundum formam sancti Evangelii," *Perfectio evangelica. Eine begriffsgeschichtliche Untersuchung im frühfranziskanischen Schriftum* (München: Verlag Ferdinand Schöningh, 1974), 55-59.

¹⁹See Ceslaus Spicq, *Esquisse d'une histoire de l'exégèse latine au moyen âge* (Paris: Librairie philosophique J. Vrin, 1944); Beryl Smalley, *The Study of the Bible in the Middle Ages* (2nd rev. ed., Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1952); Henri de Lubac, *Exégèse médiévale: les quatre sens de l'Écriture* (Paris: Aubier, 1959-1964). For a comprehensive and systematic treatment see Dominic V. Monti, "Heritage and Context," in *Bonaventure's Interpretation of Scripture in His Exegetical Works* (typescript, Ph.D. dissertation, Chicago, 1979), 12-78.

²⁰See B. Smalley, "The Gloss," in *The Study of the Bible in the Middle Ages, Lexicon für Theologie und Kirche, IV* (Freiburg-im-Breisgau, 1960), 968-71.

²¹See T. A. Collins, "Bible (Exegesis)," *New Catholic Encyclopedia*, II (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Co., 1967), 501.

²²Smalley, 271.

²³Cf. the edition of J.-P. Migne: Walafrid Strabo, *Glossa Ordinaria*, PL 114-115 (Paris, 1879). B. Smalley et al. have shown that the glosses cannot be ascribed to Strabo († 849), but must have originated around the time of Anselm of Laon († 1117). She sweepingly concludes that "anyone who has tried to use [the edition of Migne] knows how useless it is" (*The Study of the Bible*, 56, 60).

²⁴Translated by Canisius Connors, St. Bonaventure University, from the glosses on *Evangelium secundum Matthaeum* in PL 114, 118.

²⁵Quoted from T. Desbonnets, art. cit., 42.

²⁶It should be noted that the idea of a literal interpretation is not new with Saint Francis. The Victorines (i.e., the followers of Hugh of St. Victor († 1141) proposed an exegesis that was concerned with the literal meaning of the Scriptures. But this idea did not gain ground until the 13th century with the influence of Saint Francis; see *The Study of the Bible*, 97-106.

²⁷See Optatus Van Asseldonk, "De geest die levend maakt en de letter die doodt, in franciscaans licht," *Franciscaans Leven* 42 (1959), 129-45.

²⁸A. Fortini, *St. Francis of Assisi*, ET by Helen Moak (New York: Crossroad Books, 1981), 445, 449.

²⁹St. Bonaventure's exegesis, for example, was definitely scientific and academic, but with his own Franciscan background he was forced to appeal to the literal interpretation of the Bible and became "more restrained in the use of spiritual interpretation," compared to contemporary theologians; cf. D. Monti, 290ff.

³⁰Cf. John Moorman, *A History of the Franciscan Order. From Its Origin to the year 1517* (Oxford at the Clarendon Press, 1968).

³¹Raymond Brown, *The Critical Meaning of the Bible* (New York: Paulist Press, 1981), 24.

³²"Mysticism and Literal Observance of the Gospel in Francis of Assisi," 57-63. See also James Barr, "The Fundamentalist Understanding of Scripture," *Concilium* 138 (8/1980), 70-74.

³³Hans-Georg Gadamer, *Truth and Method* (New York: Seabury Press, 1975); Paul Ricoeur, *Interpretation Theory: Discourse and the Surplus of Meaning* (Fort Worth: Texas Christian University Press, 1976); *Essays on Biblical Interpretation* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1980).

³⁴Sandra M. Schneiders, "Faith, Hermeneutics, and the Literal Sense of Scripture," *Theological Studies* 39 (1978), 719-36; "The Foot Washing (John 13:1-20): An Experiment in Hermeneutics," *The Catholic Biblical Quarterly* 43 (1980), 76-92; "The Paschal Imagination: Objectivity and Subjectivity in New Testament Interpretation," *Theological Studies* 43 (1982), 52-68.

³⁵Gadamer, *Truth and Method*, 257.

³⁶Schneiders, "Faith, Hermeneutics, and the Literal Sense of Scripture," 732.

³⁷Idem, "The Paschal Imagination . . .," 62.

³⁸These reconstructive principles (tradition, situation, and respondent) are taken from Paul Achtemeier, *The Inspiration of Scripture: Problems and Proposals* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1980), 124-34, here p. 132.

³⁹Cf. Schneiders' understanding of this term in "Faith, Hermeneutics, and the Literal Sense of the Scripture," 724-25.

⁴⁰"The Paschal Imagination . . .," 62.

⁴¹The phrase is taken from Peter Chirico, *Infallibility: The Crossroads of Doctrine* (Kansas City: Sheed Andrews and McMeel, 1977), 28.

⁴²See George T. Montague, "Hermeneutics and the Teaching of Scripture," *The Catholic Biblical Quarterly* 41 (1979), 1-17, here esp. 11-12, 16 (note 11 of the proposed paradigm).

⁴³Verlag Herder, 1977. ET by T. Linton, *Followers of Christ. Perspectives on Religious Life* (New York: Paulist Press, 1978). Unfortunately, the provocative sense of the German title got lost in the translation.

⁴⁴Cf. Mary C. Boys, *Biblical Interpretation in Religious Education* (Birmingham, AL: Religious Education Press, 1980). Note the discussion on the gap

between biblical scholars and non-specialists (i.e., religious educators, the common reader of the Bible, etc.), and the helpful proposals for collaboration (pp. 296-338). Sanders' seven principles of interpretation are sound (pp. 314-15), but only ideally so, I think. Non-specialist readers are not, and should not be, "totally dependent upon an expert analyst." Boys stresses that "the non-specialists bring very special gifts to biblical interpretation (listening, life experience, work, questioning, etc.). . . . The call to conversion in the biblical texts can be understood by all" (p. 320). This is stated even more clearly by Boys in "Biblical Criticism and the Church Today," *PACE* 11 (Feb.-Mar. 1981): ". . . correct interpretation of the Bible is not restricted to professionals . . . non-specialists can read and savor the Scriptures with true comprehension" (p. 2).

⁴⁵A note of caution. I don't suggest that we should do away with the historical-critical method. On the contrary, I suggest that we need to go beyond it to make the reading of the Bible life and spirit giving. As Sandra Schneiders put it, "The question is not whether [the historical-critical method] should be done away with, but whether it is enough"; cf. "From Exegesis to Hermeneutics: The Problem of Contemporary Meaning of Scripture," *Horizons* 8 (1981), 23-39, here p. 32.

Postscript. Since I don't know Italian I was not able to incorporate the insights of the following articles in this paper. However, in fairness to the topic, I'd like to direct the reader's attention to Martino Conti, "La Sacra Scrittura nell'Esperienza e negli Scritti di San Francesco: Criteri Ermeneutici," *Lettura Biblico-Teologica delle Fonti Francescana*, ed. G. Cardaropoli and M. Conti (Roma: Ed. Antonianum, 1979), 295 pp., here pp. 19-59; Lazaro Iriarte, "Figure Bibliche 'Privilegiate' nell'Itinerario Spirituale di San Francesco," *ibid.*, 61-81; and Optatus Van Asseldonk, "Insegnamenti Biblici 'Privilegiati' negli Scritti di S. Francesco d'Assisi," *ibid.*, 83-116.

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This Day

This day all dark is filled with wondrous light;
the world's great stone of grief is rolled away.
God's word is kept—O truly blessed night!

Grim death becomes an open door for flight
to life eternal; newness from decay.
This day all dark is filled with wondrous light.

Our Jesus lives and shares with us His might
to conquer sin and follow in His way.
God's word is kept—O truly blessed night!

From depths He draws and lifts us to the height
of life in Him, although our deeds betray.
This day all dark is filled with wondrous light.

How gently he appears to inner sight
when humanly we doubt or fear, yet pray:
God's word is kept—O truly blessed night!

Sweet Christ, our life, our peace, and all delight,
You bid us trust our deepest hopes this day.
This day all dark is filled with wondrous light;
God's word is kept—O truly blessed night!

Sister Mary Agnes, P.C.C.

Book Reviews

A Guide to American Catholic History. By John Tracy Ellis and Robert Trisco. 2nd ed., revised and enlarged, Santa Barbara, CA: ABC-Clio, Inc., 1982. Pp. xiii-265. Paper, \$19.95.

Reviewed by Peter F. Macaluso, Ph.D., Associate Professor of History, Montclair State College, and Adjunct Associate Professor of History, St. Peter's College.

The *Guide to American Catholic History* has been an invaluable companion to scholars of U.S. Catholic history for over twenty years. It has now been updated, revised, and enlarged to become the most current, as well as the most complete, bibliography of American Catholicism available today.

To the entries of the first edition, four hundred eighty-nine new ones have been added here. Of these, fifty-one are titles published before 1959, and four hundred thirty-eight are titles published between 1959 and 1980. There are one thousand two hundred fifty-eight entries in all, a rich panorama of five hundred years of American Catholic life. This work is expertly organized as a precise reference. The editors have added cross references that lead to auxiliary topics, and manuscript collections are helpful in the discovery of primary research sources, as is the information for obtaining out-of-print publications.

"Guides," "General Works," and "Studies in Diocesan, Sectional, and Parish History" make up the first portion of the book. "Biographies, Correspondence, and Memoirs" comprises the largest number of entries. "Religious Communities," "Education," and "Special Studies" are the three following sections, with the last containing subheadings and subdivisions reflecting the proliferation of books on topics that in the past were relatively neglected. Categories such as "Immigration, Ethnic and Racial History" and "Interfaith" are now included. "Periodicals" and "Historical Societies" complete this bibliography. Over sixty pages of index indicate the numbered entries of the bibliography, and the material is indexed by author, title, and subject.

We are indebted to the book's well known editors and Professors of History at Catholic University of America: Msgr. John Tracy Ellis and Fr. Robert Trisco. The *Guide to American Catholic History* is an indispensable aid. This revised classic should be in front of your reference shelf.

In the Womb of the Cave. Edited by André Cirino, O.F.M. Andover, MA: Charisma Press, 1981. Pp. xvi-368. Cloth, \$12.95; paper, \$4.95.

Reviewed by Sister Lorraine

Wesolowski, O.S.F., a member of the Sisters of Saint Francis of Millvale, PA, in Bethal Park, Pennsylvania.

Upon ending his Assisian pilgrimage, Father Cirino continued his reflections on the writings of Francis. To commemorate the eighth centenary of Francis' birth, he compiled selected writings of Francis as meditative passages for each day of the year. The design of this book facilitates its serving as a journal, as there is ample space provided on each page for personal reflections.

The editor prefaces the book with various suggestions and methods for guiding the reader through prayerful considerations on the life of Francis. Excerpts from the Admonitions, the Letter to All the Faithful Christians, the Rule of 1223, the Message of Saint Francis to the Poor Clares of San Damiano, and the Canticle of the Sun are just some of the fine selections of writings the book has to offer. These passages allow the reader to touch the many events, moods, and responses Francis experienced in his life of conversion.

As the editor suggests, using the book as a journal provides the reader with more than just intellectual snatches and glimpses of the words of Francis. Rather, especially for Franciscans, the book enables one to journey with the man from Assisi as he grows in experiencing the love of God throughout his lifetime to his final birth through Sister Death.

The disappointment this reviewer found in the book was that calendar dates that would be significant for Franciscans did not have relevant passages for the day which would put one in touch with the feast celebrated

on that day.

However, in using this book as a pilgrimage through a year with Francis, the reader could come to a better understanding of the world and the life of this 13th-century saint with all its implications for the 21st century Franciscan.

Politics and the State: The Catholic View. By Thomas Molnar.

Chicago: Franciscan Herald Press, 1980. Pp. xxiii-153. Cloth, \$7.50.

Reviewed by Father Paul C. Eckler, O.F.M., M.Div. (Washington Theological Union), campus minister at Siena College and a member of the local Committee on Peace and Justice.

Thomas Molnar suggests that Thomas Aquinas' synthesis between the individual and the state is essential for freeing society from its pagan, desacralized ways. In a Thomistic perspective, it is important to note, as Molnar points out, that although the individual was created as the primary cause and the state as secondary cause, "God works not through primary agents, that is, individuals, but through secondary agents, such as the state" (p. 29). (Personally, I find this a rather weak understanding of Thomas' notion of transcendental causality.) But the state has lost its grasp of Christianity's meaning and is now led about by pagan ideologues. Therefore, "Christians confront not merely a completely secular state but a desacralized, pagan society as well" (p. 127). The purpose of this confrontation is nothing more than to right the state

in its course so that it may be returned to its proper function in guiding the human community.

But the book is a disappointment. The author's polemical style leaves the reader wondering if and when Molnar will forego the shortcomings of Aristotle, Rousseau, and Hegel and will present his own position in some depth. But it is not to be. When the reader expects some development to the author's thought on the individual-state relationship, there is only a critique of contemporary society's failure to serve as a channel of God's action. Molnar's point is certainly worthy of discussion, but the author fails to make a well thought out argument.

Ministry Burnout. By John A. Sanford. New York: Paulist Press, 1982. Pp. viii-117, including bibliography. Cloth, \$5.95.

Reviewed by Father Richard J. Mucowski, O.F.M., Ed.D., Assistant Professor of Psychology, Psychologist/Counseling Center, and Guardian, Siena College Friary.

Ministry Burnout is a book written by a Jungian analyst and son of an Anglican priest for clergy persons and those laity involved in religious ministry which primarily but not solely takes place in a parish setting. Sanford describes burnout in terms of an energy problem. The task he sets for himself is "to see what it is about the work of the ministering person that makes him prone to burning out, and to see if there are practical and spiritual solutions available to the person who feels he is burning

out" (p. 4).

In the first chapter of the book Sanford identifies nine difficulties which may face a ministering person in his or her work. These difficulties include the notions: (1) that the ministering person's work is never finished, (2) that the ministering person cannot always tell if his/her work is having any results, (3) that the work of the ministering person is repetitive, (4) that this person must deal with other people's expectations, (5) that this person often works with the same people year in and year out, (6) that there is a tremendous energy drain for any ministering person who works with people in need, (7) that often the ministering person deals with people who desire "strokes" rather than spiritual direction, (8) that the ministering person many times functions on his or her social mask or "persona," (9) that the ministering person can become exhausted by failure. Throughout each of the chapters from two to ten the author tries, sometimes with lack of clarity and cohesiveness, to discuss the particular difficulty which leads to burnout. This is done from the perspective of the psychology of the ministering person and from the perspective of the spiritual life of the ministering person and of those persons who are served through that ministry. Finally, where possible, Sanford makes practical suggestions for dealing with such problems.

For the most part Sanford did what he set out to do. However, there are a number of problems with this book. The author's use of "he" in one chapter or example and "she" in another was a major distraction to this reviewer. It would have been bet-

ter if he could have used a more neutral but less distracting way of handling his examples. A second distraction for this reviewer was Sanford's references to other books either he or other colleagues have written on a specific area under discussion. Often he would lead the reader on and then say: "I am not going to say more on dreams [or other topics] here because I have already written two books on the subject . . . (p. 110)." A digression and further elaboration while the reader's attention is with the author can often be of great assistance. To send a reader to other books written by the author, while they may be helpful, is presumptuous of the reader's time and in some cases financial resources if such reading material does not presently exist in the reader's library.

Sections of the book are shallow in description of types of people the ministering person needs to be wary of. For instance, the author tries to describe a person who lacks "sufficient life vitality" (p. 51), but he doesn't give a clinical example to en flesh his description of a type which he has identified. Furthermore, he uses Fritz Kunkel's typologies rather freely.

In chapter seven, the author discusses a new and potentially controversial topic, that of payment for spiritual/pastoral counseling. It seems that the reasons he lists for remuneration of counseling are good, but others will find his presentation here a matter to be challenged. This reviewer suggests that if a ministering person has difficulty accepting recompense for his or her spiritual/counseling services, perhaps that

reluctance might be due to doubt of the minister's own self-worth as a helping professional or to his or her lack of confidence in his or her own skills to help another individual grow.

Chapter ten, which focuses on failure, and chapter eleven, which analyzes the exhausted ego, are probably the best chapters in the entire book. Both chapters represent, in this reviewer's estimation, a good deal of personal meditation and suffering which undoubtedly took place in the

Pilgrimage to a Hermitage

Prayerfully
reverently
humbly
penitently
for the love of God—
not to be odd—
on a pilgrimage
to a hermitage
I go:
a pilgrim
to experience Him,
seeking in the dark
from His Heart
through His
and our Mother's
a Spark
to enkindle
my heart,
of His Light
a Ray
to radiate
through my soul
to enkindle others'.

Raphael Brown, S.F.O.

author's own life. The use of Scripture and literature can help the reader meditate on his or her life situation as a way to forestall burnout or rejuvenate oneself as a ministering person already in burnout.

The last chapter, a kind of hodgepodge of helpful hints, has another major caveat: "We can look for new sources of energy, as long as we remember that each person is an individual, and what may be a source of energy for one person may not be a source of energy for someone else" (p. 106). This becomes an excuse for a poorly developed chapter.

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Shorter Book Notices

JULIAN A. DAVIES, O.F.M.

Challenges in Prayer. By Basil Pennington, O.C.S.O. Wilmington, DE: Michael Glazier, 1982. Pp. vi-109. Cloth, \$8.95; paper, \$4.95.

Author's disclaimer to the contrary notwithstanding, this brief book is a fresh, well written treatise in prayer. The key issues: motivation, time, dryness, distractions, methods, contemplation—are all discussed in a way that people who do pray (but not as well as they would like) and people who don't yet pray can much profit from. As a religious I found the notion of "tithing" time to God—giving God 2.4 hours a day—an enlightening and valuable suggestion. Chapters on prayer of praise and prayer of petition, and on Jesus and prayer and Mary and prayer, complement the observations

of an experienced pray-er. A book, of course, isn't a substitute for the real thing, but it can help you "be all you can be" in your personal relationship with God.

Tomorrow's Church: What's Ahead for American Catholics. Edited by Edward C. Herr. Chicago: Thomas More Press, 1982. Pp. 226. Cloth, \$12.95.

An introduction and ten essays on ten topics: laity, parish, structure, priesthood, women, schools, marriage, the Black community, the Hispanic community, and Protestant and Jewish relations, make up this book. Each of the authors (ten in all, since the editor has an essay on schools) looks at the present scene

and essays some projections into the future, or at least some hopes or suggestions. I found the essay on Hispanics the most informative, that on priesthood the most trenchant, those on Blacks and schools among the most optimistic, and that on women the least satisfactory. *Tomorrow's Church*, in my judgment, is worthwhile because of what it tells us about today's Church.

The Words of Saint Francis. Edited by James Meyer, O.F.M. Revised ed.: Chicago: Franciscan Herald Press, 1982. Pp. viii-434. Paper, \$6.00.

All Franciscans will be happy to see in paperback a new edition of *The Words of Saint Francis* by James Meyer. This edition, with its topical index, is supplemented by *The New Critical Edition of the Writings of Saint Francis* (a precis by Marion A. Habig, O.F.M.), and includes new

English translations of newly discovered writings of Francis. Also included is a thoughtful essay on True and Perfect Joy in Saint Francis—based on textual analysis of the various accounts of that story in different Franciscan sources.

Prayer-Talk: Casual Conversations with God. By William V. Coleman. Notre Dame, IN: Ave Maria Press, 1983. Pp. 110. Paper, \$3.95.

To facilitate heart-to-heart, person-to-person contact with God, the author offers the reader thirty-two sample conversations between God and himself, covering topics like creativity, joy, mercy, truth, prayer, healing, and sex, just to name some. Each of the conversations is followed by a story, a reflection, and a prayer. The book is really a treatise on the spiritual life. It can be used as a meditation book, a conversation starter with God.

Books Received

- Coleman, William V., *Prayer-Talk: Casual Conversations with God*. Notre Dame, IN: Ave Maria Press, 1983. Pp. 110. Paper, \$3.95.
- Cunningham, Frank J., comp. and ed., and Patrick Delehanty, photos, *Words to Love by . . . Mother Teresa*. Based on interviews by Michael Nabicht and Gaynell Cronin. Notre Dame, IN: Ave Maria Press, 1983. Pp. 80. Paper, \$4.95.
- LaVerdiere, Eugene, S.S.S., *When We Pray: Meditations on the Lord's Prayer*. Notre Dame, IN: Ave Maria Press, 1983. Pp. 172. Paper, \$4.95.
- Lohkamp, Nicholas, O.F.M., *Living the Good News: An Introduction to Moral Theology for Today's Catholic*. Cincinnati: St. Anthony Messenger Press, 1982. Pp. vi-170. Paper, \$4.50.
- Simons, Thomas G., *Blessings for God's People: A Book of Blessings for All Occasions*. Notre Dame, IN: Ave Maria Press, 1983. Pp. 112. Paper, \$5.95.

Franciscan Studies M.A. Program Summer 1983 Offerings

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

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

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

ALL OTHER NEW STUDENTS pursuing a degree must take FS 500 this summer.

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

Course	Title	Credits	Days	Instructor
FS 500	Bibliography	1	MWF	To be announced
FS 502	Sources for the Life of St. Francis	3	M-F	Fr. Maurice Sheehan, O.F.M. Cap.
FS 504	Life of Saint Francis	3	M-F	Fr. Conrad L. Harkins, O.F.M.
FS 506	Survey of Franciscan History	3	M-F	Fr. Lawrence Landini, O.F.M.
FS 506	History of Franciscan Thought	3	M-F	Fr. Joachim Giermek, O.F.M. Conv.
FS 509	History of Franciscan Spirituality	3	M-F	Fr. Cyprian Lynch, O.F.M.
FS 539	Spiritual Direction and the Franciscan Tradition	2	MWF	Fr. Maury Smith, O.F.M.
FS 561	The Development of the Franciscan Person	2	MTTHF	To be announced
FS 517	Introduction to Palaeography	2	By arrangement	Dr. Girard Elzkorn
FS 520	Writings of St. Francis and St. Clare	2	MTWF	Fr. Regis Armstrong, O.F.M. Cap.
FS 650	Seminar	2	MTTHF	Fr. Constantine Koser, O.F.M.
FS 527	Pioneering Franciscan Sisters of the 19th Century	2	One week only	Five professors to be announced
FS 524	Theology of Christ according to Franciscan Masters	2	MTWF	Fr. George Marcil, O.F.M.
FS 534	Franciscan Reforms and Renewal Today	2	MWTHF	Fr. Sergius Wroblewski, O.F.M.
FS 570	Practicum	1	By arrangement	Staff
FS 599	Independent Research	1-2	By arrangement	Staff
FS 699	Master's Thesis	6	By arrangement	Staff

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

CALENDAR

Registration	Monday, June 27
Classes Begin	Tuesday, June 28
Modern Language Exam	Friday, July 8
Final Exams	Friday, August 5

FEES

Tuition per graduate hour	\$120.
Room and Board	\$510.

Fees are subject to change without prior notice.
Individual courses are subject to cancellation because of insufficient enrollment.

PRE-REGISTRATION

Pre-registration forms are available from the Office of Graduate Studies, St. Bonaventure University, St. Bonaventure, New York 14778. Students who pre-register need not report for registration on June 27.

ACADEMIC YEAR OFFERINGS

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