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MARCH, 1985

# The CORD

## A FRANCISCAN SPIRITUAL REVIEW

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# The CORD

## A Monthly Franciscan Spiritual Review

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### Standard Abbreviations used in The CORD for Early Franciscan Sources

#### I. Writings of Saint Francis

Adm: Admonitions

BenLeo: Blessing for Brother Leo

CantSol: Canticle of Brother Sun

EpAnt: Letter to St. Anthony

EpCler: Letter to Clerics<sup>1</sup>

EpCust: Letter to Superiors<sup>1</sup>

EpFid: Letter to All the Faithful<sup>1</sup>

EpLeo: Letter to Brother Leo

EpMin: Letter to a Minister

EpOrd: Letter to the Entire Order

EpRect: Letter to the Rulers of People

ExhLD: Exhortation to the Praise of God

ExpPat: Exposition on the Our Father

FormViv: Form of Life for St. Clare

Fragm: Another Fragment, Rule of 1221

LaudDei: Praises of the Most High God

LaudHor: Praises at All the Hours

OffPass: Office of the Passion

OrCruc: Prayer before the Crucifix

RegB: Rule of 1223

RegNB: Rule of 1221

RegEr: Rule for Hermits

SalBMV: Salutation to our Lady

SalVirt: Salutation to the Virtues

Test: Testament of St. Francis

UltVol: Last Will Written for Clare

VPLaet: Treatise on True and Perfect Joy

<sup>1</sup>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 Perugia

L3S: Legend of the Three Companions

SC: Sacrum Commercium

SP: Mirror of Perfection

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

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



EDITORIAL

## Lent Isn't Advent

ONE OF THE discoveries I made this past Advent (barely over as I write this the day after Epiphany) is the fact that there is a new liturgical color for Advent—blue. This option to the traditional purple emphasizes, the commentaries told me, that Advent is a joyful season. In the past few centuries Advent certainly had, in the Western Church at least, taken on the penitential overtones of Lent—had in fact become another Lent. I don't recall feeling schizophrenic about it myself, but I can understand being puzzled by all the *alleluias* during Advent and wondering how these and the joyful prophecies and prayerful watchings really went with the penitential theme of John the Baptist.

Now that Advent is getting its due, I wonder if there is need to recover the original Lenten themes that have become muted in the years since the Council. Has the reduction in the obligation of bodily fasting led us to believe that self-denial in atonement for sin is not an important part of Christian spirituality? Do we want to think of ourselves as a risen Easter people, and not pilgrims on the way to the glory of Easter, laden with our burden of guilt? Have we been misled by the etymology of the word *Lent* ("springtime") so that we see the time as one of a celebration of nature's reawakening, rather than a reflective and prayerful contemplation of the saving events of Jesus' Passion?

Lent is a time to foster that sorrow for sin, and that serious spirit of self-denial, to which our Holy Father has recently summoned us. It is a time to meditate prayerfully on the sufferings of Christ, on his selfless life and death, and to repent of our part in those sufferings and of our selfishness. Selfishness seems to seep into the most dedicated of lives, through both religious and secular influences. Our single state frees us from accountability in a personal way to another human; our ministry may offer us many opportunities for travel and friendship; our obedience, particularly in recent years, puts the duty

of organizing our lives right on ourselves. And so we think about ourselves, and plan for ourselves. Moreover, the yuppie world too has its impact on us, for we tend to see ourselves as professionals, as people with a career, as people with education and sophistication, with finely developed tastes in entertainment, food—even clothing—just like other professionals. We join health clubs, eat out as often as possible, and talk shop so seldom that a visitor to a community rec room probably wouldn't know to what ministry we have given our lives.

We can't, of course, wish away all our selfishness, or sweep it all out in an afternoon or two. What we can do for this Lent is to take seriously our responsibility for mental prayer. We can, as Francis did, let our minds be preoccupied with thoughts of Jesus and of what he endured for us. Secondly, both as communities and as individuals, we ought to try to live more poorly, and that for two reasons: (1) that we identify with the poor Christ, whom as Franciscans we have especially pledged to follow, and (2) that some (maybe most) of what we save can be devoted to the poor by circumstance. Recent popes, as well as our American Bishops, summon us to help relieve the misery of the poor. Scripture tells us, moreover, that almsgiving covers a multitude of sins. Satisfying for sins, we remember, is the principal theme of Lent, whose color is purple for penance. Ω

*Fr. Julian Davies OFM*

## Books Received

- Collins, Stephanie, ed., *A Page a Day for Advent and the Christmas Season* 1984. New York: Paulist Press, 1984. Pp. 40. Paper, \$1.95.
- Friedman, O.F.M., Greg, *It Begins with Friendship: A Fresh Approach to Prayer*. Cincinnati: St. Anthony Messenger Press, 1984. Pp. v-73. Paper, \$3.95.
- Kolmer, A.S.C., Elizabeth, *Religious Women in the United States: A Survey of the Influential Literature from 1950 to 1983*. Wilmington, DE: Michael Glazier, Inc., 1984. Pp. 111, including Bibliography. Paper, \$6.95.
- Navone, S.J., John, *Gospel Love: A Narrative Theology*. Wilmington, DE: Michael Glazier, Inc., 1984. Pp. 159, including Indices. Paper, \$5.95.
- Tillard, O. P., J. M. R., *Dilemmas of Modern Religious Life*. Wilmington, DE: Michael Glazier, Inc., 1984. Pp. 87. Paper, \$5.95.

## The Development of a Franciscan Missionary Spirituality—II

ROBERT STEWART, O.F.M.

IN THE FIRST PART of this article, published last month, we saw something of Francis's original missionary ideal and its temporary involvement with confrontation and the quest for martyrdom. In this second and final segment, we shall consider some other past interpretations of that ideal and draw some conclusions which we hope are relevant for the Order's missionary task today.

### Rejection of Metaphysical Disputations

BASICALLY, IN THE thought of Francis every friar is a missionary engaged in the work of evangelization. But within the overall call to participate in the imaging of the mission of the Trinity, there are those who experience and respond to a further call "to go among the Saracens and other non-believers" (RegNB 16). It must be borne in mind, however, that those in infidel lands are bound by all the other legislation, admonitions, and counsels of Saint Francis; they are part of the overall mission as well as the particular mission. Francis has warned the friars in previous chapters of the First Rule that there is to be "no quarrelling among themselves or with others and they should be content to answer everyone humbly, saying 'We are unprofitable servants' (Lk. 17:10)." They must not be angry but rather "moderate" showing all mildness to all men (Tit. 3:3). They must not criticize or condemn or give the slightest thought to the faults of others. Rather they must love their enemies and do good to those who hate them. They must love one another and prove their love by deeds (cf. RegNB 11).

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*Father Robert Stewart, O.F.M., M.A. (Formative Spirituality, Duquesne University), is a member of the English Province who has worked for fifteen years in formation in South Africa, first as Novice Master and now as Director of Formation in the house of studies of the Federation of Southern Africa. He is also a lecturer in spirituality at the National Seminary in Pretoria. Part One of this article appeared last month, in our February issue.*

This was the way of life that many of the friars lived. Jacques de Vitry wrote:

These friars live . . . according to the form of the primitive church about which it was written, "The multitude of believers was of one heart and one soul" (Acts 4:32) . . . I believe that the Lord wants to save many souls by means of these simple and poor men as a reproach to the prelates who resemble "mute watchdogs unable to bark" (Is. 56:10) [*Histoire de l'Orient*, ch. 32].

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A Franciscan missionary spirituality is rooted in the mystery of the Trinity [and] employs the tactics of peaceful, courteous, hopeful dialogue. . . .

---

The *Life of Giles* recalls how the friar did not hesitate to take off his cowl and give it to someone who was more ragged than himself:

Thus without a cowl he walked twenty days. When he came to a town of Lombardia called Ficarollo, he was hailed by a man. Giles, being in great need and hoping for an alms, willingly approached the man. But the man placed dice in Giles's hand as if inviting him to play. Nevertheless, Brother Giles, not at all upset, responded in a gentle voice: "May the Lord have mercy on you" [A. F. III, p. 81].

Throughout his travels to Spain and to the Holy Land, though frequently mocked by many people, Giles retained a peaceful, prayerful presence. Sometimes this way of speaking courteously to all could be a very risky business. Brother Jordan of Giano humorously records the adventure that overtook the sixty or more friars sent to Germany by the Chapter of 1219:

These, when they came to Germany and, being ignorant of the language, were asked if they wished to be sheltered or to eat, or the like, answered *ja*: they were accordingly treated kindly by some of the people. And seeing that because of this word *ja* they were treated kindly, they resolved to answer *ja* to whatever question they would be asked. Whence it happened that when they were asked if they were heretics and if they had come to corrupt Germany as they had corrupted Lombardy they replied *ja*, some of them were cast into prison, others were stripped and led naked to a dance and made a ludicrous spectacle before their fellowmen [*Chronica F. Jordani*

*a Iano*—A. F. I; trans. in P. Hermann, *The XIII Century Chronicles* {Chicago, 1961}, 22].

The early brethren seem, however, to have given on the whole an excellent example of a peaceful presence even when they were derided, had the dogs set on, or were struck violently and robbed of everything they had. One friar, according to Jordan of Giano's *Chronicle* (n. 6, p. 23),

lost his breeches fifteen times in this way. And since, overcome by shame and modesty, he regretted losing his breeches more than his other clothing, he soiled the breeches with the dung of oxen and other filth and thus the shepherds themselves were filled with nausea and allowed him to keep his breeches.

In the midst of adversity the early brethren retained their humor. They came up with some interesting solutions to the problems of living as strangers and pilgrims among infidels and being courteous to all even when they did not know the languages and customs of the people.

Basically the friars remained faithful to Francis' wish that they give an example of *minoritas*, of a humble, serving, peaceful presence among non-Christians. By their lives they were to witness to the love of God who sent his Son into the world for the salvation of all men. Occasionally, when they discerned it to be opportune, they could preach; but even then their preaching was to be done more by their lives than by their word (RegNB 16). Each friar was to become a gospel to the poor; his whole body was to become a tongue to proclaim the gospel, not to engage in disputation.

### The Explicit Proclamation of the Gospel

THERE CAN BE no doubt that to be a friar minor is to be a preacher of the gospel. From the very beginning Francis had sent his brethren out "two by two through different parts of the world, announcing to men peace and repentance for remission of sins" (1Cel 29). When he had agonized over the decision whether to remain in a hermitage or give himself to preaching, it was revealed to him through Sylvester and Clare "that the servant of Christ should go forth to preach."

Then why is the commission to preach in the sixteenth chapter of the First Rule so restrictive, stipulating that the friars are to preach only when they see it is pleasing to God or when they discern that the signs of the times are conducive to a proclamation? Once again, as regarding martyrdom, I believe that the sources indicate the answer lies in Francis' contemplative attitude to preaching and in his prayerful reflection on the preaching of the friars in the missions.

Francis above all lived what he preached, just as Jesus had done. "He wished to make a tongue of his whole body and fill the entire earth with the Gospel" (1Cel 97). He fully realized that he must "first convince by practice of what he exhorted others to do by his words" (LM 42). He taught that even "if I speak with the tongues of men and angels, but do not have charity and do not show example of virtues to my neighbor, I am of little use to them and none to myself" (LM 13, 10). To be a word, was his ideal, rather than to preach a word—to become transparent so that God's love might be seen working in him. For Francis saw himself always as a saved sinner, who had been given a share in God's holiness. It was always the Lord's work in him that he wished to proclaim. The Incarnation was alive in him, and his life showed what Christ meant for him. So he went among others as one who knew, not in an arrogant, dominating, conflicting manner, but rather as one who "showed all mildness to all men, adapting himself usefully to the behavior of all" (1Cel 97). When he first sent out the friars, he sent them on a mission of peace: "Go, dear brothers, two by two, to all parts of the world and announce to men peace and penance" (1Cel 45). He even had the courage to contradict Cardinal Hugolino, who wanted to keep the friars in Italy (SP 3, 65). The friars, he proclaimed, "will be welcomed not only in the countries of the faithful, but in those of unbelievers as well, and they will win many souls."

In 1219 Francis sent Brother Giles to Tunis.

When Giles reached Tunis, a city of the Saracens, a certain Saracen who was reputed to be the most venerable among them and had before this kept silent for a long time, began to speak out with a loud voice . . . "Infidels have come among us, who wish to condemn our prophet and the law which we obtained through him. I counsel you, therefore, to put them all to the sword and to death." This sentiment began to increase greatly as the popular voice among the Saracens. The Christians who were there and among whom Giles stayed with the other friars, feared to be put to death. Therefore they forced the friars to reembark that evening, and they did not allow them to approach the Saracens or speak with them. The next morning the Saracens ran to the harbor to launch an attack in order to capture the friars. But the friars, contrary to the will and prohibition of the Christians, preached to the Saracens from the ship and boldly exhorted them to convert to Christ [*Long Life of Giles*, p. 82].

This vignette of early mission life shows that the friars' preaching was meeting opposition not only from the infidels but also from the Christians. It is important to understand that there was great economic, social, and political interchange between the Muslims and the Christians. Christian merchants crowded Tunisian and Moroccan ports and often resided

in mercantile enclaves. It was in such an enclave, obviously, that Giles and his companions stayed. The Franciscan preaching roused opposition from the merchants because it would upset the careful balance they had established and could unleash violence in which they could easily become immersed.

Giles and his companions were trying to implement their commission to preach the gospel in fidelity to Francis' wishes and those of the Church. In the Bull *Cum dilecti* of June 11, 1219, Pope Honorius III had recommended the friars to all bishops as spreaders of the Word of God. They "have chosen a way of life justly approved by the Church of Rome. They are in the process of spreading into all regions, 'sowing the seed of the Word of God' according to the example of the apostles" (See Lucian Canonici, O.F.M., "Francis the Evangelizer," *Franciscan Herald* 1978, p. 172). Francis, knowing that the friars were now more than ever missionaries of the Church, could not bind them to any specific calling, apart from being present as lesser brothers.

Within two years of his having written the Rule the Church addressed a Bull to the Friars (*Vineae Domini custodes*, October 7, 1225), in which the aim of the friars in the mission field is clearly spelled out:

The authority of the Holy See sends you . . . with one aim: that by spreading the Good News of our Lord Jesus Christ you may convert the unbelievers with the help the Lord will give you. You are to raise up the fallen, sustain the weak, console the faint of heart, and strengthen the strong.

The Holy See thus made it clear that the friars were being sent to all peoples, Christian and non-Christian, in mission territories. This work was to be extended by the Bull *Ex parte vestra* (March 17, 1226), according to which they were "to visit Christians in prison and administer penance and the sacraments of the Church" (Ibid., pp. 173, 242). The work of the friars became more and more diversified even during the lifetime of Francis.

Francis had experienced that the mission lands contained both Christians and non-Christians, both of whom had to be won to an authentic following of Christ by the preaching of the Word. This preaching, however, must start with the example of the friars, who by their lives had to express the joy of living in the Kingdom of God.

The keynote of Jesus' own ministry and hence of Franciscan life was the coming of the Kingdom. This Kingdom belongs to the poor. "Blessed are the poor, for the Kingdom of God is theirs." Hence the friars had to live as poor men; they were part of a new creation, the "age to come." In their lives and in their preaching, they had to shape a new pattern for the

human community, a pattern of love and sharing. "Your Kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven" meant, literally, that the life-style of the Triune God was to be manifested within the human community by the life of the friars. They were to seek the lost sheep, forgive as they were forgiven, wait for the return of the lost son, challenge worldly values, and face persecution and hostility because of their stand on behalf of outcasts and their proclamation of the teaching of Christ on the need for reconciliation.

Francis asked that his friars avoid quarrels and disputes and be subject to every creature for God's sake (1 Pet. 2:13), thus witnessing to the fact that they are Christians (RegNB 16). He said they should be content to answer everyone humbly, saying:

We are unprofitable servants [Lk. 17:10]. . . . They must not criticize or condemn or give the slightest thought to the faults of others. Rather they must love their enemies and do good to those who hate them. They must love one another and prove their love by deeds [RegNB 11].

This was perhaps the background to Francis' restriction on missionary preaching in the First Rule. Having experienced the tolerance of Muslims toward holy men, he stressed a peaceful, holy presence. Having seen the opportunities available in the mission lands, he now wished the friars to preach only when they deemed it opportune—when in prayer they have discerned that it is God's will. By the time he came to write the Rule of 1223, he was able to clarify, in very precise language, his ideas on preaching:

I advise, admonish, and exhort my brothers in the Lord Jesus Christ that, when they go about the world, they should not quarrel. They should avoid verbal disputes, neither should they judge others. But they should be meek, peaceful and modest, kind and humble, speaking courteously to everyone, as is becoming [RegB 3].

Even when they discern that they should preach, then, their words should be "well chosen and chaste, for the instruction and edification of the people, speaking to them of virtues, punishment, and glory in a discourse that is brief" (RegB 9).

Francis, then, preferred the way of courteous, peaceful presence to that of metaphysical disputation. He asked that those who went on the missions not indulge in strident condemnation or harsh judgments of others, but rather that they proclaim by their lives the joy and peace to be found in living in the kingdom. Their words were to instruct and edify rather than dispute or condemn.

## Rejection of Conquest

FRANCIS GREW UP in turbulent times when the call to arms was seen as a heroic calling. The commune of Assisi called for the destruction of the Rocca Maggiore which towered over the city as a symbol of foreign, feudal oppression. Later its leaders called for a preemptive strike against Perugia for the glory of Assisi. For glory and freedom Francis, at sixteen, probably took part in the former—and in his twentieth year definitely participated in the latter—battle. Still seeking fame and fortune, he set out in 1204, full of youthful enthusiasm, to join Walter of Brienne. En route, however, at Spoleto, he became sick and after a vision returned to Assisi never again to take up arms.

Meantime Pope Innocent III was pursuing his idea of recapturing the Holy Sepulchre and crushing the might of Islam. Under his energetic and resolute leadership the Church encouraged "holy wars" or crusades. Francis swam against the tide of his time with an irresistible impulse to go against the Saracens not to defeat them and thus by "finally cracking the military carapace by conquest to expose an Islamic region to public proselytism" (Burns, p. 1395), but to make peace.

From the time when he left his arms at Spoleto until the hour of his death, Francis totally rejected armed conquest. He "sent his members all over Europe unarmed, with nothing more in their knapsacks than bread when people at that time scarcely dared travel over the mountains without the protection of a caravan" (Van Doornik, p. 131). The youth who had relied on conquest as a way to victory now saw surrender to the cross of Christ as the only way.

From his experience Francis saw confirmed his inner conversion to peace. He saw that men, women, and children killed by hunger and by pestilence, their cities devastated, were no testimony to true evangelization. He must have questioned whether the cross of Christ, flaunted as a banner of war, could ever be a sign of Christ's peace. Could the bitter fruits of war ever be the way to bring the peace and love of God to men? Francis answered an emphatic *No!* and from that time on he wholeheartedly placed himself in a life-long fight for peace.

## Instruments of Peace

IN THE CHAPTER of 1217, before sending his brothers out for the first time, Francis exhorted them:

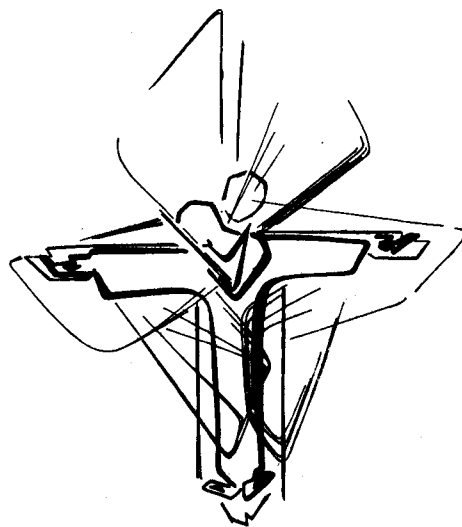
Since you speak of peace all the more so must you have it in your heart. Let none be provoked to anger or scandal by you, but rather may they be

drawn to peace and good will, to benignity and concord through your gentleness. We have been called to heal wounds, to unite what has fallen apart, and to bring home those who have lost their way [L3S 14, 58].

This initial insight regarding the mission of the friars was to dominate Francis' thought. The Franciscan missionary way was to be a contemplative action, bringing peace, pardon, and reconciliation to all. Before setting out, however, the friar had to acquire this peace. As Francis put it, "since you speak of peace, all the more so must you have it in your hearts." This peace had to arise from that mystic martyrdom which Francis saw as the underpinning of the missionary life. The friars who were to bring peace must have freely surrendered themselves to Christ, so that they are dead to self and alive to Christ:

... they must desire above all things to have the Spirit of the Lord and his holy manner of working, to pray always to him with a pure heart, to have humility and patience in persecution and weakness, and to love those who persecute us, find fault with or rebuke us, because the Lord says, "Love your enemies, and pray for those who persecute and slander you" (Mk. 5:44). "Blessed are those who suffer persecution for the sake of justice, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven" (Mt. 5:10) [RegB 10].

The early Franciscan missionaries remembered that Francis had told them they could not escape exertions and humiliations, hunger and thirst, when they went as missionaries to lands outside Italy. That is why Francis opens his missionary legislation in 1221 with the scriptural quote: "Behold I am sending you forth like sheep in the midst of wolves. Be therefore as wise as serpents and guileless as doves" (Mt. 10:16; RegNB 16). He knew, however, that even though they accepted these restrictions, and were as wise as serpents, sliding round obstacles rather than confronting them, as guileless as doves—never provoking opposition—the would still meet persecution. This persecution would be psychological, for they would always be "pilgrims and strangers," "aliens in a foreign land. It might also be physical, even to the point of having to pay the supreme price of martyrdom. But "the friars must always remember that they have given themselves up completely and handed over their whole selves to our Lord Jesus Christ, and so they should be prepared to expose themselves to every enemy visible or invisible for love of him" (ibid.).



The preacher of peace must himself be a peaceful man if he wants his mission to succeed. He must be one who has completely handed himself over to Christ in prayer. Without prayer, Francis recognized, the missionary is just another cultural invader. Motivated by a mystical surrender to God's love for all men, made manifest on the cross, he becomes an incarnation of God's peace, able to express by his life "The Lord give you peace."

Francis saw that peace was constantly threatened by material possessions; so he legislated: "When the brothers go about through the world, they should carry nothing for the journey, neither a knapsack, nor a purse, nor bread, nor money, nor a staff. And into whatever house they enter, let them first say: 'Peace to this house' " (RegNB 14). When the friar is freed of all material possessions, he will find that "peace will walk hand in hand with poverty all along his way" (1Cel 15). So the missionary is called to emulate the example of the early friars: "Without any material possessions, no desire to have anything, and no fear to lose anything, their hearts were at peace" (LM 4.9). Without absolute poverty the missioner would never be able to bring peace. He must be free of all material possessions, free from all desires, free from all fear to lose anything but the love of Christ to which he has totally dedicated himself by dying to self that he may live in Christ.

#### Conversion by Acting as Chaplain or Other Contacts

ON THE 2ND November, 1192, Richard Coeur de Lion had signed a peace treaty with Salah al-Din. The treaty recognized the existing state of affairs: viz., that the Crusaders were to remain in possession of the coastal

zone, the right to pass freely from one zone to the other was granted to all as private citizens, etc. This state of affairs continued, with the Franciscans making their first foundations along the coastal strip (see Krueger, pp. 290-91).

As Francis travelled he also noted that the friars he had sent in 1217 under Elias had established themselves at St. John of Acre. Within the Islamic lands they contacted princes and served as chaplains to merchants or mercenary troops (cf. Burns, p. 1395). While he himself was in Damietta, in fact, Francis allowed the friars to act as chaplains to the Bolognese Crusaders:

On November 5, 1219, the Crusaders succeeded after alternating ups and downs, in conquering the city of Damietta. Shortly after, there followed the process of the division of quarters: the churches and oratories were likewise opened to Christian worship. The Bolognese Crusaders desired to have the Franciscans in their quarter and assigned them a church and a friary [Roncaglia, p. 34].

Again, at the chapter of 1221 Francis was told how Berard and his companions had enjoyed the hospitality and protection of a prominent Christian in Morocco. He was informed how they had found lodging with Don Pedro, the brother of King Alphonso of Portugal, who was in the service of the King—how he received the friars with great love and devotion and provided them with food and shelter, and how he urged them not to go on with their mission. Ultimately he had had two silver coffins made to ship the remains of the martyrs back to Portugal (Berthold, p. 116).

Francis, reflecting on all these facts, saw the possibilities to expand discreetly the body of native Christians among those who served the Christians along the coastal strip. He also reflected on the papal Bulls *Vineae Domini custodes* and *Ex parte vestra* which asked the friars not only to convert the unbelievers but also to raise up the fallen, sustain the weak, console the faint of heart, strengthen the strong, visit the imprisoned, and administer the sacraments. So he allowed his friars to remain as chaplains to minister to the Christian community in mission lands.

## Conclusion

THE MISSION spirituality that emerges from the writings and time of Saint Francis, is that the friars are to go into mission lands humbly to serve and care for all the people there, without discriminating between Christians and non-Christians. They are never to quarrel among themselves or with others; they are to be peaceful and courteous to all. Basically, Francis asked his friars to give an example of *minoritas*, of humble, serving, peaceful, hopeful presence in mission lands. This peaceful presence was to be *safeguarded by absolute poverty* because by appropriating anything to themselves the friars would endanger the peace of Christ they have come to bring to the world.

When Francis invited people to peace it was to that peace that comes through conversion and reconciliation. He recognized that the division of humanity resulted from sin; so *when the friars discerned that it was opportune, they were to preach briefly on vice and virtue, punishment and glory*. The glory they were to proclaim was Christ as the beginning and end of the Father's plan. The Father's plan and mission is to unite all things in Christ and to dignify all men with a participation in the divine life through the power of the Spirit. To achieve this Trinitarian plan entailed the liberation of all men from those things that destroy this peace: from sin, death, and the power of evil. So the missionary by work and word is to be engaged in the task of liberating all from evil so that peace may reign.

By their lives the missionaries were to witness to the love of God who sent his Son into the world for the salvation of all men. Motivated by the gift of loving salvation which they had received through the cross of Christ, they were willing to lay down their lives, in love, for others. They had been called by Christ to bear his cross in their hearts and through their action in him and through him, to lay down their lives for others in "mystic martyrdom."

In summary, a Franciscan missionary spirituality is rooted in the mystery of the Trinity. It recognizes that the initiative for all missionary endeavor stems from the Father who sent his Son to bring the fullness of peace to all men. To achieve this mission the Franciscan missionary



employs the tactics of peaceful, courteous, hopeful dialogue; of sharing the Word and Sacrament; of humble service; and above all of martyrdom, of dying to self, so that in imitation of Christ the Father's love may be revealed, through the Spirit dwelling in the friars. Ω

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## Gethsemane

In the early morning darkness  
hooded monks with gentle hearts  
rise to pray for a wounded world.  
They have no answers, only faith.  
They have reserved their speech for worship.  
Their silence speaks of peace.  
Their chants are a quiet rain  
cooling the fires that blazed through the night;  
a solace for the city of God.  
Before the altar they bow low,  
like wheat beneath the blade.  
They die, so Christ may live again.  
Monks reach for the heights.  
Their strength is in surrender.  
Lord, make us worthy of their prayer.

Sister Edmund Marie Stets, C.S.B.

## Prince Charming

### A Poetic Josephology

Joseph, virgin husband,  
and virgin Father.  
Spirit of the Family,  
Leader who is led.  
Conduct an orchestra  
and you will see.  
Add soloist and  
you will hear.  
Musical Trinity.  
The Son sings the Word,  
ensemble generated—O Mary!  
Joseph spiritualizes  
the performance,  
not with arms waving,  
but with hammer and saw,  
framing a mirror in  
which he disappears.  
Fatherhood—Motherhood?  
Not for Joseph in the  
simple sense.  
Marriage for him comes  
after Family.  
No, Joseph reflects the love  
of orchestra—O Mary!  
and soloist—O Christ!  
God-Father-Creator-Mother—  
Church. . . .  
Who can pull this together  
in Christ?  
Prince Charming!  
The conductor.  
Spirit of the Son.  
Spouse of the Virgin.  
He who disappears  
when he is faithful to  
his charge.

Patrick G. Leary, O.F.M.

St. Bonaventure:

# Prologue to the First Book of Sentences

TRANSLATED BY ERIC DOYLE, O.F.M.

*The depths of rivers he has searched out and hidden things he has brought to light [Job 28:11].*

AFTER CAREFULLY analyzing this text from the twenty-eighth chapter of the Book of Job, the way was opened up for us to know here at the outset the four kinds of cause in the Book of the Sentences: viz., the material, formal, final, and efficient causes. The material cause is intimated by the word *rivers*; the formal cause, in the phrase searching out *the depths*; the final cause, in the revelation of *hidden things*; and the efficient cause is understood from what underlies the two verbs *he has searched out* and *he has brought to light*.

## I. The Material Cause

THE MATERIAL CAUSE is signified by the word *rivers*. It is in the plural and not the singular, because it refers not simply to the subject matter of the Books of the Sentences as a whole, but to the subject matter of each book taken separately. We should note that just as a real river has four characteristics, so a "spiritual river" possesses four specific qualities. And in line with this fourfold distinction, there are four Books of the Sentences.

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*The publication of this Prologue to the First Book of Commentary of the Sentences of Peter Lombard that Saint Bonaventure wrote at Paris c. 1248-1253, is the first of a series of four prologues. Since they provide us with basic outlines—in the form of poetic prose—they are beautiful works of medieval literature. Because they touch on many aspects of spiritual theology, however, such as the mystery of God, anthropology, the role of the sacraments, etc., they offer us invaluable tools with which we may attempt to penetrate the depths of Bonaventure's approach to Franciscan spirituality. Father Eric Doyle, translator of this first Prologue, passed away before this, one of his last works, could be published. Readers may wish to consult the obituary notice by Father Conrad Harkins in our December, 1984, issue. Father Eric wished to express his gratitude to Father Roger Barralet, O.F.M., who read the first draft of this text and made valuable suggestions which enhanced the intelligibility of the text in a number of places.*

When I consider that a river goes on flowing, lastingness comes into my mind. As Saint Isidore says, "A river is an unending current."<sup>1</sup> When I reflect on the width of rivers, vast expanses come into my mind. In fact that is what distinguishes a river from a little brook. When I think about their movement, I find myself reflecting on circularity. As it says in the Book of Ecclesiastes: *To the place from where the rivers come, they return to flow again* (1:7). When I consider the usefulness of rivers, I find myself thinking about processes of purification. Because of the vast amount of water they contain, rivers purify the land through which they flow without getting polluted themselves.

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The unveiling of . . . hidden mysteries is the aim . . . [so] the Master *searched out the depths of rivers* under the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

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Every analogy is based on some similarity.<sup>2</sup> Taking these four qualities metaphorically, therefore, we find that a river has a fourfold spiritual meaning, as we can gather from Holy Scripture.

1. First, then, in terms of lastingness, the emanation of the Persons in the Trinity is described as a river. This emanation uniquely is without beginning and without end. Of this river Daniel says: *The Ancient of days was seated and a swift, fiery river issued from his face* (7:9-10). This Ancient of days is the Eternal Father, whose antiquity is his eternity. The Ancient One was seated because he is endowed not only with eternity but also with immutability. The text says: *From the face of the Ancient One issued forth a swift, fiery river*. That is to say, from the sublime nature of his Godhead there proceeded the fullness of love and the fullness of power. The fullness of power is the Son, and thus the river was swift; the fullness of love is the Holy Spirit, and thus the river was fiery.

2. Secondly, in terms of vast expanses, the created world is described as a river. In fact, because of its vastness, the Prophet in the Psalms calls this world not only a river, but also a sea: *So is this great sea which stret-*

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<sup>1</sup>*Etymologiarum Liber XIII*, c. 21, n. 1, in PL 82, 489: "Fluvius est perennis aquarum decursus."

<sup>2</sup>Aristotle, *Topica* VI, II, in *The Loeb Classical Library*, II (Cambridge, MA, 1976), 567: "For those who use metaphors always do so on account of some similarity" [πάντες γὰρ οἱ μεταφοροῦντες κατὰ τινα ὁμοιοῦτα μεταφέρουσιν].

ches wide its arms (Ps. 103:25). Ezechiel says about this river: *Behold I come against you, Pharaoh, king of Egypt, great dragon who lie in the midst of your rivers and say: "The river is mine and I made myself." But I will put a bridle in your jaws (29:3-4)*. This great dragon whom the Lord addresses and threatens in the figure and person of Pharaoh, king of Egypt, is the devil. He reigns over those whom he has blinded with the darkness of error, such as heretics, for instance, to whom he also says: *The river is mine and I made myself*, as if he himself made this world and had not his own origin in another. It was the devil who framed this error and put it into the minds of the wicked Manichees, who maintain that the whole structure of the visible world was made by an evil god. The Lord will put a bridle on the jaws of this dragon when, having destroyed the power of spreading falsehood, he will manifest himself as the Creator of this river. Thus it follows in the same text of Holy Scripture: *And all the inhabitants of Egypt shall know that I am Lord (Ez. 29:6)*.

3. Thirdly, in terms of circularity, the Incarnation of God's Son is called a river. For just as in a circle the end is joined to the beginning, so in the Incarnation the highest is joined to the lowest, God to the dust of the earth, the first to the last, the eternal Son of God to human nature created on the sixth day. Of this river Sirach says: *I, like the River Dorix and like an aqueduct, came out of paradise (24:41)*.<sup>3</sup> Dorix means a life-giving remedy. It is used here figuratively and may be understood conversely as the source of a life-giving remedy.<sup>4</sup> For the Incarnation was none other than the source of life-giving remedy for us: *Surely he has borne our infirmities and carried our sorrows (Is. 53:4)*. Rightly, then, is the Incarnation of the Son of God called the River Dorix. Christ says truly of himself: *I, as the River Dorix—that is, a healing river—and like an aqueduct, came out of paradise*. Now it is of the nature of water that as high as it rises so far does it come down. Such was the going forth of the

<sup>3</sup>Dorix: this reading (the Vulgate has *dioryx*) is taken from the Old Vulgate and does not appear in modern translations; see, e.g., Sir. 24:30 in the RSV. The editors of the Latin text refer the reader to commentaries on this text by Hugh of Saint-Cher, O.P. (c. 1200-1263), the first Dominican Cardinal (cf. C. Jerman, "Hugh of Saint-Cher," *Dominicana* 44 [1959], 338-47; J. P. Torrell, "Hugh de Saint Cher et Thomas d'Aquin," *Revue thomiste* 82 [1974], 5-22); and by Nicholas of Lyre, O.F.M. (c. 1270-1349; cf. H. Labrosse, "Source de la biographie et oeuvres de Nicholas de Lyre," *Etudes franciscaines* 16 [1906], 383-404; 17 [1907], 489-505, 593-608; 19 [1909], 41-52, 153-175, 368-79; 35 [1923], 171-87, 400-32).

<sup>4</sup>It is difficult to reproduce Saint Bonaventure's play on words here: *generatio nis medicamentum, generatio medicamenti*.

Incarnation, as the Psalm says: *His going out is from the end of heaven and his circuit even to the end thereof (18:7)*. And in Saint John's Gospel we read: *I came from the Father and have come into the world; again I am leaving the world and going to the Father (16:28)*, and thus he completed a circle. A text contained in a dream which Mordecai had, can be applied to this river which is Christ, taking it to refer to his coming forth from his mother: *The tiny spring that became a river and was turned into a light and into the sun (Esth. 10:6)*. Who, I ask you, is this tiny spring other than the most humble Virgin Mary? She became a river when she brought forth Christ who, on account of the abundance of grace he brings, is not only called a river, but also the light of wisdom and the sun of justice, as Saint John says of him: *He was the true light (1:9)*.

4. Fourthly, in terms of processes of purification, the sacramental system is called a river. The sacraments cleanse us from the stain of our sins without getting polluted themselves. Of this river, the Book of Revelation says: *He showed me the river of the water of life, bright as crystal, flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb (22:1)*. The sacramental system is described as a river bright as crystal because of the splendor and luster the sacraments leave in the soul which has been purified in this river. It is called the river of the water of life because of the efficacy of grace which gives life to the soul. It flows from the throne of God and of the Lamb. Sacramental grace flows from God as from its author and efficient cause, and from Christ as from its mediator and meriting cause. That is why all the sacraments are said to have their efficacy from the Passion of Christ. Saint Augustine witnesses to this when he says: "From the side of Christ sleeping on the cross the sacraments came forth while the blood and water flowed out."<sup>5</sup>

There is a text in the Book of Genesis which refers to all these rivers, both taken together and considered separately, which reads: *A river flowed out of Eden to water the garden and there it divided and became four rivers. . . . The name of the first is Pishon. . . . The name of the second river is Gihon. . . . And the name of the third river is Tigris. . . . And the fourth river is the Euphrates (2:10-14)*. The river flowing out of Eden is the subject matter of the whole Book of the Sentences. The four rivers coming from it are the specific subject matter of each of the four books, as anyone can easily recognize who sets himself to explain carefully the meanings of the above mentioned names.

<sup>5</sup>*The Works of Aurelius Augustine, ed. M. Dods, X: Lectures or Tractates on the Gospel according to St. John, vol. I (Edinburgh, 1873), 134: "When Christ is dead, the spear pierces his side, that the mysteries may flow forth whereby the Church is formed" (cf. PL 35, 1463).*

*Pishon* means "movement of the mouth," and for this reason it refers to the emanation of the Persons. As word and breath go forth from a physical mouth, so the Son and the Holy Spirit proceed from the mouth of the Father, as it says in Sirach: *I came out of the mouth of the Most High, the firstborn before all creatures* (24:5). These are the words of the Son himself, who is the Word and Wisdom of the Father. And in the Psalms we read: *By the word the heavens were established and all the power of them by the spirit of his mouth* (Ps. 32:6).

*Gihon* means "the sands of the seashore," and it refers as such to the created universe. As the universe of creatures is likened to the sea because of its vast expanse, so it is compared to the sands of the seashore because of the multitude of beings it contains. As it is written in the Book of Sirach: *Who has numbered the sand of the sea and the drops of rain?* (1:2).

*Tigris* means "an arrow," and in this it refers to the Incarnation of the Son of God. For just as in an arrow iron is joined with wood, so in Christ the strength of divinity is united with the weakness of humanity. And as an arrow flies through the air from a wooden bow to smite the enemy, so Christ springing from the cross destroys the adversary. This is the arrow of which the Fourth Book of Kings speaks: *The Lord's arrow of victory, the arrow of victory over Syria* (4Kgs. 13:17).

*Euphrates* means "fruit bearing," and this refers to the sacramental system which not only cleanses the soul of sin, but makes it fruitful in grace. This is indicated in the Book of Revelation where it says that on both sides of the crystal river *was the tree of life . . . and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations* (22:2).

## 2. The Formal Cause

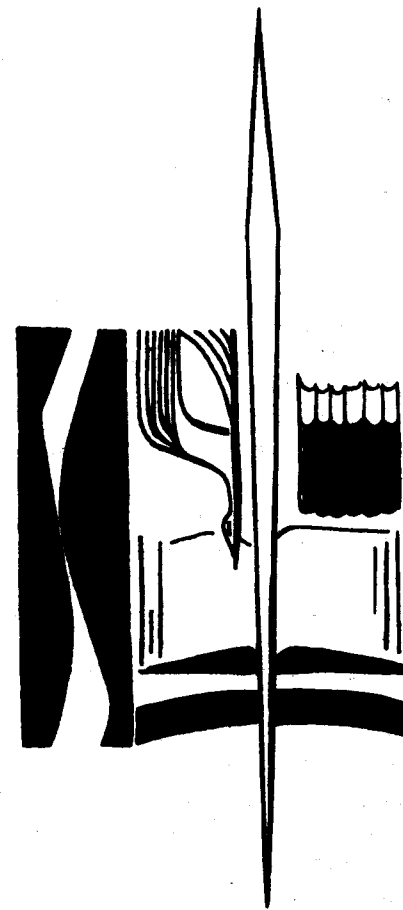
AS THERE ARE four rivers, so there are four deep mysteries<sup>6</sup> corresponding to them. 1. There is the deep mystery of eternal emanation which is the sublime nature of the divine being, to which a text in Ecclesiastes may be taken as referring: *it is a great depth, who shall find it out?* (7:25). Truly God is a great depth and a deep mystery. This is what brings Paul the Apostle to exclaim in Romans: *O the depth of the riches and wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgments and how inscrutable his ways* (11:33). God's judgments are indeed unsearchable

<sup>6</sup>Thus I translate *profunda*. It does not keep to the depths of rivers (*profunda fluviorum*) of the text from Job 28:11; but it makes for better and more intelligible English.

because they are so deep. As the Psalm says, *Your judgments are a great deep* (35:7), and we read in Sirach: *Who has measured . . . the depth of the abyss?* (1:2). This same depth is indicated in the Book of Job: *Can you find out the deep things of God? Can you find out the limit of the Almighty? It is higher than heaven—what can you do? Deeper than Sheol—what can you know?* (11:7-8). All of which is to say, of yourself you can do nothing, you can know nothing. Thus, Paul advises us in the Letter to the Ephesians: *that you, being rooted and grounded in love, may have the power to comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth* (3:17-18).

The Master searches out this deep mystery in the first Book of the Sentences. The sublime nature of the divine being consists in two things: the most awe-inspiring emanations, namely generation and procession; and the most noble qualities, which are the highest wisdom, omnipotence, and perfect love. All this forms the subject matter of the first Book. In the first part he treats of the most holy Unity and Trinity of God, and in the second part, in a special treatise, he examines the three qualities just mentioned.

2. The deep mystery of creation is the impermanence of created being. The more a creature wastes away, whether because of sin or because of punishment, the deeper it goes into the depths. For this reason the Prophet, speaking in the place of a man who has faded away because of sin, says in the Psalm: *I stick fast in the mire of the deep and there is no sure standing* (68:2). Again, the Prophet prays that he may not waste away through punishment: *Let not the tempest of water drown me, nor the deep swallow me up* (Ps. 68:16).



The Master searches out this deep mystery in the second Book. The impermanence of created being lies in two factors: the change from non-being to being, and the reversal once more to non-being. Now, although no creature of its nature tends to non-being, nevertheless, as Saint Augustine says, the sinner tends towards non-being because of sin.<sup>7</sup> These two factors form the subject matter of the second Book. In the first part he treats of the issuing forth of all things, and in the second part he deals with the fall, the temptation by the devil, original and actual sin, and so we reach the end of the Book.

3. The deep mystery of the Incarnation is the value of Christ's humanity, which was so great that it can truly be described as deep, as having no limit, as inexhaustible. A text from Jonah may be applied to this deep mystery: *You did cast me into the deep, into the heart of the sea, and a flood encompassed me* (2:4). This can be understood of Christ, for he was so humbled that he can truly be said to have been cast into the deep and degraded. We read in Isaiah: *We have seen him, and there is no sightliness that we should be desirous of him. Despised and the most abject of men, a man of sorrows, and acquainted with infirmity* (53:2-3). Therefore, he describes himself accurately as cast forth. But where is he cast? Into the depths of the sea and the depths of a river. The passion of Christ may be likened to the sea because of the bitterness of his sufferings and likened to a river because of the sweetness of his love. For the heart of Jesus was so affected towards us by the tenderness of love, that it did not seem too much to him to undergo the worst and most bitter death for our sake.

The Master searches out this deep mystery in the third Book. The value of Christ consists in two things: namely, his sufferings, by which he redeemed us; and his actions, by which he formed us and which consist in the works of the virtues, the gifts and the commandments. These form the subject matter of the third book. The first part treats of the Incarnation and passion in which is found our salvation; and the second part treats of the virtues, the gifts, and the commandments, in which is contained our formation.

4. The deep mystery of the sacramental system is the power of perfect healing. So great in fact is the efficacy of sacramental healing, that it is beyond the human mind to comprehend it, and so it may rightly be

<sup>7</sup>The exact text does not appear literally in the works of St. Augustine. But the sense of this passage will be found in the *Confessions* VIII, 16, in *The Fathers of the Church*, XXI (Washington, 1973), 185-86; (PL 32, 744); *The City of God*, Bk. XIV, c. xiii, in *Everyman's Library* (New York, 1945), 43-44 (PL 41, 420-22); *De vera religione Liber unus*, c. xi, PL 34, 131-32.

described as a deep mystery. Of this Isaiah says: *You made the depths of the sea a way for the redeemed to pass over* (51:10). This depth in which the Egyptians were submerged and which the children of Israel, delivered from Egypt, passed over, is the efficacy of the sacraments, in which the works of darkness are destroyed and the armor of light and the gifts of grace conferred, through which we pass from the power of darkness into the kingdom of the children of God's love. The efficacy of the sacraments is compared to the depth of the sea and the depth of a river. Of the sea, because it first delivers us from sin and leads us to the bitterness of penance; of a river, because it delivers us from wretchedness and leads us to the delights of glory. This was graphically prefigured in the children of Israel, for whom, as they left Egypt, the sea dried up and they went across on dry ground in the midst of the sea, as the Book of Exodus tells us (15:19). When they entered the Promised Land, the river dried up and they passed over the Jordan, as is written in the Book of Joshua (4:22-23).

This deep mystery the Master searches out in the fourth Book. The power of perfect healing has two components: the curing of the diverse weaknesses that assail us, and liberation from all the miseries that plague us. These two components form the subject matter of the whole of the fourth Book. The first part treats of the various kinds of healing which the seven sacraments bring about. The second part deals with that perfect healing: the glory of the risen life, to which they come who truly and faithfully received the sacraments of the Church; and, on the other hand, it deals with the punishments of the wicked who despised the sacraments of the Church.

### 3. The Final Cause

AFTER SEARCHING OUT the four deep mysteries in the four Books, there emerges the purpose or final cause, that is, the revelation of four hidden mysteries.

1. The first is the mystery of the divine nature, of which Isaiah says: *Truly, you are a hidden God, the God of Israel, the Savior* (45:15). The majesty of the divine nature is indeed hidden for us, as it is written in the Book of Job: *How small a whisper do we hear of him! But the thunder of his power who can understand?* (26:14). For certain no one can understand this, except him with whom the wisdom of God dwells. This is the reason why that lover of wisdom, the author of the Book of Wisdom, made this prayer: *Send her forth from your holy heavens and from the throne of your glory send her* (9:10).

The Master, filled with wisdom from on high, brings this hidden mystery to light in the course of his investigations in the first Book. He

examines and unfolds the most awe-inspiring emanations and the most noble qualities of the Godhead, and so he reveals to us, as far as it is possible while we are in this world, the majesty of the divine nature.

2. The second hidden mystery is the order of divine wisdom, of which Job speaks: *But where is wisdom to be found? And where is the place of understanding? It is hid from the eyes of all living* (28:12, 20-21). Indeed wisdom is hidden, for as Job also says: *but wisdom is drawn out of secret places* (28:18). To know wisdom it is necessary to search out its depths, not in itself, but in its works in which it shines forth. So it says in the Book of Sirach: *There is one most high Creator, and he poured her out upon all his works* (1:8, 10).

The Master reveals this hidden mystery in his analyses in the second Book. He examines the order of good and evil and makes known to us how the wisdom of God *was set up from all eternity and of old before the earth was made* (Prov. 8:23).

3. The third hidden mystery is the strength of divine power, of which Habakuk says, *Horns are in his hands: there is his strength hid* (3:4). He is speaking there about Christ hanging on the cross where the strength of his power was hidden under the veil of weakness. This is the plan of the mystery hidden for ages of which Ephesians speaks: *To me, grace was given to preach to the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ and to make all men see what is the plan of the mystery hidden for ages in God* (3:8-9). This is the hidden mystery, the sacred secret, that the mighty God was clothed with the protection of our weakness in order to overcome the enemy. This is unheard of since the world began.

The investigations of the third Book make known the strength of the divine power. It shows how Christ in his weakness overcomes the opposing power. If he was victorious by weakness, what would have happened if he had entered the fight with his power? *And if the weakness of God is stronger than men* (1 Cor. 1:25), *who shall turn back* (Is. 14:27) the arm of God? It is abundantly clear that his power is indescribable whose weakness is so strong.

4. The fourth hidden mystery is the sweetness of the divine mercy, of which the Psalmist says: *How great is the abundance of your sweetness, O Lord, which you have hidden for those who fear you* (30:20). Indeed, the sweetness of mercy is hidden and stored up for those who fear God because, as the Psalmist says, *the mercy of the Lord is from everlasting to everlasting upon those who fear him* (102:17), and *on those who hope in his mercy* (146:11).

This sweetness is revealed in the analyses contained in the fourth Book. He unfolds how God forgives our sins in the present, what cures

he applies to our wounds, and what gifts he will grant us in the future. In this way the Master makes known to us the sweetness of divine mercy.

#### 4. The Efficient Cause

THE UNVEILING of these hidden mysteries is the aim of the four Books as a whole. With this intention in mind for himself and for his readers, the Master of the Sentences *searched out the depths of rivers* under the guidance of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit himself is the chief searcher of secret things and of the depths, as Saint Paul tells us: *For the Spirit searches all things, even the depths of God* (1 Cor. 2:10). Inflamed with the love of this Spirit and enlightened by his radiance and splendor, the Master composed this work and *searched out the depths of rivers*. By the aid of this same Spirit he became a revealer of hidden mysteries. It is he of whom the Book of Daniel says: *He reveals deep and hidden things and knows what is in darkness* (2:22).

This was the Master's aim and intention, as he himself explains in the Prologue: "Wishing to place the light of truth on the candlestand, we composed this volume with God's help and much work and effort, from the witnesses to truth who are established in eternity." And a short while before that, he had outlined his purpose as follows: "To unfold the hidden truths of theological investigations."

So, from the foregoing reflections, it is evident what are the material, formal, final, and efficient causes of the Book of the Sentences. Ω

### Cry, Baby, Cry

Homesick, Lord, I'm homesick for golden  
streets and crystal palaces.

So homesick, Lord, so homesick, for the land  
I've never seen.

O, I'm homesick, Lord, I'm homesick, for the hand  
of the mother who never touched me,  
the face of the father who never  
blessed me.

I'm homesick, Lord, I'm homesick. It's  
lonely here and strange,  
Living in this shadow place, hidden  
from your love beams.

It's hard, Lord—away from the homeland  
—missing the homeland, where I've never been.

Celeste Heatherley Morgan

## Depression and the Cross of Christ

SISTER EDMUND MARIE STETS, C.S.B.

EVERYBODY, AT ONE TIME or another, for some unexplained or sometimes obvious reason, gets depressed. Psychologists tell us even children get depressed, and most adolescents refer to depression as a "bad mood." Depression is rather universal, but the ways people deal with it are unique, and very revealing.

It is not uncommon to find bars and clubs doing a brisk business at the end of a work day or on a weekend, especially if the lounge provides a "happy hour." Come in and adjust your attitude—you need something to pick you up after a down day! Alcohol is a great relaxer, as our society knows well, but the effects on those who use it to mask reality, or on those who abuse it, are devastating.

Some people are locked into routines that breed a depressing existence. Whether through poverty, or prejudice, or meaningless and unproductive work, some lives are burdened by a heaviness which sometimes seems unendurable. Faced with such a challenge, it is a rare and precious soul that holds onto faith, to courageous hope in God, to all the promises given in the beatitudes. These people meet depression head on; they are fighters, and more often than not, they are also survivors.

How do you describe depression? Clinically, there must be hundreds of ways. But the average person usually calls it a darkness, a heavy black cloud that shrouds the spirit when we encounter difficulties or trials in life. Our instinctive impulse is to dispel the darkness, to find a way out and feel bright and good again.

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*Sister Edmund Marie Stets, C.S.B., who has frequently contributed poetry to our pages, teaches English at Alvernia College in Reading, Pennsylvania.*

In the Gospel of Saint Matthew, we read about Christ's apostles and their experience with depression:

One day, when they were together in Galilee, Jesus said to them, "the Son of Man is going to be handed over into the power of men; they will put him to death, and on the third day he will be raised to life again." And a great sadness came over them [17:22-23].

In this passage, it is almost as if a cloud descended on the apostles, as if a fog encircled their hearts. There is a deep meaning in this, because the reason for the sadness, or depression, seems to be Christ's foretelling of his passion.

I think there is a subtle link here, often overlooked. Depression is a very acute form of suffering, and it is intimately related to the cross. As self-willed creatures, we rarely see depression as a suffering or a sacrifice; we see it instead as an unnecessary evil, something to get rid of. To view depression from the spiritual side is, perhaps, to see it as a darkness of faith, a trial, permitted by God to purify the heart and strengthen our trust in his almighty power and loving care.

Christ must have lived with depression every day, enduring constant humiliations and frustrations in his mission of salvation. He was a sign of contradiction in the world, and the burden of our sin which he carried to his death was ever present to his mind. When Christ shared this knowledge with his closest friends, they also experienced his own heaviness of heart, and they began to understand in a very real way what and how he suffered. It was a trial of the spirit, and as such, its full reality was cloaked in darkness and mystery. But it was a suffering which Christ endured with great courage and with heartbreaking generosity: "My Father, if this cup cannot pass by without my drinking it, your will be done" (Mt. 26:42).

As followers of Christ, we have come to know that his life was lived as an example, and that the cross—though a sorrowful mystery, is also a banner of triumph. In every age, countless saints and martyrs have experienced the passion of Christ in some way. The dark night of depression is, in fact, a singular grace, a cup offered to special friends, and in the journey of life it has been known to foreshadow mystical prayer. Ω

## Book Reviews

**From Saint Francis to Giotto.** By Vincent Moleta. Chicago: Franciscan Herald Press, 1983. Pp. xii-120, including Index. Illus. Cloth, \$25.00.

*Reviewed by Brother Gregory J. Zoltowski, O.F.M., M.F.A. (Catholic University of America), Assistant Professor of Fine Arts at Siena College.*

The search for Saint Francis has been a long and arduous one. Francis' own Order has been wracked by struggles over interpretations of his Rule. Painters have set to the task of picturing the Saint. Scholarly analyses have filled volumes concerned with Francis' own writings and their meanings. Vincent Moleta's book can be added to the many sources available in this search, as a new and clearly written resource on Franciscan spirituality.

An expert on early Italian Literature on the faculty of the University of Western Australia, Moleta rightly describes his book as a text for non-specialists. The reader need not be versed in the history of art or of the Franciscan movement to enjoy this book. On the whole, I found it to be cleverly simple. Moleta presents his view of Franciscan spirituality in so clear and concise a manner that he has produced one of the clearest texts I can recall on the subject.

Using 13th-century art to illustrate and enhance his text, the author unfolds Francis' humanism and shows how it affected the lives and work of early Italian writers and painters, in-

cluding Dante and Giotto. He describes Francis' appealing love of nature, explaining how this love softened the rigid stylistic norms of early Christian art. He calls the resulting new affective form of art "Franciscan realism," a style in which, whether by writing in the vernacular or by painting in a three-dimensional representational style, the artist sought above all to relate Francis' life or spirit to the life of the viewer.

Giotto's famous frescoes, which climax the book, demonstrate this point effectively. The gentle, sensitive drawings of Regina Stalberg Reuss, in turn, add a contemporary balance to the 13th century art featured in the book.

The text concludes with an exploration of Francis' influence on the writings of Dante and his portrayal in some early icons.

Overall, I am pleased with the book. It inspired me without boring me with reworked history. The illustrations are enjoyable but, unfortunately, printed only in black and white. My Franciscan heart would have better enjoyed them in full color.

**The Persistent Prejudice: Anti-Catholicism in America.** By Michael Schwartz. Huntington, IN: Our Sunday Visitor Press, 1984. Pp. viii-277. Paper, \$6.95.

*Reviewed by Father Julian A. Davies, O.F.M., Head of the Philosophy Department at Siena College and*

*Associate Editor of this Review.*

This informative book has two parts: (1) an historical survey of anti-Catholicism in the United States, and (2) an effort to destroy a number of myths or caricatures of Catholicism. Prejudice against the Catholic Church and its teachings, the author argues, is still in this age a part of American life, although some do not see it. As a staff member of the Catholic League for Religious and Civil Rights, Mr. Schwartz has collected evidence of this bigotry over the past seven years. One of the most persistent types has been the attacks on Catholic schools and on efforts to obtain support for parents sending their children to them. Besides citing case after case, the author notes the observations of others outside the faith, such as historian Arthur Schlesinger.

Among the myths (slanders) that continue to dominate much talk about the Church on the part of the prejudiced are the Myth of the Foreign Potentate, i.e., the whore of Babylon myth, which identifies that creature in Revelation with the Catholic Church; the Deputy Myth, which places the late Pope Pius XII and the Church as conspirers in the elimination of Jews during World War II—rather than, as was the case, rescuers. Not really a "myth," but no less a target of Schwartz's writing are the "Uncle Pat's"—those Catholics who have surrendered their religion to the secular mentality of the age, particularly in the areas of abortion and sexual morality.

The first part of the book seems to be written much more dispassionately than the second, and the second part of the book suffers for this. Overall, all

Catholics and all Americans can find out the facts about a prejudice which is still "respectable." Particularly valuable are the accounts of the Supreme Court's misinterpretation of the Constitution and the reading into law of the defeated Blaine Amendment.

**A Concise Guide to the Catholic Church.** By Felician A. Foy, O.F.M., and Rose M. Avato. Huntington, IN: Our Sunday Visitor Press, 1984. Pp. viii-158. Paper, \$6.95.

*Reviewed by Father Raphael D. Bonanno, O.F.M., Guardian at the Sanctuary of Emmaus, Qubeibeh (Jerusalem).*

*A Concise Guide to the Catholic Church* is a handy reference book for new Catholics or for those born Catholics who need a quick resume about their Church. Its source was probably the famous *Catholic Almanac* of which the two authors, Foy and Avato, are the editors. That book is indispensable in its field, but this new *Concise Guide* is very useful in its own way. Teachers of convert classes and adult religious education will welcome its appearance. The articles are short and to the point, the index is a practical aid, and the price is reasonable. What more can one ask of a "concise guide"?

**Weeds among the Wheat—Discernment: Where Prayer and Action Meet.** By Thomas H. Green, S.J. Notre Dame, IN: Ave Maria Press, 1984. Pp. 204. Paper, \$4.95.

*Reviewed by Father Wilfrid A. Hept, O.F.M., a member of the staff and*



*Spiritual Guide of Young Adult Catholics of St. Anthony's Shrine, Boston.*

Before Vatican II Catholics might have spoken of knowing the will of God or doing the will of God, but I doubt they would have used a term like *discernment* to name it. Not so today. Jesuit Father Thomas Green follows up on his two books on prayer, *Opening to God* and *When the Well Runs Dry* with *Weeds among the Wheat*, subtitled *Discernment: Where Prayer and Action Meet*. In fact, in the introduction he writes: "Hence, the challenge and purpose of this book: to translate into the language of the educated, committed Christian (whether priest or religious or lay) the basic meaning and principles of the art of Christian discernment."

Early in the first chapter, Father Green points out that discernment is the essential link between prayer and the active Christian life, the meeting point of prayer and apostolic action. Therefore, there can be no discernment unless one is a pray-er and has a proper concept of God. In some detail he shows that our concept of God can be neither that of watchmaker nor that of puppeteer, but must be that of the Father of adult children. The last part of the chapter is devoted to discerning true and false prophets in the Old Testament by applying six norms for authentic prophecy. At the end of this chapter, as well as at the end of the other chapters, the author has a "Practicum Question" which he used in teaching the course in discernment in the seminary in the Philippines. These could be useful for a discussion group. With a chapter titled "Jesus Discerning and Discerned" and one on "The Climate of Discernment,"

the author completes his exploration of the "what" of discernment. The "how" of discernment constitutes the other element essential to the understanding of the subject; but this knowledge alone does not suffice for discerning God's will, for discernment, like prayer, is an art and is acquired more by doing than by reading about it.

With this background of the "what" of discernment, at any rate, the author discusses the "how" in the second section of the book, *Sowing the Seed*. In this section, Father Green draws heavily on the Spiritual Exercises of Saint Ignatius Loyola. He writes: "What St. Augustine has done for the problem of evil, or St. Teresa of Avila and St. John of the Cross for the phenomenology of prayer, St. Ignatius, by the grace of the same revealing God, has done for discernment." The author uses these Spiritual Exercises for the background of chapters on "Good Times for a Good Choice," "The Tactics of God and the Enemy," and "Beginners and Desolation."

In the Third Part, titled *A Mixed harvest*, the author encourages the reader who has followed him through desolation, consolation, and commitment, not to settle for comfortable mediocrity in his or her relationship with the Lord. To do that would be to "buy peace with the devil by abandoning [the] dream to love as [one is] loved" (p. 125). In the next (eighth) chapter, Father Green discusses the Lord's parable of the weeds and the wheat (whence the book's title). It seems in the kingdom of God Providence often decrees that the weeds continue to grow along with the wheat. This can be discouraging to those seeking the kingdom. To put them on their

guard, the author seeks to detect and to explore the various species of weeds (in biblical terms: the world, the flesh, and the devil). Finally, chapter 9 ("The Wheat Matures: Discerning Love") brings us full circle to mature spirituality with the aid of the insights of St. Ignatius' Exercises. In an Epilogue the author indicates how this personal discernment can be applied to a community seeking God's will together.

How well the author has achieved his purpose of elucidating the basic meaning and principles of the art of Christian discernment, I leave to the judgment of the reader. He certainly deals with a topic that is of primary importance today. Those who have liked his other books will find this equally satisfying. Those who are seeking to discern the will of God for them in their vocation or their daily life will find helpful aids and food for thought in this book.

## Shorter Book Notices

JULIAN A. DAVIES, O.F.M.

**It Begins with Friendship: A Fresh Approach to Prayer.** By Gregory Friedman, O.F.M. Cincinnati: St. Anthony Messenger Press, 1984. Pp. v-73. Paper, \$3.95.

This short work is an excellent primer on prayer. After a chapter on faith, including remarks on faith as search and faith as outgrowing certain images of God, the author develops the notion of prayer as communication with a friend. He points out in a separate chapter that God is often a very quiet friend. Other chapters take up getting answers in prayer, prayer in tough times, and types of prayer. The book does deserve its title, for the approach of Father Gregory is fresh and contemporary. Beginners in prayer and seasoned pray-ers can find this excellent book helpful.

**Karen Berry, O.S.F. Cincinnati: St. Anthony Messenger Press, 1984. Pp. x-62. Paper, \$3.50.**

As the title suggests, this compact book is about dealing with people, with disappointment, loss, and the pain which comes when a relationship is broken. The author's technique is to describe the pain, select a reading from Scripture (particularly the New Testament), and then reflect on what the passage tells her concerning what is happening within her. Although writing from her own experience, Sister Karen does seem to articulate the experiences of everyman and every woman. Religious and laity alike can profit from her reflections and be led to find their own scriptural passages to release the power of the Father, Son, and Spirit to heal their brokenness.

**Beyond Broken Dreams: A Scriptural Pathway to New Life.** By Sister

**Prayer Book of the Saints.** Compiled and edited by Charles Dollen. Hun-

tington, IN: Our Sunday Visitor Press, 1984. Pp. 197, including Indices. Paper, \$6.95.

As the title indicates, this book is a collection of prayers composed, for the most part, by canonized saints. The prayers are of two types: prayers for saying, and prayers for reflecting. The author begins with prayers of the New Testament, including, of course, the Gospel canticles used in the Divine Office, and continues with prayers from the Fathers of the Church. Special to me were the prayers of Saint Ephrem to Our Lady and St. Patrick's Breastplate. Followers of Francis will find his Cantic of the Sun and Peace Prayer in the medieval section, and followers of Dominic can find the Eucharistic hymns of Aquinas. Notable too are the Stations of the Cross of St. Alphonsus Liguori. Short prayers by Maximilian Kolbe and Mother Cabrini are included in the survey of the modern period, and a special section of prayers includes Cardinal Newman's "Lead Kindly Light" and the Prayer of Mary Stuart. All in all there are over 100 selected prayers, and a brief biographical note precedes each. Though not in prayer book form, this is truly a prayer book that religious and laity alike can put to good use.

**Praying the Daily Gospels: A Guide to Meditation.** By Philip A. St. Roman. Notre Dame, IN: Ave Maria Press, 1984. Pp. 247. Paper, \$5.95.

This hand-sized book contains a brief description of meditation and short

reflections on each of the daily Gospels for the entire Church Year, Sundays excluded. The Gospel texts are not printed, just referred to, as are the psalm prayers of the day. Hence the book is to be used in conjunction with a Bible or a Daily Missal. Written by a layman, *Praying the Daily Gospels* seems to have a lay audience in mind, as evidenced by the practical character of the reflections, the questions posed, and the short settings of the Gospel scenes. For the layman interested in becoming serious about prayer, this Guide can be a help.

**TV, Movies, and Morality: A Guide for Catholics.** By John Butler. Huntington, IN: Our Sunday Visitor Press, 1984. Pp. 160, including Glossary. Paper, \$6.95.

This book in one sense is misnamed, for it is not just or even mostly for Catholics; it is, rather, for all who are concerned about the harmful effects these modern media can have on young and old alike. Much of the book is concerned with description of the media business—e.g., the role of advertising. An Appendix gives practical methods of responding to TV programming by contacting the proper agencies. A glossary of TV and movie terminology is also given. I think this is a useful book, although the analyses and discussions are not as extensive or as profound as might be expected. I was offended by the cover and theme illustration of the devil, for neither TV nor the movies can be considered the devil's medium.

## Franciscan Studies M.A. Program Summer 1985 Offerings

THE FRANCISCAN STUDIES PROGRAM offers a full schedule of courses in Franciscan theology, history, and spirituality, fully adaptable according to varied goals of students.

All courses meet in Plassmann Hall, except for those marked with an asterisk next to the days on which they meet. Those so marked meet in Friedsam Memorial Library. Three credit courses meet Monday through Friday. Two-credit courses meet Monday through Thursday, except FS 539, MWF.

Course	Title	Credits	Days	Time	Instructor
FS 502	Sources for the Life of St. Francis	3	M-F	8:30-9:45	Fr. Wayne Hellmann, O.F.M., D.Th.
FS 504	The Life of St. Francis	3	M-F	8:30-9:45	Fr. Conrad Harkins, O.F.M., Ph.D.
FS 506	Survey of Franciscan History	3	M-F*	9:55-11:10	Fr. Maurice Sheehan, O.F.M.Cap.
FS 506	History of Franciscan Thought	3	M-F	9:55-11:10	Fr. Romuald Green, O.F.M., Ph.D.
FS 518	Scriptural Foundations of Franciscanism	2	M-Th	11:20-12:22	Fr. Cassian Corcoran, O.F.M., S.T.D.
FS 520	Writings of St. Francis and St. Clare	2	M-Th	11:20-12:22	Fr. Regis Armstrong, O.F.M.Cap., Ph.D.
FS 532	The Secular Franciscan Movement	2	M-Th	1:00-2:02	Sr. Jeanne Glsky, S.F.P., M.A.
FS 561	The Development of the Franciscan Person	2	M-Th	1:00-2:02	Br. Edward Coughlin, O.F.M., Ph.D.
FS 500	Methodology and Bibliography	2	M-Th*	2:10-3:12	Fr. Paul Spaeth, M.L.S.
FS 517	Introduction to Paleography	2	M-Th*	2:10-3:12	Rega Wood, Ph.D.
FS 539	Spiritual Direction and the Franciscan Tradition	2	MWF*	2:10-3:33	Fr. Maury Smith, O.F.M., D.Min.
FS 650	Seminar: "The Spirituality of St. Francis and Contemporary Trends"	2	M-Th*	7:00-8:02	Fr. Theodore Zweerman, O.F.M., Ph.D.
FS 599	Independent Research	1-2	By arr.		Staff
FS 699	Master's Thesis	6	By arr.		Staff

WITH APPROVAL OF THE FACULTY ADVISOR AND DIRECTOR, STUDENTS MAY FULFILL A MAXIMUM OF SIX CREDITS IN ELECTIVES FROM COURSES OFFERED IN THE DEPARTMENT OF GRADUATE THEOLOGY.

### CALENDAR

Registration .....	Monday, June 24
Classes Begin .....	Tuesday, June 25
Modern Language Exam .....	Friday, July 12
Final Exams .....	Friday, August 2

### FEES

Tuition per graduate hour .....	\$140.
Room and Board .....	\$570.
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 24.

### ACADEMIC YEAR OFFERINGS

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