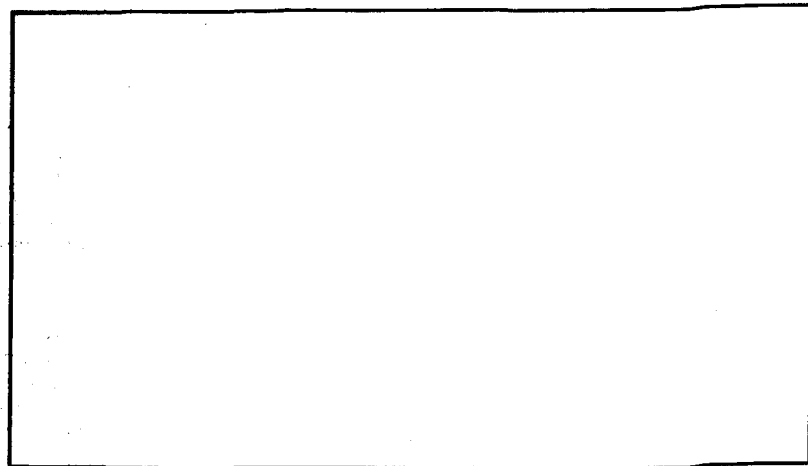


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APRIL, 1985

# The CORD

## A FRANCISCAN SPIRITUAL REVIEW

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Volume 35, No. 4

# 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	Fragm: Another Fragment, Rule of 1221
BenLeo: Blessing for Brother Leo	LaudDei: 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 <sup>1</sup>	OrCruc: Prayer before the Crucifix
EpCust: Letter to Superiors <sup>1</sup>	RegB: Rule of 1223
EpFid: Letter to All the Faithful <sup>1</sup>	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	<sup>1</sup> 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).

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

### On Following and Imitating: The Franciscan Option

ALL THROUGH THE Francis corpus we come across a peculiar expression for evangelical living: viz., *sequi vestigia*—to follow the footprints of the Lord. Its overall imaginative force is that one step into the very prints Christ made in the ground with his feet (and make whatever alterations are necessary to conform to their shape!).<sup>1</sup> But it is a dynamic image, and the really operative word is in fact *sequi*, to follow. Merely fitting into the footprints is not enough, it is too static. And the Franciscan way always preferred “following” to “imitation.” A true disciple of the gospel is not a replica of Christ, but a faithful follower of a model track laid down by Christ. A great body of Franciscan literature deals with the “conformity” of Francis to Christ.<sup>2</sup> Francis himself saw the road of simplicity as laid out for him by God: “The Lord called me to walk in the way of humility and showed me the way of simplicity” (LP 114). This entailed a simple and direct reliving, as far as humanly possible, of the life of our Lord in its details together with an obedient carrying out of his commands and counsels to his disciples as given in the Gospels. The following of Christ was never for Francis just one of many ways a person could choose, but rather an obligation. He was impelled by Scripture to see it thus:

<sup>1</sup>E.g., EpLeo 3; EpOrd 51; RegNB I:1. The image derives from 1 Pet. 2:21: *ut sequamini vestigia eius* (Vulgate). We are to follow the exemplary track of Christ.

<sup>2</sup>One need only recall the opening chapter of the *Fioretti* and above all the *Book of Conformities* of Bartholomew of Pisa. But the notion of the prophetic likeness of Francis to Christ began with the earliest writings—e.g., the encyclical of Elias on the death of Francis—and it is strong in Celano and in the *Legenda Maior*.

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“Christ . . . left an example for you to follow the way he took” (1 Pet. 2:21). This did not make of him a biblical fundamentalist, for his simple approaches had no myopic literalism about them and he always attended to spiritual meaning (cf. Adm VII). And even if he personally (“I, little brother Francis”) felt obligated to trace almost every detail of our Lord’s life, he acknowledged a certain freedom in the program of his own followers (cf. EpLeo 3; 2Cel 214). So a literal reenacting of what Christ did is not necessarily a desideratum in Franciscan spirituality as such. But it does remain Christocentric, and what is called the *sequela Christi*—following of Christ—belongs to its primary aims. The word *sequi* conveys the sense of accompanying someone, and also falling to the share of someone, and to follow a person’s example and opinions.

### Francis

FOR FRANCIS, to “observe the holy gospel” involved two things: following our Lord’s teaching and following “the way he walked”—the style of living our Lord adopted especially in self-emptying poverty. Celano, by actually quoting the Rule of 1221, neatly sums up Francis’ objective:

His highest intention, principal desire and chief purpose was to observe the holy Gospel in all things and in every respect. And perfect was all his intentness, all his devotion, total his soul’s yearning, total his heart’s fervor “to follow the doctrine of our Lord Jesus Christ” and “to copy his footsteps” [1Cel 84].

Here Celano does use *imitari*, but it is his own, not Francis’, word. Not that the Poverello was any kind of dictionary man (although we know how words held a fascination for him as mysterious and quasi-sacramental things); it was rather that in his sanctity and simplicity and knowing the secret scripture of the poor, he had insights into meanings denied to the wise of this world. He knew he was spiritually right in sooner speaking of the following of Christ than of the imitation of Christ. The reason for this was that while he would never deem himself worthy or capable, should it be desirable, of becoming a replica of the Lord Jesus (though all the ages after would wonder at his practically accomplishing this), he saw that to follow after the Master was the obedient response of a disciple. It meant *Evangelium observare*—to observe the gospel.

### Luke

THE GOSPEL was not so much a text as a life. Is it not discernible in the Evangelists themselves that this was so? We are meant to “do these things” and have life. In Saint Luke, for example, the notion of following Christ is highlighted; and the long central section of that Gospel, from

9:51 to 19:27, contains the great instructions for would-be followers en route to Jerusalem. This maps the crucial journey to Calvary. Clearly in the Evangelist’s mind is also the inward journey, that itinerary of the self into God through following Jesus Christ, the very invitation to which makes inroads into a person’s heart and soul. Here it is the interior Master, the Holy Spirit of the Father and of Jesus, who must be operative, who must guide the journey. Luke emphasizes “the Spirit of the Lord and his holy operation” to an extent unparalleled except in his other book, Acts, and in Saint Paul. Luke is also the Gospel of absolute renunciations, drastic measures. With its enunciation of poverty as a prime requisite in the disciple it is a great sample from the entire gospel understood as a life led in practice. It is what Francis saw. Even if he took the Gospels as a whole and also latched onto certain texts from the other sacred authors, still the Lucan vision of the journey through poverty and radical renunciation must have been foremost in his mind. The Lucan Gospel it was that made impact upon the lower classes of those outsiders evangelized by Paul. Into their misery and poverty had come a hope enshrined in the preaching of a poor Christ who had no place to lay his head and who had chosen to live among outcasts, experiencing human pain and want in the condition of a slave (cf. Brown, 337). It was precisely these conditions that would enable them literally to “make a go” of following Christ; their poverty was blessed and salvific in the power of the Spirit. Yet the good and merciful news was shot through with a terrific challenge. Luke, for all his portrayal of the kind Savior, pulls no punches and gives the gospel message with no coating: the man who reinvests his capital to build bigger barns is not a sensible man at all but a fool (12:15–21); Dives may not have been a crook, but he enjoyed his wealth and never bothered about the misery of Lazarus, and ended up in Hades (16:19–31). And Luke’s Beatitudes and Sermon on the Plain are more radical and demanding in their form than even Matthew’s Sermon on the Mount (cf. Brown, 338–39).

### Bonaventure

WITHOUT QUESTION this unconditional disposition required of the Lord’s follower influenced every authentic Franciscan from Francis through Clare right on to Bonaventure. It is interesting that the first major biblical work undertaken by Bonaventure while teaching at Paris was his Commentary on Luke’s Gospel. The most “Franciscan” of his scriptural writings, many of its ideas dovetail in a telling manner with the arguments of the *Disputed Questions on Evangelical Perfection*, especially touching on the total renunciation of ownership (*Opera Omnia*, VII). Inseparable from voluntary dispossession is the *sequela Christi*, which is

the element in perfection making the disciple resemble his Master: "To follow Christ means to be utterly 'configured' to him" (*Opera Omnia*, VIII, 463:41; cf. V, 132:6).

This configuration is not imitation in a static, much less a mimic, sense. For it is achieved by following the Lord as supreme exemplar and carrying out what he enjoins. Above all it means bearing the cross, as one walks along in the company of Christ. In the cross reappear the features of the evangelical journey: utter humility, based on our Lord's self-humiliation; utter poverty, like Christ's nakedness on the Cross; utter austerity, sharing the pain and desolation of Jesus—in other words, the condition of homeless itinerants.

Jesus prescribes a threefold step to his would-be disciple: to deny himself, to take up his cross, to follow him. Bonaventure sees this invitation answered in the three vows of religious profession (which appear at the head of the Franciscan Rule). Obedience and chastity respond to the first two elements of the invitation respectively. But it is by means of poverty that Christ is followed. Further, since Franciscan life is that of the gospel, its poverty entails complete renunciation of ownership, even in common. The widow of Luke 21:1-4 is a figure of the poor Franciscan. She herself through giving away *all* she possessed becomes a *mulier evangelica*, a gospel woman, making a wholehearted offer. In a sense she acts recklessly by throwing away her livelihood; but the Lord often asks this of one in an evangelical vocation. Such an action may be criticized as imprudent; yet it is justified by sublime motivation (*Opera Omnia*, VII, 521:5-523:8). Thus, the reckless abandon of the gospel (sampled in Luke) is reflected vividly in Bonaventure's interpretation of Franciscan life as a following of Christ.

### The Rule

THE RULE, MOREOVER, was conceived by Francis as quite literally a rule "for the road," and transcendently for the inward journey. It has all the precariousness of pilgrim movement and provisional status, homelessness, crisis decision, and so forth. But an important feature of the Rule is its freedom for personal responsibility, once the basic course is mapped out. Francis did not want to restrict one's following of Christ by



too many precepts, and quite a number of things can be done if the Lord so inspires one. In Francis' day the inherited idea of religious perfection was that one ought to be surrounded and protected by all manner of precepts and restrictions and regulations. But he could see that once you got walking behind Christ you did not need so much of all that; there was a Person who was more valuable than a law. In any case, not even the Rule was the last word; the gospel was that! It was meant to liberate people for walking after Christ, not wrap them up for static existence. The Rule is the marrow of the gospel, but not the whole of it; it is the *life* that is the gospel. The Rule is more like an athlete's starting-board than a *cul-de-sac*. But if it is the mirror of a life, it may never become an archaic document we trumpet in pious moments. It is, after all, a book, a text for living, and one we ought to learn "by heart" so that it permeates our activities and affects our attitude to each dawning day. The Rule is the shaping of the journey in the *vestigia Christi*. Basically, it is but a statement that the gospel is our life and in a sense is but an outline of how to go about this. But it encapsulates in its ideas the "doctrine and footprints" of the Lord and unerringly points to the rest of the Good News. And it is surely because of this larger evangelical character of the Rule that it merits the superlative metaphors of Francis."<sup>3</sup> Yet even the Rule, especially in its final draft, must have appeared to Francis like an eagle with clipped wings, while he dreamed of hosts of followers recklessly ready to embark with him on crazy flight (Casaroli). Ω

Gregory Strachan,  
D.M.

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Casaroli (Cardinal), Homily at Assisi, 4 Oct., 1981; see *L'Osservatore Romano* (Eng. ed.), 12 Oct., 1981.

<sup>3</sup>"For he called the rule the book of life, the hope of salvation, the marrow of the Gospel, the way of perfection, the key to paradise, the treaty of an eternal covenant" (2Cel 208).

"He Followed Him on the Way":

## Mark's Portrait of the Disciple

DERMOT COX, O.F.M.

TO LIVE THE *vita apostolica* of Christ and the disciples has been an implicit ideal for successive generations since the Tenth Century at least. Perhaps no movement evokes this "nostalgia for that ancient gospel of Christ which precedes all rules" (Squire, 147) more than the Franciscan movement does. Yet in all that has been written about "Franciscanism" two elements, perhaps, can be singled out as particularly characteristic of Francis himself: his model was the human life of Christ on earth; his inspiration the words and teaching spoken to the first disciples. So, where are these to be found nowadays? In the Gospels, obviously. But a "short summary" of it all, a vital pattern of both life and teaching, can be found in one carefully planned and constructed narrative: that presented in chapters 8 through 10 of the Markan "good news." In reading these three chapters one relives what was perhaps the most intense learning experience of the novice disciples, and one learns how Jesus expected his first disciples to "follow him."

### Setting the Scene "on the Way"

WITHIN THE FRAMEWORK of a single journey from Galilee to Jerusalem, taking perhaps two weeks in all, Mark presents the personal teaching of Jesus on discipleship. They are all, Master and pupils alike, "on the way." The formula (*εν τη οδω*) is artistically used by the synoptist: it both marks this last journey and stands in itself as a paradigm of discipleship. Jesus is literally leading a small group of followers towards the city of David, but in a more significant way he is leading them on an interior journey of discovery. Both end at Calvary.

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So, for the second synoptist at least, the disciple is, like Jesus himself, "on the way" to the Passion. At the human level the journey is marked by a haunting degree of intimacy as they eat, sleep, and talk together. The "crowd" of outsiders (marked by the word *οχλος*), which for most of the Gospel serves as an uncomprehending foil to Christ's teaching, here fades into relative insignificance as Jesus addresses himself more exclusively and urgently to that small group which he had "called to himself" so long before (3:13). His aim is to lead them to an understanding of his own person and mission in the few short weeks left to them so that, at journey's close, his career can end and theirs begin. This journey is itself framed by a section on Jesus, his mission and vocation (1:9-8:26) and a last section on the achievement on that mission and thus the beginning of the mission of those he leaves behind (11:1-16:8). The theme of the "way" of discipleship is thus a dynamic of human progress, a striving towards a goal and a pedagogy of ways and means.

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Perhaps the weakness of Franciscanism is the weakness of Christianity: the "life" presented by Christ was too single-minded, too radical, too "all or nothing," to be easily codified in a Rule.

---

Within this journey two "lived parables" add an edge of urgency to the teaching: the "rich young man" who did not follow (10:17-31) and "blind" Bartimaeus, who did (10:46-52). Both are parables of blindness for the disciple (and the reader) to think about and apply to himself. "Seeing," the gift of recognition, is crucial to Mark, and it determines the way he arranged his material. He clearly shares with Matthew the insight that to walk the journey to its close requires an act of recognition as to who and what Jesus is, though for his part Matthew stresses the fact that even this is a grace from God (Mt. 16). Both, however, are agreed that the consequence of this recognition is a shared journey to Calvary, and both list the essential qualities of discipleship within that context. What Mark presents is a sequence that runs from an initial act of recognition of Jesus as the Christ (8:27) through a growth in awareness of the implications this has for both Jesus himself and the individual follower. What Christ said and did (rather than his formal teaching) is the model Mark places before his readers (Best, 15), so that they, second-generation

disciples, might understand their vocation. It is equally true that their understanding of all of this, and therefore our understanding of it, rises out of the perception that Calvary is the "end of the road." Particularly for the disciple who "takes to the road" in the post-Ascension Church, an understanding of the role suffering played for Christ is crucial. Indeed, this is forced on the attention by the fact that all three synoptists agree in preserving this dimension, and even John understands the second-generation Christian in this light. The disciple is always one whose ultimate terminus is the same as Christ's, and who is therefore always asking a series of questions: *who* was this person Jesus?; *what* did he come to achieve?; *how* did he achieve it? Indeed, the way each one answers these questions determines how one understands one's own vocation to follow after the Master. And this is why the framework of two miracles of "sight" is so important. The first section of the Gospel, from chapter 1 to chapter 8, that deals with the early ministry of Jesus (his "works of power" and miracles), has already led the reader to 8:22 and the gift of sight to a blind man.

Taking the blind man by the hand, he led him out of the town. Then he spat on his eyes and laid his hands upon him, and asked him, "Do you see anything?" He looked up and said, "I see men, but they look like walking trees." Again he laid his hands on his eyes, and the man looked intently and was healed; *and he saw everything clearly.*

This is immediately recognizable as a miracle with a symbolic discipleship content. It is part of a sequence that depicts three "types of blindness": that of the Pharisees (vv. 11-13); that of the disciples themselves which culminates in the challenge, "Do even *you* not yet understand, even after seeing the multiplication of the loaves and fishes?" (vv. 14-21); and of the blind man who did gain his sight, albeit progressively. Thus, when one arrives at journey's end (10:46) and the healing of Bartimaeus, this immediate gift of sight links the role of the cross in discipleship (v. 45) to the real cross that from now on will loom closer to them all as they move into Jerusalem and the ultimate crisis (Mk. 11-end). The last verse of the "road" section thus serves to tie the imagery together: "He received his sight and [immediately] *followed him on the way*"—the way that leads to Calvary.

Over the whole journey lies the shadow of Calvary, which was the historical goal and which, now, supplies the perspective within which all subsequent disciples can understand Christ's vocation—and their own. All along, it had been the Cross that had supplied the inner meaning of the instruction given by Jesus to his followers as they walked together "on the way." Almost every incident is a presage of the Passion. In fact, the teaching as a whole centers around three "predictions" of the Passion,

each one being followed by an elaboration or an instruction: 8:27ff, 9:30ff, and 10:32ff. These mark the stages of the journey and the development of the teaching on discipleship.

One thing to be noted—something characteristic of Saint Francis' attitude toward his own "followers," as will be noted in the conclusion—is a preliminary to understanding the Markan account, is the fact that the narrator insists on the following of *Jesus*—the disciples are never held up as models or leaders. Mark shows what discipleship is all about by showing how Jesus "did it" and by showing a group of ordinary people groping along behind. They were less than obviously successful, and even the best of them is *not* the model. Only Christ is the one to be followed, and he is the only success. Achievement is measured, not by strength of faith or tenacity in loyalty, but simply by a willingness to remain open to God's initiative already begun in the disciple as he sets out on the way after Jesus (Martini, 19ff).

### The First Stage of the Journey: Mk. 8:27-38

And Jesus went on with his disciples, to the villages of Caesarea Philippi; and on the way he asked his disciples, "Who do men say that I am?"

THE JOURNEY does not begin quite as abruptly as all that. Its starting point is a confession of faith, an intellectual gesture of commitment that the reader has been working out on his own account since the public speculation about Jesus began in 6:14. This is the pivotal point of the Gospel and from now on one's mind is bent to answering the question for oneself: *who is he?* This means that the reader's attention is focused, step by step, on the journey's end—as yet unseen but sufficiently guessed at to keep the followers thinking (10:32). This implicit guessing-game indulged in by the Twelve is the reason why Jesus gives his first clear description of where they are all headed (v. 31): "And he began to teach them that the Son of man must suffer many things, and be rejected by the elders and the chief priests and the scribes, and be killed . . . and he said this plainly." What now follows, that is the implications of being found in Jesus' company, must be seen in terms of each traveller working out, at this stage of the journey, how much it means to *him* to be with the Master. Peter's confession in v. 29: "You are the Christ"—is probably a catechetical formula that identifies Jesus for subsequent generations of disciples, and it is the fruit of some very clear thinking about the fact of Christ's last journey. As Mark presents it, it follows on the three-stage healing of vv. 22-26 where there is a development from *blindness* (v.22) to *half-sight* (v. 24) to *full sight* (v. 25), and where the meaning of the last verse is, "He was restored, so that he could see clearly what it was all

about." One would need to be very clear-sighted before making as radical a commitment as the Petrine "confession" suggests. It is relatively easy to say: "You are the Christ," and to form a cerebral allegiance to the truth of it. It is far from easy to involve oneself in it *as Christ saw it*—as a personal commitment that led ineluctably to the Passion.

It is interesting to note how Matthew deals with the same idea of commitment to an unseen end from a different point of view. The small episode he records in 8:18ff is paradigmatic of the open-ended nature of discipleship:

A scribe came up and said to him, "Teacher, I will follow you wherever you go." But Jesus said to him, "Foxes have dens and the birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay his head." Another of the disciples said to him, "Lord, let me first go and bury my father." But Jesus said to him, "Follow me, and let the dead bury their own dead."

This is a composite picture: two types of traveller being set up for the reader's assessment: vv. 19–20 depicts one who wishes to *become* a disciple, and vv. 21–22 one who, *already a disciple*, wishes to qualify his response. The answer to each is a warning: don't set out on this particular "way" unless you are sure. Taken together, the passage suggests that Jesus is anxious to clarify just how total are the implications of discipleship by showing that it can involve nothing less than a total gift of self. And the way the scribe responds suggests that he at least has a fair idea of what it means. After all, "wherever you go" (*οπου εαν*) bespeaks quite a degree of uncertainty. Who, as yet, among them knew where the road Jesus took would lead? And what a way to set out! No middle-class security, no reserve of the goods one needs to live respectably—and no reward offered except the dubious promise of sharing the fate of the Master. For the implications are all too clear: if one follows him *wherever* he goes as does the scribal volunteer in Matthew, then for the Markan disciple Calvary is the natural and inevitable terminus.

From this point on one notices how the idea of "fear" creeps in and begins to stain the disciples' attitude: 9:6, 9:32, and 10:32. Even the hopeful "lords" of the new Kingdom are beginning to suspect that there may be a severely literal edge to Christ's demands. And the description of the life-style that now follows in 8:34–39 does no more than confirm this dawning realization of the total exigence of discipleship. Whatever else may be interpreted with regard to "following," the one thing that cannot be qualified or rationalized is its "all or nothing" nature.

Mark 8:34–9:1 is clearly a coherent unit, composed perhaps of separate sayings that were brought together in the tradition even before Mark edited the material (Best, 28). It is therefore quite primitive, traceable to Jesus himself. This is the way *he* saw his disciples, and so it is

the way the very first disciples saw themselves.

If any man would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me. For whoever would save his life will lose it; and whoever loses his life for my sake and the sake of the good news will save it. For what good does it do a man to gain the whole world and lose his life?

There is a clear contrast drawn between the small group of disciples and the larger crowd, and this act of setting the "crowd" up as a foil to the disciples in 8:34 is typical of Mark, who likes to show the distinction between the "committed" follower and the crowd who hear the same message but are not open to its implications. This teaching represents, in Jesus' eyes, the basic essentials of the life, and he is deliberately putting the hard reality first, without dressing it up. This is certainly not the best of catechetical methods—so he is probably trying to put before the disciples a reality of challenge, so as to draw from them, the ones who have heard his call most clearly, an awareness that belongs to one's first response, before familiarity lays its familiar gloss over the radical nature of one's calling. Certain norms of existence are demanded of those who understand the reality of Jesus' mission. That is the only blueprint for their way of life. For every new generation that "comes after Jesus," as much as for that first generation, "calling" is both hard and easy: take one unambiguous step across the line of commitment, and the life of cross-carrying then follows.

But what is the life-style of the disciple, accepting the passage of time since those words were first spoken? In Mk. 8:34 three constituent elements are presented: "following after" Jesus, "denying oneself," and "taking up one's cross." The first is relatively simple, and tells us very little, as Mark uses it for the normal state of discipleship, which in his world was the normal act of following after a leader or master in the local, physical sense—just as one sees students following after their rabbi through the streets of Jerusalem. So perhaps the other two elements are meant to supply the key by showing how Jesus' disciples differ from those of a rabbi in the modality of following. The first thing that strikes the reader is the grammatical structure of the sentence as it comes from Mark's pen: a series of four verbal forms. The first is "come after me," an *aorist* infinitive; and this is followed by two *aorist* imperatives: "deny yourself" and "take up your cross." All of this goes to make up "follow me," which is the *present* imperative. What seems to be envisaged by the Markan Christ is an initial act—acceptance of the gift of vocation to following after the Master, and then a continuous action, a way of life that is self-denial and the carrying of a cross. *And one must keep at it.* The process only begins with the human decision to follow after Christ in a literal sense, to be in his company, watching what he does and learning

from experience. This then continues through life—and lays certain restrictions on life. In the light of the Passion the Markan disciple knew that this involved self-denial of a certain kind for the Master who had walked that way first. The acceptance of the cross and a life of self-denial are clearly not covered by the *aorist*, which marks a definite, completed act. It is here that one recalls how Luke, in his redaction, adds the word *daily*, clarifying the matter for *his* readers. And the same idea is found in the Pauline corpus (e.g., Rom. 13:14 and Eph. 4:22; cf. Best, 35). It is to be remembered that even in the time of Jesus a cross was not an inevitable concomitant of life. It was something one brought on oneself by reason of what one was and did. One “asked for it.” A person living an ordinary life does something radical that changes his status in the eyes of society, and suddenly the gallows becomes a very real consequence. And not all of the first disciples earned a cross in the way Jesus had. Yet their share in the Calvary-event had to be something else—alogous, perhaps, but nonetheless real. So here in Mk. 8 cross-carrying stands as a theological idea rather than the evocation of a historical Calvary. It represents the whole of Christ’s work and words as these are viewed by the Gospels: in the light of the “Suffering Servant” of Second Isaiah who sacrifices himself for the redemption of others. This may become applicable in differing ways to the actual circumstances of each disciple’s life. He is not called to a *type* of work—social, spiritual, etc.—but to live a real assimilation to the Christ-pattern, so that this pattern becomes a perceptible reality in the world. Whatever be the actual form this takes—and that may vary with each individual who “comes after” Jesus—one thing is immutable: the phrase underlines a willingness to give *absolutely*; to hold nothing back for self; to make any sacrifice, even the ultimate one, for the Master.

The second mandate, to “deny oneself,” adds depth to the whole picture. The first thing to note is that it is not found either in Mt. 10:38 or in Lk. 14:27. Yet it has all the appearance of being older than Mark, who must have taken it from Jesus himself and added it to the tradition as a way of developing the community’s understanding of what going after Jesus really meant. Traditionally, it has been taken as a synonym for ascetical practice, for denying to oneself the things one wants or needs. But the reflexive form in which it occurs in the Greek of Mark—denying oneself (*απαρνησασθω εαυτον*) makes this an impossible interpretation. *Oneself* is the direct object of the verb *deny* (Best, 50). We are dealing with the opposite of self-affirmation, or self-esteem. The text suggests a clear refusal to arrogate to oneself any “rights” or privileges, even those that are natural to one’s state in life—even the denial to oneself of what are usually considered “human rights,” such as freedom, justice, etc.

Clearly, then, it must involve a willingness not to affirm any right, even that to life. But given the context of the last journey in Mark it is broader than that since death *as such* is not necessarily called for. Searching for further clarification one’s eye falls on one other episode in Mark (14:30) where the same verb is used of Peter “denying” his Lord, and one can conclude that “denying oneself” means recognizing that one is no longer one’s own master. It is a renunciation of one’s self-determination.

The combination of the two verbs adds depth to the overall picture, giving a more rounded idea of the human response involved. Self-denial is the interior attitude, cross-bearing the commensurate external attitude, perhaps. The composite picture would then imply a definite, and visible, way of life and thought on the part of the individual; a decision to adopt a certain way of life that is dominated by the Master’s Calvary experience. This is made clear by the addition of v. 35b: “for my sake and the gospel’s.” This represents the motivation for the complex “life of following”: an adhesion to the way Jesus viewed it, an acceptance of his way of bringing redemption to an alienated world. It is a clear-sighted acceptance of the role of “servant.” And the parallel of v. 35a and 35b—paradoxical as it may seem—shows that this life of service and of denial of selfhood actually results in the attaining of *real* selfhood, real personality.

While this exhortation is central to the teaching of Christ on discipleship, it cannot, I think, be taken by itself, in isolation from the tradition of Jesus’ sayings and personal teaching. It is probably to be understood as a highly charged “capsule” of his general teaching, and takes its coloring from that. It suggests, very strongly, a particularly *interior* dimension to “deny yourself and take up your cross.” Some external form is necessary, and such must really be analogous to a cross, but what dominates it is the interior “virtue” that causes the external manifestation. Why did *Jesus* choose this way? Why the way of a *servant*, and a *failed* servant (if human values are applied)?

### What Are the Qualities of a Follower?

AS ONE SITS BACK at the end of this first leg of the journey and tries to assess, with some measure of tranquillity, the mind-boggling instruction of the Master, one notes first that this “mandate of discipleship,” this explosion of new ideas, occurs *at a particular point* in the development of Mark’s Gospel. Matthew places it at the beginning of the ministry (chapters 5–7), but in the second Gospel it is left to the end, occurring *after* the teaching of Christ’s own way of the Passion. Therefore the Markan concept of the disciple’s life-response (his vocation) takes its meaning from the Passion. To live as a disciple, as Jesus here outlines



such a life, is a moral "way" that refers directly back to his death, which it makes present to the world. The "cross" is not, therefore, an asceticism voluntarily assumed, but rather the necessary and only Christlike way of bringing redemption. As a start, it involves each one who aspires to "following" in the task of discovering what Jesus thought of his last journey to Jerusalem, and realizing this in one's own concrete situation. The idea that it represents *imitatio Christi* in the medieval sense does not stand up to textual analysis. "Imitation" of Jesus played little part in the disciples' actual following of the historical Christ (Schulz, 15ff). Rather, those first followers "along the way" saw themselves as involved in a movement geared to the fact that the "Reign of God" had been inaugurated and was now active on the earth. So for them it was not simply a case of "imitating" their Master, though this was included in the genuinely itinerant, dispossessed style they adopted, but the total relationship that existed between them and the Lord was so complex that it called for all the elements of following: imitation, denial of selfhood, insecurity, service of the Kingdom. Through it all the question of *knowledge* looms large: knowledge of the Master they followed, of his nature, and of his task.

As yet, however, the bemused—and let it be admitted, frightened—disciples that we meet "on the way" at the end of Mk. 8 do not fully "know" either Christ or the modality of his service. For this reason it is necessary that Jesus now present, after a six-day interval (9:2), a parable of knowledge and recognition.

#### Interlude: A Question of Identity (9:1-29)

BEFORE THE JOURNEY recommences (at 9:30), two episodes are placed before the disciple, each one geared to eliciting a new level of faith based on recognition: the "Transfiguration" and the "Healing of an Epileptic Child" together serve to deepen first impressions about Jesus and vocation. Only in this way will the Twelve become sufficiently perceptive as they face into the second part of the journey.

It is essential that the disciples know about Christ if they are to follow him. So the "Transfiguration," occurring as it does after the short "rest period"—that is, after they have had six days (9:2) to think about his first instruction (8:31ff)—throws light on the future Calvary-event, and deepens their awareness of what is involved in following such a Master. Both other synoptists—Matthew and Luke—have abbreviated this from Mark; so it would seem that Mark's longer elaboration of the tradition is with a view to his own particular theological purpose, which is to present Jesus as a *teacher* who now answers, graphically if not by word, the question of identity that has lain dormant so long. Who is he? Let them

experience his "glory" and see his power in action—and answer for themselves. As always, Mark's preoccupation is the intellectual as well as the moral preparation of the disciple for the service that lies ahead when Christ has finished his journey.

#### The Second Stage of the Journey (9:30-50)

THIS TAKES UP the theme of instruction, but from the change in tempo it is obvious that the implications are beginning to come home to the Twelve:

They went on from there and passed through Galilee. And he would not have anyone know it; for he was teaching his disciples, saying to them, "The Son of Man will be delivered into the hands of men, and they will kill him; and when he is killed, after three days he will rise." But they did not understand the saying, and they were afraid to ask him [9:30-32].

This short section is dominated by the opening word of v. 31, *for*. This is important, because it shows the reason behind Christ's desire to escape attention (v. 30b; cf. Best, 73). He has given them a hard teaching; now they all need some time, exclusive of any outside distraction, to clarify what he has shown about himself, and what he has taught them about their own vocation. And the important part of this instruction is to make it clear where the "way of discipleship"

ends—that is, where *he* ends up. From the text it appears that he succeeded, at least to the extent that they understood enough to make them afraid to ask for further clarification (v. 32b): "and they were afraid to ask him [any more about it]." They already knew from the first stage of the journey that discipleship demands *all* a person can give; now that "all" is becoming frighteningly concrete. The verb *delivered* into the hands of men, used here (and in Lk. 9:44), has overtones of ritual sacrifice. What follows now, in the episode that takes place "in the house" (that is, in a situation of privacy and intimacy) reverts to the theme of "service," first seen in chapter 8. The text reflects a very early and fundamental enunciation of the nature of being a follower (Stanley,



127), and (typical of the original teaching of Jesus) the first requirement of discipleship is a real *μετανοια*, a reversal of human standards of value: "If anyone would be first, he must be last of all and servant of all."

This is the beginning of a formal teaching, and the reader expects that it will, in some way, be elaborated. One can say "formal," because the text observes that he delivered it "sitting down" (35a)—the posture of the teacher-rabbi. The "greatness" of the disciple, which they have been discussing on the way (vv. 33a–34), can in fact be a real issue *only in the context of a journey to Calvary*. Indeed, one cannot but notice how for all three synoptists it is always on this journey to the Passion that the disciples are inspired to ask about "greatness" (Best, 76). Here in Mark the answer to their problem takes the form of a "parable" of discipleship (Stanley, 128): "He took a child, and put him in the midst of them"—so what do you think it's all about?

It has nothing to do with "innocence." A modern reader must look with the eyes of a first-century Palestinian Jew at the graphic lesson presented by Mk. 9:35ff, and understand it as did the bemused Twelve.

The whole point about the "child" is not that it is "humble" or "innocent"—what child *is*, except to the doting eye of a mother? It is rather that, in the contemporary context, a child was quite simply "nobody": no importance, no rights, no place in society. So here in Mark a "child" is made the exemplar of total abdication of "rights" and "privileges," and consequently of "service." The reader must think again, reassess his norms of comparison, and understand what is demanded of the "follower" of Jesus. The idea is not that one becomes little *so as to rise higher in the Kingdom*, but that *the essence of true Christian greatness is service in the sense Jesus and the evangelist knew it*. The disciple is judged, not by how *like* a child he becomes (a child is not to be imitated), but rather by his attitude to the paradigmatic "child"—the valueless, the unimportant, the peripheral, the outcast. How do *you* now think such a person should be received *in Christ's name*? The respect due to God is offered to *all* his creatures. Perhaps "courtesy," in the sense in which Francis used it, might be illustrative. In a way, this parable serves to give actuality to the earlier teaching proposed back up the road in 8:34. How do you consider, and serve, the peripheral people?

Mark is clearly forging a link between the "greatness" of the disciple and the "service" of the Cross. Since the Gospel of Mark was written for a post-Ascension community, what he says here must have relevance for that community. It must be a *present* situation; it must place before the believer a personal challenge to his scale of values. What happens, then, to each reader is fourfold:

- The concept *greatness* is redefined, the only norm now being

Christ's historical activity;

- the addition of the phrase *servant of all* in v. 35b links discipleship to *service*;
- and a small service becomes immeasurably great when it is "done for me" (v. 36);
- for the disciple who "serves" *in this way* a relationship is forged with Christ himself and so with the Father.

It is clear that the value of such service cannot be gauged by normal standards, since the only blueprint for the disciple's activity is Jesus and *his* activity. The Gospel of Matthew confirms this in 9:33ff, where the disciple is seen as one who gives up all desire to be great, becoming like a "child" without status, privileges, or dignity in his own eyes or in the eyes of others. That this became, at a very early stage, the understanding of the community is seen from Gal. 4:1 and Mt. 5:3.

Here in Mark, however, the penultimate stage of the journey ends, and once again Jesus offers a breathing space in which his followers can put their ideas together before being led out on the last, irrevocable step.

#### Interlude: A Parable of Following (10:17–31)

BEGINNING ONCE AGAIN with Mark's formula, "as he was setting out *on his way*," we have a short section that effectively serves as a "parable of discipleship." Two reactions to Jesus' call are presented: the "rich [young] man" who thinks better of his initial gesture of enthusiasm, and the small group of those who have already set their feet on the path of "following" without, perhaps, fully knowing the implications. These are now forced to take stock of what it will mean for them personally. The refusal of the rich man, who "goes away sorrowfully" (v. 22) is clear; the whole thing is too much to ask. What is more important for the reader is the special discussion that Jesus now holds with the Twelve (who remain), in which the *inner* meaning of discipleship is proposed—for it is precisely this that they have to work out on the last stage of the journey. One could say that this last stretch of road represents a single teaching unit framed by two episodes: the "blindness" of the disciples—first James and John in vv. 35–40 and then the other ten in vv. 41–45; and the blindness of Bartimaeus, who at least *knows* he is blind and joyfully follows Christ the moment he sees "the light" (v. 52).

To what extent did the Twelve learn about themselves and about Jesus from this whole incident? In dealing with the story of the "rich young man," the reader is immediately alerted by the disciples' stunned reaction to the Master's statement that it was difficult for a rich man to enter the Kingdom: they were "amazed" (v. 24). The word used in Mark (*εθαμβηθησαν*) is forceful. What Jesus has said to them about poverty, the leav-

ing of home and family, and persecution at the end of it all is not what they had come to expect—in spite of the clear indications they had been given in the first two stages of the journey. The truth of the matter is that until Jesus himself reaches the end of that journey *they* will be unable to understand it, for it transcends human logic and reason. Christ is proposing something totally new—the requirements needed if they are to be of his company, serving the Kingdom alongside him. Perhaps it draws one's mind back to the first introduction to discipleship in Mk. 1 and 4. Those who have been called, and who accept, must, before going a step further, "be converted." But in Mark *μετανοια* means more than a decision taken to "change one's way of life." It means changing one's whole way of thinking; judging by other norms than the human; accepting other values than those proposed by reason or humanity; opting for a different way of looking at life—and death.

Even at this stage of the game it is clear that Jesus is dealing with ordinary, good people who have to *unlearn* and then learn all over again. Their evident slowness would seem to be rather pathetic, but from Peter's sudden start of self-awareness in v. 28, introduced as it is with dramatic highlighting ("began," "lo!"), it dawns on the reader that in fact they have already begun the impossible journey through the needle's eye without being aware of it—from the moment they left home and began to follow after:

Peter began to say to him, "Lo, we have left everything and followed you." Jesus said, "Truly, I say to you, there is no one who has left house or brothers or sisters or mother or father or children or lands, for my sake and for the gospel, who will not receive a hundredfold now in this time, and in the age to come eternal life.

God has been at work in them while yet they were unconscious of it. He had taken the initiative; he gave the grace. They thought they were making a human gesture in their own small gift of self, and "lo!" it was already being transformed into a divine gesture (Martini, 71ff). And to their growing surprise the recompense is already here: "we who have left family and friends" have gained family and friends—Jesus' new family of close associates. This is a very Markan insight, and one remembers a previous episode when Jesus made a particularly strong statement regarding his newly called disciples in Mk. 3:32: "Who is my mother, and my family?" One notes, however, that Mark sees "persecution" as being counted among the gifts of the Kingdom, and this saves one from being too emotionally superficial, or euphoric, about the "rewards" of the life of discipleship.

It is precisely this cool awareness that becomes more and more necessary as they all of them now set out on the last stage of the journey.

### The Third Stage of the Journey (10:32-45)

THIS LAST SECTION is marked by an increase of tension brought about by the dramatic overtones of the first verse and the hardening of the concept *service* in the last verse. One feels very strongly that the storm is about to break: "And they were on the road, going up to Jerusalem, and Jesus was walking ahead of them; and they were amazed, and those who followed were afraid." They are on the road, going up to what is now a certain death, and the Master is forging ahead as if driven by a vision they cannot share. And they are afraid to ask him about it. All of this marks the last stage of the journey as the moment of crisis, the high point in the education of a disciple (Best, 126ff), a fact that is underlined by the common reaction of the Twelve; their very "amazement" and "fear" shows that even in their blindness they see there is no going back. Jesus' own actions emphasize the same thing: he "takes them *again*" (the emphasis in the Greek text is noteworthy), and now he includes them specifically in what is going to happen: "We are going up," he warns them. This had not been stressed in the two previous predictions of the Passion (8:31 and 9:31). But now the reality must be known, and no ambiguity may remain. The persistent "blindness" of the Twelve, the fact that they can still indulge in futile ambitions of greatness (James and John) or in equally sterile recriminations (the other ten) shows that they have forgotten (if indeed they had ever realized) what had been stressed in the previous instructions: the discipleship is a call to *service*; and that service explicitly the sacramental redemptive "service" of the Passion (cf. 9:33ff). The disciples must recognize what Jesus is doing, and where he is going. They must not view him as others in the crowd do—as a prophet, a teacher, or a source of solely human healing. He is the Son of Man on the way to achieving the Father's will by dying on the Cross. If the disciple "recognizes" the real Christ, he must recognize his own part in all of this movement to Jerusalem. Like his Master he must take this "good news" to a deprived and "blind" world. And he must do it the way his Master did it: by involving himself in the lonely "service" of the Cross; by "denying himself"; by stripping himself of the trappings of human respect and human "rights." It is noteworthy that the phrase used in v. 44 has hardened the simpler statement of 9:31, where the call was one to "service." Here, with no time left for woolly thinking, the word changes: "Whoever would be first among you must be *slave of all*. For the Son of Man came also not to be served but to serve, [that is,] to give his life as a ransom for many." We have arrived at the full significance of the "service" that was Christ's on this earth and that must consequently be the disciple's. "Slave of all" cannot be interpreted as easily as "servant"; it leaves less room for hedging. But to make things even clearer, Jesus

describes the service in historical terms: it is his own service of "giving his life as a ransom" for many (v. 45).

Those who follow the Master walk with him on a clearly determined road. A clear perception of end and means is essential. There can be no ambiguity about the disciples' "recognition" of Jesus. Those who receive the call receive also the gift of "sight," but they must be willing to personalize it; to make it real for themselves. And to involve the reader in this act of "recognition," Mark closes the journey with a final "acted parable" of discipleship:

Jesus said to blind Bartimaeus, "What do you want me to do for you?" And the blind man said to him, "Master, let me receive my sight." And Jesus said to him, "Go your way; your faith has made you well." And immediately he received his sight and followed him on the way.

Jericho is the last staging post before Jerusalem. Anyone who now "sees" and follows knows where the road ends.

### Conclusion

THEY ARE "following after the historical Jesus." But it is clear that a return to gospel roots cannot be simply to reinstate the actual life of a first-century Palestinian Jew or a thirteenth-century Italian Christian. As has been said, "imitation" of Jesus played relatively little part in the way early disciples followed the Jesus of history. Rather, they had learned a "way" by personal experience, and they had assimilated its distinctive vision of life and its value system in personal, and varying, ways. Christ himself had given his teaching to the world in very open-ended terms, offering a life rather than a code.

Franciscanism at its source would seem also to have been experiential rather than speculative. Francis had come to know Christ as he had lived, rather than through theology. He followed the life of the early disciples in its fullness, interpreting the teaching as literally as possible, not as an ideal but as the only way of life. And in a manner of speaking he did not really give his followers a "Rule"; he led them to Christ and set their feet on the path he had walked, following along in his company. This is Christianity at its best, and its practical failing is obvious.

Perhaps the weakness of Franciscanism is the weakness of Christianity: the "life" presented by Christ was too single-minded, too radical, too "all or nothing," to be easily codified in a Rule. Unless it is lived at a white heat of enthusiasm and generosity, there is little left of the vision but a mediocre "professionalism," little that is recognizable as "the way" walked by Jesus and the first disciples—or as the "Franciscanism" of Francis of Assisi. Ω

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### Easter Interlude

Walking together, it was almost dawn,  
and they felt the morning mist as it fogged up the lake,  
the gentle water lapping,  
like a small animal slaking its thirst.

The early light broke in cold waves upon their hearts.  
They spoke in muted, gray tones  
of unanswered questions,  
promises unfulfilled.

Camped in shadows they shared bread;  
it seemed to satisfy a private hunger.  
And in the silence,  
while the light grew bright on the beach,  
they were warmed by a fire  
that burned within.

Sister Edmund Marie Stets, C.S.B.

## Ave, Cave

Ave, Cave.  
Flowing water  
vadose and phreatic  
dissolving pathways—  
convoluted inroads  
through narcissism,  
through cholesterol clutter  
the hartsprings to new life  
when drinking from  
the present water table  
carbonated quenching  
a passage that goes forever  
and after drought  
formation/flowers/fruit  
a garden (of oulopholites) enclosed,  
nard streaming solid  
into draperies  
travertine translucence  
helictites' sweet wandering  
while the wind brings—  
calcium magic chemistry—  
dead bones to life,  
a land of moon-milk and honey

*Sister M. Felicity Dorsett, O.S.F.*

*St. Bonaventure:*

## Prologue to the Second Book of Sentences

TRANSLATED BY GREGORY SHANAHAN, O.F.M.

Only this have I found: that God made man upright, and he has entangled himself in an infinity of questions [Eccl. 7:30].  
IF ANYONE is eager to know what are the main scope and the entire interest of this *Second Book of the Sentences*, it happens that the words we have just quoted from the Wise Man in Ecclesiastes provide the answer to his inquiry. For when a man has brought good sense to bear on all his probings, and failed more often than succeeded, in the end he has to admit that what he discovered was this: that God made man upright<sup>1</sup> and that man has involved himself in interminable questionings. The statement comprises two things: upright formation, or rectitude, comes from God (*God made man upright*); and man's wretched crookedness comes from himself (*he has entangled himself with an infinity of questions*). These contain the boundary-mark of all human understanding: to recognize the origin of good, to seek it out, reach it, and find rest in it; to know also the source and origin of evil, so as to keep clear of it and be on one's guard against it. Herein also is included the whole thrust of what this book treats of: two things, namely, man's original state and man's lapse from that state.

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*Of the four prologues introducing the Commentaries on the Sentences of Peter Lombard, the second is perhaps the most significant. It is a marvelous synthesis of Bonaventure's anthropology, in which the human person is placed in a central position with regard to the entire created world. Always the contemplative, the Seraphic Doctor simply but profoundly states that "he who carefully reflects upon the principal purpose and entire content of this second book" will be reminded of the conclusion of the biblical wise man of Ecclesiastes. After all his attempts to investigate the things and events of this world, he declares: "Only this have I found: that God made man upright, and he has entangled himself with an infinity of questions" (Eccl. 7:30). This classical piece of Bonaventuran literature is a reflection on that statement.*

*God made man upright*: this tells us of man's original state. The manner in which God made man upright is explained by Ecclesiasticus 17:1-2: *God created man of the earth*—as regards his body—and *made him after his own image*—as regards the nature of his soul—and *he turned him into it again*—as regards super-added grace. This grace turns the soul towards God by means of habits, called virtues—and *clothed him with strength according to himself*.<sup>2</sup> According to these words God not only made rectitude possible for man, by impressing on him his image, but actually made him upright by turning man towards him. Man, then, is upright, when understanding is attuned to the highest truth in the act of knowing, when the will is conformed with the highest good in the act of loving, and when energy is connected to the highest power in operating. This is the result of man's total conversion away from himself and towards God.

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Man . . . is upright, when understanding is attuned to the highest truth in the act of knowing, when the will is conformed with the highest good in the the act of loving, and when energy is connected to the highest power in operating.

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In the first instance, therefore, man is upright when his understanding is attuned to the highest truth. In saying "attuned," however, I am not implying an absolute completeness; I mean, rather, a form of imitation. If truth, as Anselm says, is "rectitude perceivable by the mind alone"; and if nothing quite matches uprightness like that which is upright, then when our intellect is attuned to the truth, it is, of necessity, rectified (*De Veritate*, 11). Its attuning takes place when it actually turns towards the truth. Actual truth is defined as "the attuning of reality with its perception."<sup>3</sup> Now our understanding, if it be turned toward truth, is made true, and thereby attuned to truth; just as when it is attuned to rectitude it is made upright. Here a line from the book, *The True Religion*, is in point: "Without truth, nobody judges correctly" (St. Augustine, *De Vera Religione*, 31, 57ff). But one who has an eye for the truth makes a correct decision, as the Lord said to Simon: *You have judged correctly* (Lk. 7:43)—that is, "your conclusion is correct."

Likewise, man is "rectified" as his will is conformed to the highest good. The highest good is the highest equity or justice; for as one becomes more just, one becomes better. Anselm, however, says, "Justice is rectitude of will" (*De Veritate*, 12). And since nothing quite conforms to uprightness as that which is upright, as long as the will is shaped in harmony with the highest good and equity, of necessity it is rectified. It is when it turns toward the good in the act of loving that it is thus shaped. As Hugh [of St. Victor] says: "This I know, soul of mine, that when you love something, you are transformed into its likeness" (*Soliloquium de arrha animae*). He who loves goodness is upright. The *Canticle of Canticles* refers to this: *The upright love you* (1:3); it means, "the upright turn towards your goodness while your goodness leans down to them." The soul that has experienced this cries out: *How good God is to Israel, to those who are of an upright heart!*" (Ps. 72:1). And since it is only the upright who have this experience, it is said: *praise is fitting for the upright* (Ps. 32:1).

In no less a fashion is man rectified when his power is connected to the highest power. "That thing is upright whose middle point does not stray from the extremities."<sup>4</sup> The extremities are *first and last, alpha and omega, beginning and end* (Rev. 22:13). In the middle of these lies the action by which an achiever reaches his final goal. There is, therefore, a power that is "upright," when it operates from the first beginning to the last end. Now, it is because divine power has all things for its sphere of operation, and works on God's account, that it is the most upright of all operations. Yet nothing quite connects with what is upright like that which is upright; and so, when our power connects with the highest power, without a shadow of a doubt, it becomes upright. It follows that man is not only made upright, but is also made ruler and reigning king,<sup>5</sup> to recall Deuteronomy: *He shall be king with the most upright: the princes of the people being assembled with the tribes of Israel* (33:5). This will take place in the life of glory, when this power of ours will be fastened to the divine power. It is then that we shall have complete power over our will, as God has over his. This is why all shall reign as kings; this is why the realm of heaven is promised to all.

God, therefore, has made man upright when he turned him toward himself. In his turning towards God, man became upright not only in regard to things above him, but also in regard to things beneath him. For man stands in the middle: he himself is turned in the direction of God and subject to him; everything else is his subject. This is so because God placed every created truth in subjection to his intellect for discernment, every good to his desiring for use, every energy to his power for direction



It follows, of course, that human understanding, once it faces divine truth, lays claim to wisdom, by means of which all things are discerned. For according to the Book of Wisdom: *She gave me the knowledge of all things that are: to know the disposition of the whole world, and the virtues of the elements; the beginning, and ending, and midst of the times, the alterations of their courses, and the changes of the seasons; the revolutions of the year, and the disposition of the stars; the natures of living creatures, and the rage of wild beasts, the force of winds, and reasonings of men, the diversity of plants, and the virtues of roots. And all such things as are hidden and not foreseen (7:17:21)*<sup>6</sup>. And so it was that Adam gave names to all things.

Equally God subjected all things to man's will for his use, so that he might turn them all to his advantage. *He has put all things*

*under his feet*, says the Psalm (8:8); and the Apostle—who was speaking to people converted to God—said, *Everything is for you* (1 Cor. 3:22).

To man's power he also subjected everything he was to govern. *Subdue it*, says Genesis (1:28), *and rule over the fishes of the sea, and the fowls of the air*.

This initial upright human condition in its relationship with things above and below is epitomized in the words: *Let us make man to our image and likeness; and let him have dominion*, etc. (Gen. 1:26). Therefore, God made man upright when he converted him and made him like himself, and then placed him over everything. And so, human nature, clearly, was created upright.

What follows in the text concerns man's pitiable aberration: *he has entangled himself with an infinity of questions*. Observe there *the way* he fell, as well as *the state into which* he fell. Three things about sin and three elements in our text give us the way he fell. There is in sin *a turning from, a turning towards, and a loss of goods or despoiling*. That "entangling" is *the turning towards*; that "endlessness" is *the turning from*; and those "questions" are *the despoiling*.<sup>7</sup> You see, the turning towards makes a man depraved, the turning from makes him weak, and the despoiling makes a beggar of him. All of that is indicated by: *he has entangled himself with an infinity of questions*.

We can also observe the state into which man fell. He fell, to be sure, from uprightness to the extent of losing uprightness itself, though not the aptitude for it; losing the habit of it, not the inclination to it. If it was a real resemblance he lost, well, at least he *passes like a shadow* (Ps. 38:7). But because there remained the inclination, and no habit, man ends up as an anxious searcher. Nothing created could compensate for the good lost, since it was infinite, and so his yearning and searching go on, without a moment's peace. Thus by straying from uprightness *he has entangled himself with an infinity of questions*.

The understanding, by turning away from the highest truth, becomes ignorant; through curiosity it involves itself in interminable questionings. *There are some*, says Ecclesiastes (8:16-17), *who day and night take no sleep with their eyes. And I understand that man can find no reason of all those words of God* which—you can add—might satisfy his longings and inquiries. In fact, one question begets another, and causes a fresh debate, and then the questioner gets swamped in insoluble doubts. That is why Proverbs says, *It is an honor for a man to separate himself from quarrels; but all fools are meddling with reproaches* (20:3). Sad men are these, giving heed, as they do, *to fables and endless genealogies that furnish questions* (1 Tim 1:4). They are the types that wrap themselves in reproaches, for they are *ever learning and never attaining to the knowledge of the truth* (2 Tim. 3:7).

The will, at variance now with the highest good, finds itself in dire need. It entangles itself with an infinity of questions through concupiscence and greed. As Proverbs says (30:16): *the fire never says, It is enough*; and Ecclesiastes (5:9): *A covetous man will not be satisfied with money*. So he goes on, forever asking and begging. Covetousness, likewise, is never satisfied; rather does it get enveloped in endless questions concerning pleasures. *All things are mingled together*, we read in Wisdom (14:25-26), *blood, murder, theft and dissimulation, corruption and unfaithfulness, tumults and perjury, disquieting of the good, forgetfulness of God, defiling of souls, changing of nature, disorder in marriage, and the irregularity of adultery and uncleanness*. These are the endless questions, all mingled together, in which man involves himself, once his will no longer takes shape from the highest good.

As for human power, it became weak on disconnecting itself from the highest power. It, in its turn, entangled itself in an infinity of questions through its instability, forever seeking rest and not finding it. *The Lord mingled in the midst of Egypt the spirit of giddiness* (Is. 19:14). The spirit of instability is what this is; there is no keeping anything steady in it. So, a sinful man is *like dust, which the wind drives from the face of the earth* (Ps. 1:4). We read in the Psalm: *If you turn away your face, they shall be*

troubled; you shall take away their breath (Ps. 103:29); so shall the sinner be: like the dust which the wind drives from the face of the earth. Just as dust, therefore, cannot settle while there is a turning wind, so neither can our power remain steadfast. And that is why it goes about looking for and shifting from any number of places, and begging support for itself.

Man, then, entangled himself with an infinity of questions through curiosity, falling from truth into ignorance. He did it through covetousness, falling from goodness into evil. He did it through instability, falling from power into impotence. And that is how man's original state and his lapse from that state are drawn to our attention in the words quoted at the outset. And "this only have I found" covered by this second book of the *Sentences*. Ω

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<sup>1</sup>There is a marvelous play on the word *rectus* in the Latin text as Bonaventure tries to underscore the position of man before the fall and after it. It is difficult to express this in English, for the word could easily be translated *right*, *upright*, or *correct*. The same may be said of the Latin word *rectitudo* that continues the play on words. It can be translated *rightness*, *righteousness*, or *uprightness*. To keep the spatial imagery that Bonaventure seems to be intending here, we have kept to the translation of *upright* and, hence, *uprightness*.

<sup>2</sup>The word *virtue* today commonly means moral goodness in, perhaps, too mild a sense. The Latin *virtus*, although used in the context of the Christian virtues, conveyed primarily the sense of manly worth, valor, courage, and strength. Only here is *virtutum* translated as *virtues* (apart from the quotation from Wisdom on the "virtues" of the plants, etc., where it also means inherent efficacy. For the rest, the word *power* is used and, once or twice, *energy* and *strength*.

<sup>3</sup>*Adequatio rei et intellectus* was a common definition of truth in the medieval schools; cf. *Opera Omnia* I, 707.

<sup>4</sup>The definition is derived from Plato. Bonaventure, ever skillful with words, gives here one of the variants of *rectum*.

<sup>5</sup>Once more we are confronted with one of Bonaventure's plays on words. In this instance: *rector*, *rex*, *regnum*, that we have rendered *ruler*, *reigning king*, and *realm*.

<sup>6</sup>An adaptation of the Vulgate which reads *he*, referring to *God*.

<sup>7</sup>Bonaventure is analyzing his opening scriptural text. *Finis privationem*, which is here translated as *endlessness* is a clever variant of the *infinity* of the scriptural quotation.

## A Changed Man

He was really changed  
when the Lord called his name;  
Down at San Damiano,  
and he's never been the same.

Worldly, reckless;  
the Lord said, "Cease."  
And his restlessness has been replaced  
by His Peace.

He fasted and prayed,  
and loved all creation;  
And he preached Jesus Christ  
as the Way to Salvation.

Tirelessly, he sought  
to be more like his Lord;  
And finally, at last,  
the Stigmata he bore.

Weakened, near death,  
He lacked but one thing;  
And he left Brother Body,  
and went to his King.

Walt Hund, T.O.R.



## Book Reviews

**The People of the Way: The Story behind the New Testament.** Cincinnati: St. Anthony Messenger Press, 1984. Pp. viii-142, including Index. Paper, \$5.95.

Reviewed by Father Joseph Juracek, O.F.M., M.A. (Scripture, Washington Theological Union), Lecturer in Religious Studies at Siena College.

Anthony Gilles has set out to show the reader that "we cannot understand the New Testament unless we approach it, on the one hand, as a book about Jesus and, on the other, as a book about the early Christians' developing relationship with Jesus." He accomplishes this task by examining each book of the New Testament in light of the growing faith of the early Christian community. Gilles divides the New Testament into three stages of development, paralleling the stages of the early believers' relationship to and understanding of Jesus.

The first stage is infatuation. The Acts of the Apostles is clearly written in this first stage, for it is a love story which recounts how the early Church first began to experience its infatuation with the risen Lord. This infatuation was the impetus which compelled the early Church to proclaim its love of Jesus to all who would listen. It should be observed here that Gilles' developmental view does not wish to question the rather late date usually assigned the composition of Acts.

As in any love affair, infatuation leads to a stage where the lover desires to know everything possible about the

beloved. Gilles gives the name *intimacy* to this second stage in New Testament development. The Gospels of Matthew, Mark, and Luke provide a bridge between a natural curiosity to know more about Jesus and an experience of Jesus which called for commitment from the hearer. The Synoptic Gospels, therefore, emphasize the implementation of Jesus' teaching in one's everyday life, calling each believer into deeper commitment and intimacy with Jesus. (Most of the other New Testament books, of course, also taught Christians to surrender their own needs and to accept the values of the beloved.)

Identification is the third stage of New Testament development. Here the early Christian community became so closely united with Jesus that they began to take on his very identity. Traces of this stage can be found in two separate sets of New Testament texts: (1) Ephesians, Colossians, and Hebrews; and (2) the Gospel of John and the Johannine Epistles.

So often I hear people complain that they do not read the Bible because it is so difficult to understand. Thanks to Gilles this particular excuse is no longer valid. *The People of the Way* not only provides the reader with a very broad outline of each book of the New Testament, but also involves him or her in a first-hand experience of the Scriptures. Gilles has developed a unique and powerful tool which will unlock for the beginner the understanding of the New Testament.

**Behind Closed Doors: A Handbook on How to Pray.** By Joseph Champlin. New York: Paulist Press, 1984. Pp. vi-227. Paper, \$7.95.

Reviewed by Father Julian A. Davies, O.F.M., Associate Editor of this Review.

The subtitle of this book, *A Handbook on How to Pray*, is an apt description of its contents. The author, a well known writer in the area of Liturgy, begins by stating and commenting upon seven basic principles about prayer: (1) some time must be set aside for prayer and solitude each day; (2) prayer is being present with God, speaking and listening to the Lord in a variety of ways best suited for each individual; (3) different people prefer different ways of prayer, and the same person may pray several different ways in a day; (4) prayer is based on and builds up faith; (5) prayer may overflow into feelings, but doesn't necessarily do so; (6) any praying person can expect moments of purifying dryness and darkness; (7) prayer must be cross-stamped; that is, include a vertical dimension to God as well as a horizontal dimension open to humans.

After thoroughly discussing these principles, Father Champlin goes on to explain seven different ways of praying: (1) the Rosary, (2) the Liturgy of the Hours, (3) reflective Bible reading, (4) meditation, (5) charismatic and healing prayer, (6) centering prayer, and (7) journal keeping. Particularly significant in the chapter on Mary were the fresh insights into ways of saying the Rosary and the "comeback" or resurgence of Marian devotion in the Catholic community today. Also especially valuable is the treatment of charismatic and

healing prayer. Each of these chapters on ways of praying is followed by a list of helpful books on that area.

The last part of the book reprints chapters one to three of the General Instruction on the Liturgy of the Hours, which is in itself a treatise both on prayer and on the importance and significance of the prayer which can be the vehicle of praise for laymen as well as clerics and religious.

Father Champlin writes interestingly and competently. His book on prayer can help anyone who is serious about his or her life with God. Those who direct people on the way to God ought to know this book. Veteran pray-ers can find it helpful too.

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### Addendum

We neglected, in Father William Hart McNichols's article on La Verne in our January issue, to indicate that the opening poetic citation on page 28 is from Gerard Manley Hopkins's "The Wreck of the Deutschland." We regret this unfortunate omission.

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**Relics.** By Joan Carroll Cruz. Huntington, IN: Our Sunday Visitor Press, 1984. Pp. viii-308, including Bibliography. Paper, \$10.95.

Reviewed by Father Julian A. Davies, O.F.M., Ph.D., Associate Editor of this Review.

This well written book on a topic of genuine human interest begins with a rationale and history of the veneration of relics, including the testimony of

Vatican II. Subsequently relics of Jesus, of his Passion, of Mary, and of the saints are described and their history related in full, with reference to sources. Among the relics of the Lord, we find accounts of Eucharistic miracles, such as those at Lanciano and Siena in Italy, and the Holy Grail. The Passion relics are the best known: the Crown of Thorns, the True Cross, the nails, and the Shroud of Turin, to name some.

With regard to Mary, there are accounts of miraculous pictures and statues, such as Copacabana, two at Guadalupe, one dating from 1326 in Spain (one of the pictures was ignorant of), Prompt Succor (important to

American History during the War of 1812), and Perpetual Help, to name a few.

Biographies of the saints are really more discussed than their relics, and this is as it should be. Buildings as relics—in particular the House of Loreto, are treated, as is the "Manna of the Saints"—oil which exudes from their bodies and has had healing effects.

Several color plates enhance the book's appearance, and a helpful bibliography is included. Well written as it is, and with the attention it gives to a topic in which the faithful are interested, *Relics* should be in the library of every priest, every convent, and every parish.

## Books Received

- Champlin, James M., *Behind Closed Doors: A Handbook on How to Pray*. New York: Paulist Press, 1984. Pp. vi-227. Paper, \$7.95.
- Dictionary of Mary*. Translated by John Otto. New York: Catholic Book Publishing Co., 1983. Pp. 416. Paper, \$6.00.
- Finley, James, *The Answering Call: Fostering Intimacy with God*. Notre Dame, IN: Ave Maria Press, 1985. Pp. 157. Paper, \$4.95.
- Folliet, Joseph (Brother Juniper), *The Evening Sun: Growing Old Beautifully*. Trans. by David Smith. Chicago: Franciscan Herald Press, 1983. Pp. viii-175. Cloth, \$12.50.
- Folliet, Joseph, *Finding Peace of Heart*. Trans. by Paul Burns. Chicago: Franciscan Herald Press, 1982. Pp. vi-133. Cloth, \$10.50.
- Fortman, S.J., Edmund J., *Activities of the Holy Spirit*. Chicago: Franciscan Herald Press, 1984. Pp. viii-191. Cloth, \$12.00.
- Gauchat, Dorothy, *All God's Children*. New York: Ballantine Books, 1985. Pp. x-161. Paper, \$2.50.
- Holland, Leo, *Images of God: Finding the Lord in Ordinary Objects and Everyday Events*. Foreword by George Martin. Notre Dame, IN: Ave Maria Press, 1984. Pp. 110. Photographs. Paper, \$4.95.
- Knight, David, *Confession Can Change Your Life*. Cincinnati: St. Anthony Messenger Press, 1984. Pp. iv-59. Paper, \$2.50.
- McCarthy, S.D.B., Flor, *And the Master Answered . . .* Notre Dame, IN: Ave Maria Press, 1985. Pp. 135, illus. Paper, \$4.95.
- Seraphim, P.C.P.A., Sister Mary, *Clare: Her Light and Her Song*. Chicago: Franciscan Herald Press, 1984. Pp. xiv-401. Cloth, \$18.00.

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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 Glisky, 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	Mr. 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.
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