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The drawing on page 135 has been furnished by Sister Christine Therese Schneider.

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[1]
EpCust: Letter to Superiors[1]
EpFid: Letter to All the Faithful[1]
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

[1]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).

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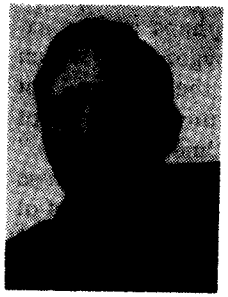

EDITORIAL

Will We Ever Learn

OUR CATHOLIC FAITH teaches us that what we believe through faith and what we can know by reason are in harmony. In the area of religious life, psychology, and sociology—disciplines of reason and experience—confirm more and more that our customs and practices are community building and personally enhancing. For instance, although clothing does not make the Franciscan, yet the sense of personal identity given by a uniform is well known, as is the social witness of a distinctive garb. Again, psychologists tell us of the importance of silence, time to collect oneself. The social sciences teach that doing things together builds bonds that hold people together. Our faith has taught us that we need to deny ourselves, and M. Scott Peck in his best seller, *The Road Less Traveled* (New York: Simon and Shuster, 1978), argues from his experience as psychiatrist that postponing gratification is a lesson contemporary people need to learn. Jesus told us that it is better to give than to receive, and volunteerism as an institution is with us as our culture perceives the need for people to fill their lives with meaningful service.

Unfortunately, it seems that the more we learn from the social sciences, the less we carry out the many customs that they have demonstrated to us are viable. As the need for silence is more recognized, we find less of it in our communities. As we learn about group dynamics, fewer and fewer common activities: meals, recreation, prayer, working—fill our horariums. As we learn about the value of signs and symbols, we more and more put aside our habits. As we learn the benefits of giving, we find our lives more and more concerned with personal hobbies, friendships, and travel. As we hear of the danger of "burn out," we plunge ourselves into the apostolate with reckless abandon. As we hear again and again of the power of the spoken word, we have abandoned reading at table, a wonderful opportunity for learning as well as growing. As the nutritionists tell us of the dangers of red meat, we find abstinence on Fridays in Lent hard to take.

How explain these paradoxes? Perhaps the reasons offered for what we lived in religious life a few years ago were not always the best—but that doesn't mean that the practices were wrong. Perhaps we are experiencing a reaction to the excessive literalism of a bygone era, which sometimes made it appear that the religious existed for the Rule, and not vice versa. Perhaps a false view of self-fulfillment has unwittingly crept into religious life—the 70's were the years of the "me generation." Whatever the reasons or causes, the intelligent—and religious—response to our circumstances today is to realize that we had been doing a lot of things rightly, and that we will serve ourselves and our God and world better, if we get back to doing them. Ω

Fr Julian Davies ofm

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Vocations and the Franciscan Vocation

BERNARD J. PRZEWOZNY, O.F.M.CONV.

BY DRAWING ATTENTION to the Church's universal vocation to holiness, the Second Vatican Council (LG, art. 39-42) reminded every believer of his obligation to give an account for the hope that is in him (1 Pt. 3:15) and to confirm by a saintly life his calling and election to the eternal kingdom of Christ (2 Pt. 1:11). But anyone who attempts to give that account by specifying the particular nature of his call to holiness, as we shall try to do in the case of the Franciscan vocation, would do well to keep in mind the words of the Psalmist: "God has spoken once; I have heard two words" (62:11). Indeed, every believer is called to share in the one and same holiness of God; but each one hears that call and shares in that holiness according to his or her personal gifts. God has uttered one word to the Church; its members hear many words.

The truth of the Psalmist is also confirmed by the particular charism of a founder of a religious order and by the personal appropriation of that charism by his followers. In the case of Saint Francis of Assisi, just as in the case of all saints, we may say that he could not hear God's call without bearing fruit a hundredfold (Mt. 13:23), which means that his charism, although one and fully integrated in his own personality, is so polyvalent for his spiritual followers that they cannot but actualize it in many—hopefully complementary (!)—ways. Saint Francis says one word; Franciscans hear many words.

Father Bernard J. Przewozny, O.F.M.Conv., who presented this paper last year at an International Conference on Vocations, is teaching this year at St. Anthony-on-Hudson in Rensselaer, New York.

Personal Identity and the Universal Call to Holiness

WE SHOULD IMMEDIATELY note that, although the Franciscan charism is very often lived by people who also practice the evangelical counsels, Saint Francis intended it for all classes of people, clerical and lay, married and single, poor and rich. Thus, when we discuss the relation of his charism to the evangelical counsels, we do not mean to exclude those who live his charism as secular Franciscans. Here, again, the saint's charism says one word; his followers hear many words.

The meaning of the countless appropriations of the one and only call to holiness, and the meaning of the many possible existential "interpretations" of a charism such as that of Saint Francis, can briefly be summarized in the following four points:

1. Every call to holiness is rooted in baptismal consecration and belongs to a Christian's personal identity (LG, art. 39–40; 43–44).

2. Inasmuch as the call to holiness pervades the "construction" of a Christian's personal identity, and since the latter is mediated by the psychological and social dimensions of life, then the call to holiness, just as every grace, is mediated through the believer's life in the Church and in the world. Thus his charismatic identity is a gift and a mission in and for the Church, in and for the world.

3. Inasmuch as the call to holiness is addressed to every Christian but is realized or actualized according to a personal charism, it is impossible to establish an order of importance among particular manifestations of holiness. From the point of view of its charismatic reality, the Church is not a spiritual Waldorf Astoria where everything is tranquil and well organized for the comfort of its guests. Indeed, through his generous gifts, the Holy Spirit creates a holy disorder in the Church. The little old lady abandoned in a nursing home may be sanctifying herself more effectively than a friar who unwillingly observes the schedule of his friary.

4. Even if the practice of the evangelical counsels manifests in a special way the Church's universal call to holiness (LG, art. 42) and even if the religious state undeniably belongs to the life and holiness of the Church (LG, art. 44 cf. PC, art. 1), it still remains true that the generosity of the Holy Spirit, demonstrated by his bestowal of multiple charisms, does not permit a facile, existentially personal, apology of a particular gift. Every recipient of a charism is therefore obliged to question himself about the meaning of his God-given identity. And this is also true of the little old lady in the nursing home.

Baptismal Consecration and Religious Consecration

TO KNOW ONESELF, one must examine all of one's experiences which are mediated by positive or negative interactions in a world of more or less complex relations. As Max Scheler points out (1961), to know man one must study him in his relations to a realm of ethical and religious values, to society, to history and culture, and to his subjectively understood place in the universe of living things. Or, as Peter Berger and Thomas Luckmann remind us (1966), to know a person one must consider his or her social construction of reality.

Even if at times mysteriously or in a hidden manner, a believer's Christian identity is mediated by the Church. In Baptism, that grace-given but mediated identity or construction of reality is consecrated as the individual's answer to God's infinite love. This answer is especially expressed through the theologal virtues of faith, hope, and love. Consequently, the call to holiness, which is inseparable from baptismal consecration, is related to the three theologal virtues. According to Vatican II:

> The forms and tasks of life are many but holiness is one—that sanctity which is cultivated by all who act under God's Spirit and, obeying the Father's voice and adoring God the Father in spirit and in truth, follow Christ, poor, humble, and cross-bearing, that they may deserve to be partakers of his glory. Each one, however, according to his own gifts and duties must steadfastly advance along the way of a living faith, which arouses hope and works through love. [LG, art. 41].

Every believer answers God's infinite love with finite love which, sustained and transformed by grace, is the bond of perfection (Col. 3:12–14; 1 Cor. 12:31–13:6). God's redeeming love creates the believer's response and permits him or her to enter the covenant of love established in Christ, in whom infinite and finite love are united in the same person. Consequently, Vatican II rightly points to the intimate relation between baptismal consecration, as the fundamental incorporation into the covenant, and the consecration of the evangelical counsels as a more abundant sharing in its riches:

> True, as a baptized Christian he [i.e., a religious] is dead to sin and dedicated to God; but he desires to derive still more abundant fruit from the grace of his baptism. For this purpose he makes profession in the Church of the evangelical counsels [Ibid.; cf. PC, art. 5, and John Paul II, *Redemptionis Donum*, par. 7–8].

Although it is true that the evangelical counsels are primarily means

and instruments of love,[1] the love towards which they lead is still intimately bound to baptismal consecration and, consequently, to the theologal virtues. Saint Bonaventure's position on the relation between love and all other virtues can help us understand what this means (cf. *III Sent.* 27.1.1).

First, although all virtues are distinct from one another, they are concomitant to and compenetrate each other. Second, there exists a distinction between the love which is common and general to all virtues and the love of charity which is a theologal virtue.[2] Finally, charity is sufficient as far as merit and reward are concerned, only because it is connected with all other virtues and gifts. Consequently, although the evangelical counsels are primarily means and instruments of love, they are means and instruments of that love which compenetrates all virtues but at the same time is distinct from the love of theologal charity.

Keeping Saint Bonaventure's teaching in mind, we can say that obedience is related to faith, poverty to hope, and chastity to charity, without denying the particular relation of the three counsels to the love that is concomitant to and compenetrates all virtues. In other words, life according to the evangelical counsels is a species of Christian life. That is, although it has its own place in relation to the divine and hierarchical structure of the Church, religious life does not imply "a kind of middle way between the clerical and lay conditions of life" (LG, art. 43).

Furthermore, although a specific charism may be practiced by those who live according to the evangelical counsels, it need not be restricted only to them, but, inasmuch as it is a gift for the whole Church, it may and should extend to all Christians, even to those who do not profess the evangelical counsels; otherwise that charism runs the risk of being solipsistic.

Theologal Virtues and Evangelical Counsels

INASMUCH AS the Franciscan charism is for some believers related to the evangelical counsels (cf. RegB 1–2 [*Omnibus*, 57–58]), and these, in their own turn, are related to baptismal consecration, we can attempt to

[1]Cf. LG, art. 44, and its note 5 which cites St. Thomas' *Summa Theologiae*, II-II, q. 184, a. 3, and q. 188, a. 2; and St. Bonaventure's *Apologia Pauperum*, c. 3, 3. Also cf. PC, art. 6 and 11, and Paul VI, Apostolic Exhortation *Evangelica Testificatio*, par. 3 (henceforth cited as ET).

[2]Cf. St. Bonaventure, *In III Sent.*, d. 27, a. 1, q. 1, ad 3: "Amor ille quod cadit in definitione virtutis generaliter non est amor caritatis, quae est una de virtutibus theologicis, sed est amor omnibus et ceteris virtutibus communis et generalis."

specify the particular nature of the Franciscan charism by clarifying the relation of the evangelical counsels to the theologal virtues which mediate every believer's finite, but graced, love for God. But the results of such an effort will only indicate what the Franciscan charism possesses in common with the life of other institutes of perfection. The only reason why one should attempt such a specification, therefore, is that it will remind Franciscans who live according to the evangelical counsels that they must interpret those counsels according to their particular charism, just as they must interpret Christian life according to the demands of that same charism.

In this sense, then, let us specify the relation of the evangelical counsels to baptismal consecration.

Every Christian must love God the Father by transforming lust of the flesh into chaste love,[3] lust of the eyes into poverty of spirit (Mt. 5:3) and into hope for realities unseen (Heb. 1:1), and pride of life into that kind of faith which is an obedient submission to God (1 Jn. 2:15–17).

As far as religious are concerned, they must transform lust of the flesh into that chaste love which is a total and exclusive gift of self to the One who alone can satisfy definitively, that is, eschatologically, all true love; lust of the eyes into that hope which declares itself poor because it cannot find security in the visible realities of this life; and pride of life into that faith which is mediated through daily obedience (cf. PC, art. 12–14; ET, par. 13–29).

We can therefore say that consecrated persons, who live according to the love which is perfect chastity, according to the hope which is poor in human resources, and according to the obedience of total faith, "accomplish the interior purpose of the entire economy of redemption" (*Redemptionis Donum*, par. 11). In a world of transitory

[3]This is true even of spouses; cf. John Paul II, Wednesday audience discourses on Mt. 5:27–28, especially those of October 15, 22, 29; November 5, 12; December 3, 10, 17, 1980; January 7, 14, 28; February 4, 11, March 18, April 1, 8, 15, 1981. Cf. also *Redemptionis Donum*, par. 9–10.

mediations, they witness to the presence of the Kingdom of God and to its future consummation.

Mediations of Saint Francis' Charism

IF FRANCISCANS ARE TO appropriate not only what is common to Christian existence and to the consecrated life of the evangelical counsels but also Francis' insight into both of these, then they must be convinced that the saint's particular charism has an existential value for their personal Christian identities and construction of reality. To discover that existential value means to delineate what is perennial in Francis' charism, and this we can do only through an examination of the personal and social factors which mediated his charism, because those factors were the means whereby he himself appropriated God's grace. The mediations of his own life rendered his charism precise vis-à-vis his own society and other institutes of perfection.[4] Indeed, even if Francis' lifestyle was prophetically critical of the social values of his day, it still remains true that his personal charism was "defined" and acquired meaning for him and for others only in the social and ecclesial context of his own times.

Some of the mediations of the call to holiness appropriated by Saint Francis are well known to all readers of his biographies: imprisonment in Perugia, long illness and consequent disgust with "nature," periods of prayer in solitary places, encounter with lepers and subsequent work among them, first apparition of the Crucified, pilgrimage to Rome, words from the Crucifix in the Church of San Damiano, etc.

The meaning of these and other mediations can be summarized in the following three paragraphs:

1. It is undeniable that the origin of Francis' vocation, the foundation of his new self-identity, and the goal of his personal existence was God. The saint himself tells us this:

> This is how *God inspired me*, Brother Francis, to embark upon a life of penance. When I was in sin, the sight of lepers nauseated me beyond measure; but then *God himself led me into their company, and I had pity on them. . . . When God gave me some friars, there was no one to tell me what I should do; but the Most High himself made it clear to me* that I must live the life of the Gospel. I had this written down briefly and simply and his holiness the Pope confirmed it for me [Test {*Omnibus*, 67–68}; cf. 2Cel 209 {*Omnibus*, 529–30; emphasis added}].

2. It is just as undeniable that the sense of Francis' charism was

[4]Cf. his refusal to live according to the monastic or eremitical rules of his day (1Cel 33; *Omnibus*, 255).

mediated to him by the events of his life.[5] Thus, one can say that Francis' meeting with lepers immediately clarified the meaning of his charism. So, too, his renunciation of his father's wealth and his own future inheritance clarified his relation to his family, society, and the world.

3. A more attentive examination of Saint Francis' *curriculum vitae* leads us to say that his Christian and ecclesial life, even if at the beginning of his conversion only in an implicit manner, pervaded all mediating events and offered him the hermeneutic insight to interpret correctly both the charism and its mediations. Precisely because of his Christian and ecclesial life, he understood his encounter with lepers as a call from God and not as a merely human invitation to social and charitable works. The renunciation of his father's wealth, moreover, in the presence of the bishop and townspeople, made him unequivocally aware of his faith in God's universal fatherhood. An example of a more explicit ecclesial mediation, still at the beginning of his conversion, is his presence at Mass in the Church of St. Mary of the Portiuncula. At the end of that celebration, when he asked and received from the priest an "authentic" interpretation of the Gospel text, Francis discovered the evangelical and apostolic meaning of his charism: "This is what I wish, this is what I seek, this is what I long to do with all my heart!" (1Cel 22 [*Omnibus*, 247]). Consequently, his desire to obtain the approval of the highest ecclesiastical authority for his first norm of life (*memoriale propositi*), and later for his Rule, cannot imply simply the Church's legitimation of his charism; rather it points to its continued mediation of that grace, albeit implicitly at the beginning.[6] Without entering into a discussion of the much debated question concerning the "ecclesialization" of Francis' charism, one may say that, unlike other penitents of his time, the more sincerely he appropriated the Holy Spirit's call to holiness, that much more clearly did he perceive the mediating role of the Church in that call. Francis appropriated his charism in, through, and for the Church.

Franciscan Vocation

FRANCIS' ATTITUDE toward work and poverty permits us to illustrate the relation between his charism and its mediations.

[5]For a theological interpretation of the psychological element in private revelations and visions, cf. K. Rahner, "Visions and Prophecies," in *Inquiries* (New York: Herder and Herder, 1964, 87–188.

[6]Cf. Test [*Omnibus*, 67–68]: "God inspired me, too, and still inspires me with such great faith in priests who live according to the laws of the holy Church of Rome . . . and his holiness the Pope confirmed it [the *memoriale propositi*] for me"; cf. also 1Cel 32–33 [*Omnibus*, 254–56].

At the time of Saint Francis, the growing burgher class was developing a monetary economy which placed great value on work, a value that was inseparable from the laws of the marketplace. The more one earned, that much more one could buy; and the more one bought, that much greater became one's power and social "dignity." Towns bought civil rights from feudal princes and lords; private citizens bought social positions. The belligerent rivalry between the *maiores* and the *minores* is an example of this class struggle to acquire always greater power and "dignity." Before his conversion, even Francis wanted to become a knight and, thus, to improve his social standing (cf. LM I.3 [*Omnibus*, 637–38]; L3C 2 [*Omnibus*, 893–95]).

In this context, the saint's legislation concerning work was prophetically critical of the values his society attributed to it. He distinguishes between work and its compensation.[7] As a God-given grace, which should not extinguish a spirit of faith and devotion and which should permit a Franciscan to give good example and to avoid idleness, work belongs to human creativity and dignity. The saint therefore protected this essential value of work against all possible distortions by the laws of the marketplace. His distinction between work and its compensation did not mean, however, that social justice is exempt from satisfying the needs of the worker by assuring an equitable distribution of all the goods that God's generosity has made available to his children. Although equitable distribution according to the demands of social justice, in its modern understanding, may not have been the primary reason, it is nevertheless one of the reasons why Saint Francis could say: "When we receive no recompense for our work, we can turn to God's table and beg alms from door to door" (Test [*Omnibus*, 66]; cf. also the apology for begging alms in RegNB 9 (*Omnibus*, 39–40).

Francis' attitude toward work offers us a unique insight into his particular attachment to poverty. When he exalted poverty (cf. RegB 6, RegNB 8 and 9, and Test [*Omnibus*, 61, 38–40, 66]), he was contradicting the values of his society which was bent on making human dignity dependent on legal concessions, economic power, or property. For Saint

[7]Cf. RegNB 7 [*Omnibus*, 37]: "Everyone should remain at the trade and in the position in which he was called. In payment they may accept anything they need, except money. If necessary, they can go for alms like the rest of the friars. They are allowed to have the tools which they need for their trade." And, in RegB 5 [*Omnibus*, 61] we read: "As wages for their labor they may accept anything necessary for their temporal needs, for themselves or their brethren, except money in any form." Cf. also Test [*Omnibus*, 66].

Francis, God is the only source of man's incalculable worth.[8] Furthermore, in a society such as his, poverty would not be separated from humility. The late Raul Manselli was correct when he claimed that for Saint Francis it is not being poor that is important but being poor in humiliation, according to the sufferings of Christ crucified (p. 272). It is Christ, humble and poor, who establishes and guarantees human dignity. One can say that, in this salvific and existential perspective, Francis is interested in "being" rather than in "having," provided that "being" in this case implies an emptiness which must be filled by Christ, who made himself humble and poor for our sakes.

Without pretending to be original or complete, and without suggesting an immutable hierarchy among all the elements, because the hierarchy among secondary elements may vary according to changing social and ecclesial conditions,[9] we may list the following as belonging to the undeniable particularity of the Franciscan charism: (1) zealous conformation to Jesus, poor and humble, because in him God's infinitely rich love manifested itself for all humankind (cf. RegNB 9 and 23 [*Omnibus*, 39–40, 50–52]; RegB 6 [61]; Adm 5 [80–81]; EpFidI [93]; LM 6 [671]); (2) Gospel and Catholic life (RegB 1 [*Omnibus*, 57]; RegNB 19 [46]; Test [67]; 2Cel 208–09 [528–30]); (3) special love for the Mother of Christ (LM III.1 [646–47]; IX.3 [699–700]; (4) fraternal life (cf. RegB 6 [*Omnibus*, 61–62]); (5) penance (LM IV.6 [*Omnibus*, 657], poverty (cf. LM I.3 [*Omnibus*, 637–68; L3C 2 [893–95]; and above, note 7), *minoritas* (cf. RegNB 6 [*Omnibus*, 37]; Adm 12 [83]; 1Cel 38 [260–61), joy and simplicity (cf. RegNB 7 [*Omnibus*, 38]; EpFidI [96]; (6) preaching and evangelization (cf. RegNB 16 and 17 [*Omnibus*, 43–45]; RegB 9 [63] and 12 [64]; and (7) harmony with all creation (cf. CantSol [*Omnibus*, 130–31]; LM VII.1 [688–89].

These elements of Francis' charism permitted him to appropriate the call to holiness which was part of his own baptismal consecration, and, in addition, they inspired him to live according to the evangelical

[8]Cf. Adm 20 [*Omnibus*, 84]: "What a man is before God, that he is and no more." Cf. also LM VI.1 [*Omnibus*, 671]. Or, as we read in RegNB 23 [*Omnibus*, 52]: "We should love our Lord and God who has given and gives us everything, body and soul, and all our life; it was he who created and redeemed us and of his mercy alone he will save us; wretched and pitiable as we are, ungrateful and evil, rotten through and through, he has provided us with every good and does not cease to provide for us."

[9]Cf. Francis' prohibition against riding horseback (RegNB 15 [*Omnibus*, 43]; RegB 3 [*Omnibus*, 60]) and against petitioning the Roman Curia (Test [*Omnibus*, 68], and his permission concerning the use of shoes (RegB 2 [*Omnibus*, 58–59]).

counsels, the demands of which he made his own, but again, according to the spirit of his charism. Furthermore, as in the case of the Secular Order, he could propose his charism to all classes of Christians.

An analysis of the social and cultural mediations of all the undeniable elements of Francis' charism would show which of these were more important in the ever-changing circumstances of his time, which are more important today, and which are unconditionally important always and everywhere. Undeniably, the first three elements would belong to what is unconditionally important always and everywhere. In passing, we can say that contemporary Franciscans have not been inspired enough by the saint's distinction between work and its compensation to challenge the materialistic and non-Christian values of their consumer society (cf. Esser). And the application of this distinction to today's social and cultural values would seem to be more important than the application to them of Francis' prohibition against riding horseback!

The inestimable contribution of Saint Francis to the renewal of the Church and society of his day proves how effectively his charism revitalized the Christian construction of reality. His and his followers' personal identities inspired all classes—clerical, religious, and lay, rich and poor. They were convinced that Christ had called them in, through, and for the Church. If Francis' charism is to bear fruit today, then his modern followers must be convinced that, in its substantial content, his charism represents the "marrow of the Gospel" and the essence of their Christian identity. Ω

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A Tale • Trees • Life

In Eden's garden
A tree was an accomplice
Man rejected God.

Guile-less tree unharmed—
The Snake and man were punished;
Cast out Eden's gate.

Fruit trees furnished food,
Oaks, Elms gave shelter, warmth, tools,
Fuel for Sacrifice!

The Weeping Willow
Gracefully bent her arms in prayer;
Haven from the Sun!

Trees are children's slides.
Challenge to climb up so high
Try to reach the sky.

Trees are all colors,
Some tall, short, crooked, or straight;
All deeply rooted.

Beautiful Forests!
Residence for fowl and beasts;
Timber for mankind.

Noah built an ark,
A formidable fortress
'Gainst raging storms, floods!

Noah sent a dove—
Returned with a Peace off'ring,
An Olive tree's leaf!

Many twigs and branches—
Kindle for his Sacrifice,
Praise and thanks to God.

When Jesus was born,
Mary laid Him in manger
Made of lowly wood.

The boy Jesus learned
To carve, polish, and create
Wooden furniture.

We've heard the story
Of Jesus crowned with thorns
Molded from a tree.

How cross-beam was used
And placed upon His shoulders
Laden with our sins.

Guileless accomplice
Honored in our Redemption—
Tree—Cross for God's Son!

Shuddering, he cried:
"What evil has this Man done?"
Men raised Jesus high.

Darkness covered earth,
Jesus promised Paradise—
Bowed His head and died.

Like mighty Tree,
Jesus conquered sin and death;
Appeased His Father!

Indifferent tree—
Blest table for Sacrifice,
Vessel for His Blood!

When you behold trees,
Reflect God's greatest wonders
And transform your life!

Sister Barbara Mary Lanham, O.S.F.

Are We Shaped in Bonaventure's Image?

GREGORY SHANAHAN, O.F.M.

SAINT FRANCIS, by all that he was and all that he left us in writing, causes many questions to arise in our minds. Is it possible, for instance—should it be desirable—to follow the *letter* of the Gospel? If *spirit* be interpreted in too broad a sense (perhaps to mean a general adherence or favorable attitude to some objective), is it not in danger of becoming a shadow without substance? To keep the spirit of something—a rule, a law, a treaty—surely means, however, to carry it out according to the intention for which it was drawn up, in other words, to observe it *truly*. Whereas when we speak of a *spiritualized* form of something, we usually mean a watered down version, or if not, an adaptation which stresses agreement in principle without practical and detailed implementation.

If everything is eventually to be spiritualized (in the above mentioned sense), then why did Francis start his new movement? Surely the monks were for centuries living a spiritualized gospel program (in the good sense). True, many of them had become rich and lax and grown estranged from the masses of people. But could not Francis have simply tried to be a holier and poorer monk? (It *was* suggested to him.) And yet he would not have gained the place in history he has if he were merely a "stricter" monk. His movement is something more than a stricter monasticism. Above all, it has to do with Francis' reading of the Gospels in a new way, in a new light. His was a simple and straightforward approach; and what was revealed to him became an overwhelming desire to follow Jesus Christ step by step as far as was humanly possible. All this in him was unquestionably spiritual, but it was also certainly beyond "spiritualization."

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The question is: can and ought the pursuance of the letter as well as the spirit be accomplished by others? Must it be done especially by those on whom the onus lies of interpreting a founder's charism and who lay claim to his *founding* charism (cf the observations of J. M. R. Tillard in The CORD 24 [1984], 259, n. 1). The reason why this may not be a silly question to ask is that it is admitted that the real formative influence on Franciscans as such must be the person of Saint Francis in the peculiar drama of his life. If with us this is said for some extraordinary reason to be stronger than even any legislation, can it be restricted for ever to a conceptualization or to a hidden affair of the heart (cf. Esser, 15)? Does not history itself demonstrate that the spirituality of Franciscans has a peculiar need to be expressed in actions, incarnated in outward *experience*? Although radically contemplative, emanating from vision and life experience rather than being defined by any engagement in particular, Franciscanism seeks to be "extroverted," dramatized, to have visible and tangible social impact—that is, as a lived experience and not merely in the form of a synthetic "message." Nor is Franciscanism to be reduced to a theological viewpoint and nothing else. The doctors and schoolmen who expounded Christocentrism never gave the impression they had evaded by means of a sublimation the minority, poverty, and austerity inherent in their profession of rule and life.

This is where Bonaventure comes in. In his handling of the Franciscan ideal he has received an inordinate amount of criticism. (One might seek to know if Ignatius of Antioch in his extrapolation of Christianity was criticized for lack of fidelity to Christ and the first Apostles!). His being dubbed "second founder of the Order" (given varying shades of either approval or irony by different writers) at least indicates that at a crucial moment in their history he faced the problem of an interpretation of Saint Francis for the friars of his time. It is never idle, however, to investigate one mystic's interpretation of another mystic's ideal. It throws light upon the question of the variety of spiritual experience and of the common ground of mysticism. Such an investigation may also be looked on as an exercise in the theology of the spiritual life and of the religious life (consecrated life in community) and as a study of the effect which historical vicissitude has on their development.

By the time of the general chapter of Narbonne in 1260 Bonaventure had been minister general for thirty-three years; Francis was thirty-four years dead and thirty-two canonized, and in the meanwhile much water had run under the Franciscan bridge. Although several of the early companions of the Saint were still living mostly secluded lives in Italy, elsewhere the confreres of the "rugged woodsmen" had invaded the University scene. Their sole motive in this was, initially, the practical one

of mastering theology in order to keep their preaching orthodox. Many of them were now clerics and involved in priestly apostolates. Several, including Bonaventure (who would be whisked from a Paris rostrum to head an Order), were making their mark in the teaching world. Professors, established and respected, like Alexander of Hales, were even joining the novel group, becoming friars minor. All this brought amazement from academic circles and was resented by certain masters of the University from whom the friars were drawing more and more students. Furthermore, there had emerged a specific place of service, a *Franciscan* church—quite different from a tiny chapel in the Italian woods; and there ensued a certain conflict with the French clergy over the friars' encroachment in the areas of preaching, hearing confessions, and burials. Medievalists will be familiar with this as the Mendicant Controversy, in which Dominicans as well as Franciscans were involved (cf. Douie). Both Aquinas and Bonaventure were in the thick of the defense of the mendicants (as the new friars were eventually designated) for most of a decade; most ardently when at one point the very scriptural basis and justification for their form of religious life was called in question. The *Apologia Pauperum* came later, but Bonaventure's pre-generalate years (1248–1257) drew from him, among several other theological works, his *Disputed Questions on Evangelical Perfection* and his long exegetical undertaking, the *Commentary on the Gospel of Luke*, into which biblical work he cleverly wove several important themes, among them Gospel poverty, Gospel preaching, and voluntary expropriation (See **The CORD** [Jan., 1985], 5; [Apr., 1985], 99–100). The *Evangelical Perfection* places strong emphasis on renunciation of *communal* ownership; the *Luke Commentary* frequently stresses the perfection in renouncements of a total and radical nature. The latter also points up the enhancement of a preacher's credibility which his humble and austere life-style brings, and makes many references to features of Franciscan life. The mind of the Seraphic Doctor is already veering towards a definition of minoritic existence and towards identifying the main traits of its spirituality.

Obviously Saint Bonaventure's world differed greatly in many respects from the primitive scenes of the Order. The changes that were wrought in its first fifty years must have appeared at least as dramatic as the changes in the pattern of religious life over the past fifty years of our own era. Assisi, and perhaps even Bagnoregio with the little "school" at the friary there in Giovanni Fidanza's youth, must have seemed far-off places indeed. The "first companions" must have been imagined like men of another era. One of those companions was the Blessed Giles, old enough now to have observed all the developments, his old age spent in contemplation. The complaint placed on his lips by Jacopone da

Todi—"Paris, Paris, you have destroyed Assisi!" hardly seems unlikely.[1] And yet, the heart of Bonaventure must have been like the heart of Giles. To the Doctor's credit, not only was he aware of a listing by that humble friar of the degrees of contemplation, but he actually gave these and their source, in the *Luke Commentary*.[2] Was it the contemplative in Giles that the "prince of mystics" admired? For there was more to Franciscanism than a humble and austere moving among people: poverty marked out the Franciscan way, but contemplation was its goal. And Saint Bonaventure would be the last to omit the contemplative from a definition of Franciscan spirituality. Paris, after all, may not have ruined Assisi; but there was emerging a more mystical conception of Saint Francis' ideals. Did this necessarily demand an utter adaptation of a simple way of life? Francis had clung dearly to this himself, and had given the most distinct impression that he wanted the apostolic engagements of his friars and especially any pursuit of knowledge to be subservient to a poor, devout, and Spirit-guided existence. This was Bonaventure's problem; but in his own mind he appears to have resolved it with consummate ease. Nonetheless one observes him keeping his feet on the ground trodden by those who regarded themselves as *idiotae et subditi omnibus*. He had pen and notebook with him in 1259 in Italy and interviewed Brother Leo and others to glean their reflections. General or not, Paris Doctor or not, one thing had not changed: the essence of a common life, embraced in profession of the Rule of Francis and shared with simple brothers everywhere. But something else was changing, developing, that is, into something rich and rare; and at this point in time it was brewing in his mind and in the core of his heart. That this was so, many would for ever think; others would not. Who is fit to give a definition of the spark of a marvellous ideal? Is it "those first eye-witnesses," awed and simple, or is it the one who later, viewing all from a mountain of transfiguration with eagle eye, writes it all down with inspired hand?

On the one hand Bonaventure upheld a strict interpretation of the gospels in regard to self-abnegation, poverty, and mendicancy, and exalted the image of the Saint whose approach this was; he also tackled laxist tendencies within the Order, as his first encyclical in 1257 makes clear

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[1]"Mal videmmo Parigi, che n'ha destrutto Assisi, con la lor letteria l'hanno messo in male via." (Jacopone da Todi: *Poesie Spirituali*, ed. Tresatti, Venezia, 1617; quoted by J. Jörgensen (1957), 329, n. 4.

[2]The grades of contemplation listed by "a certain Brother Giles" are mentioned alongside those given by Saint Augustine and Richard of St. Victor; cf. *Opera Omnia* VIII. 231.

(**The CORD** [June,1983], 179–83). On the other hand he positively accepted the development of studies, and he took no step to lead the friars back to a day-to-day but uniform way of living in conformity with the most primitive observance. Whatever may be said about an ambivalence here, his deeper thinking on the matter is unambiguous; indeed, it would be churlish to say it was anything but ingenious:

> Do not worry over the fact that the friars in the beginning were simple and unlearned; rather should that strengthen your faith in the Order. I say it before God, that what made me love the life of blessed Francis so much was its similarity to the beginnings and the perfect growth of the Church. The Church started out with simple fishermen and went on to include renowned and skilled doctors. And so it is with blessed Francis' Order. God thus shows that it was not founded by human wisdom but by Christ [*Ep. de 3 Quaest. ad Magistrum Innominatum*{*Opera Omnia* VIII, 336}].

But was this General promoting more than natural development and adaptation to new circumstances? The Narbonne Constitutions, admittedly to a large extent an ordering of old decrees, represent a "modern" tightening of discipline for a rather "conventualized" situation (cf. **The CORD** [May, 1984], 140–41). There would be no restocking of the ranks with first-generation type friars; but neither would there be any lowering of idealism. In fact, the ideal of "seraphic perfection" would be so underlined by the Order's new steersman that the Francis-like friar might reappear spontaneously at any time,. and practise the essential elements of regular observance.

If it were a question of studies alone, of learning in itself, there would not be a great clash with the original ideal. Francis saw no need for learning in his own life, and he legislated for something far more important in followers of his (RegB X.7–9 [AB 143–44]; EpAnt [AB 79]). Men of learning joined him, however, at an early stage, and he appreciated their talents. Yet while he bade his brothers "honor all theologians," he hardly envisaged his own Order as a body of intellectuals. For him, an essential mark of the evangelical life was poverty. True, poverty was not an absolute end in itself; inner conformity to Christ was what really mattered. It was the changes that study carried in its trail that might clash with all this. Studies tended to make a man important. Convents and libraries became a necessity to pursue them. Advanced theological training led men to give doctrinal sermons, thus placing them at a remove above the simple band of penitential preachers of earlier days, whose simplicity was transparent in their words and acts. Now, even if it was before Bonaventure's generalate that two major changes had taken place: viz., the predominance of clerics over lay friars in running the Order, and the pursuit of studies—still, he did not alter the trend. As for learning, he

sought positively to fit it in with Saint Francis' aims. So, between the mind of the Doctor and the heart of the Poverello there occurred a secret reconciliation at a higher level: at the level of Scripture, for instance. For Bonaventure the Word Incarnate was the outer manifestation of the Father, and he wrote that the only fruitful way to approach the word of God was in humility and faith, "bending the knees of our heart." Francis, whose vocation began with an opening of the Scriptures and who all his life searched them for guidance, had the most extraordinary reverence for the Word of God, but also for all words, even his own words (!), which reminded him of the Word Incarnate.[3]

In 1259 Bonaventure visited the mountain hermitage of La Verna in Tuscany. His retreat may be looked on as a seeking to know if the more mystical, post-stigmata Francis was not the key to the route the Order should take; if the Order was not primarily a school in which men learned to achieve sanctity (there being no dichotomy, of course, between a Gospel mode of living and advancement in mystical prayer).[4] This is supported by the fact that he wrote to the Poor Clares at the same time, dwelling on their contemplative program and encouraging it as a genuine form of the Franciscan life (**The CORD** [July-Aug., 1983], 215–16). Also, he was meditating on the Gospel life of Saint Francis, while being taken up with the seven grades of contemplation. The main result of his mystical reflections is the *Itinerarium—The Soul's Journey into God*—in the prologue of which he describes the circumstances of its composition:

> Following the example of our most blessed father Francis, I was seeking this peace with panting spirit—I, a sinner and utterly unworthy who after our blessed father's death had become the seventh Minister General of the Friars. It happened that about the time of the thirty-third anniversary of the Saint's death, under divine impulse, I withdrew to Mount La Verna, seeking a place of quiet and desiring to find there peace of spirit. While I was there reflecting on various ways by which the soul ascends into God, there came to mind, among other things, the miracle which had occurred to blessed Francis in this very place: the vision of a winged seraph in the form of the Crucified. While reflecting on this, I saw at once that this vi-

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[3]Cf. the *Breviloquium*, ed. cit. in references, below, p. 4. Saint Francis' reverence for the written word of God is attested in many of his *opuscula*, e.g., EpOrd 35–37; AB 59.

[4]I wrote this in Maria Ratschitz, a mission in South Africa founded by Trappists a century ago. It is now a locus of solitude and of Franciscan encounter. Dedicated to Our Lady of Sorrows and clinging to the forested slope of Hlathikhulu mountain, it is strangely evocative of our historic places, not least of La Verna.

sion represented our father's rapture in contemplation and the road by which this rapture is reached [Cousins, 54].

In *The Soul's Journey* we move through and out of a philosophical contemplation of God through his traces in the universe into theology, and eventually arrive at the threshold of contemplative peace. At a certain point, however, a decisive transition must be made, and this involves abandoning the sensible world and speculation and even ourselves. In this *transitus* "Christ is the way and the door, Christ is the ladder and the vehicle" enabling us to rest our intellect and pass over to mystical ecstasy. For our part we must turn towards the cross of Christ and all that this entails. This Francis did, in whom the miracle of the stigmata was the demonstration of his crossing from self and the earthly to union with God:

> . . . he passed over into God in ecstatic contemplation and became an example of perfect contemplation as he had previously been of action . . . so that through him, more by example than by word, God might invite all truly spiritual men to this kind of passing over and spiritual ecstasy [Cousins, 112–13].

Bonaventure sees the Saint as model for all who pursue spiritual perfection. He also makes clear that the vital transition takes place only when all intellectual effort is abandoned and the concentration is upon charity and grace. Intellectual activity is a barrier to be removed; it helps us up to the door, but cannot lead us in. Only the poverty of abandonment can do this, together with prayer ("the mother-source of every upward surge") and union with the crucified Christ. This Bonaventurean conclusion is highly interesting in that it coincides with the intuitive conclusion of Francis. The mysticism of the two men forces the conclusion that knowledge is subordinate to poverty, grasped more fully as self-abandonment, and likewise to prayer and love, and can be vindicated only if it leads up to the gateway of union with God. What was intuition and ecstasy from the outset in Francis is speculative wisdom and the journey of the *mens* in the Seraphic Doctor:

> There is no other path but through the burning love of the Crucified. . . . This love . . . so absorbed the soul of Francis that his spirit shone through his flesh when . . . he carried in his body the sacred stigmata of the passion. . . . No one is in any way disposed for divine contemplation that leads to mystical estasy unless like Daniel he is *a man of desires*. Such desires are enkindled in us in two ways: by an outcry of prayer . . . and by the flash of insight by which the mind turns most directly and intently toward the rays of light [Cousins, 54–55].

According to Etienne Gilson (pp. 72–75), the great originality of

Bonaventure was his combining piety with intelligence in the service of love. Gilson observes that this sheds light on the *comparative* lack of asceticism in Bonaventure's life in contrast to the extraordinary mortifications of Francis (an asceticism held by medievals to be *de rigueur* in the true saint). He himself made excuse on grounds of health and in this his contemporaries bore him out. But this very fact influenced the direction of his mysticism. The imitation of Francis had to be a translation rather than a literal imitation. What was discipline of the body in Francis had to be substituted by some other discipline. There would, of course, be prayer, so central to the Franciscan life; there would be the basic austerities outlined in a Rule loved, lauded, and vindicated by this friar; there would also be the rigors of travel imposed by preaching and administration. But "why not also a new transmutation of learning into love, a transmutation unknown to the founder of the Order because the ways of learning had not been his" (Gilson, 74).

A similar explanation is suggested by Efrem Bettoni in treating of the "problem" Saint Bonaventure faced in respect of fidelity to the Franciscan ideal (1964, 17–19). The thing that struck his contemporaries most in Saint Francis was his poverty, his simple abandonment of all things. Bonaventure saw this as merely the *negative* side. Poverty is more positive when viewed as a means of arriving at perfect union with the God of all things. Francis' own life was, to be sure, a continual contact with God, realized often in solitude, or in daily fraternal encounter, in journeyings, in preaching the good news. His universe was a huge forest of symbols redirecting the mind and heart to the Creator. His poverty meant an enjoyment of things because they existed as creatures, not because they could be possessed. In this view reconciliation is wrought between what appear to be diametrically opposed: viz., abandonment of the world and fraternal communion with all creation. What Bonaventure wanted to preserve at all cost was the core of "the Francis message": the recall of all men to the constant contemplation of the most high God, wherein is found that knowledge and peace which is the purpose of human existence. He saw the goal as more important than the means to it, even if they differed from the means Francis adopted. This applied particularly to the pursuit of learning, which Francis held to be an obstacle to simplicity on the Spirit-guided road to heaven. This bypassing of and opposition to studies would be highlighted later in the literature of the more rigorous of the Spirituals, who will view the flourishing of learning in the Order (at least learning which they would deem "non-sacred") as destructive of its original spirit—again, "Paris destroying Assisi" (cf. MacVicar). But Bonaventure is the first to admit that the highest contemplation is above all the work of grace and prayer

and therefore within the scope of the ignorant and illiterate. He nonetheless affirms that there is also a discipline of the intellect that can replace an ascetic heroism not attainable by everyone. There is a certain *journey of the soul* towards the goal of contemplation, and it is served by learning. And the substance of Francis' ideal is not harmed by its pursuit.

In the *Disputed Questions on Evangelical Perfection* Bonaventure, in a fervent, unrelenting vindication of Scripture-based humility and poverty, shows he understood very well the basis of that life so dear to his spiritual father. In defending to the hilt the renunciation of ownership both in common and in private, he is championing something fundamental to the Rule of the Friars Minor, and therefore something which he and the rest of the friars professed and embraced as a way of life. Moreover, the main thrust of his arguments is that this form of poverty accords most perfectly, better than other forms then, with the observance of the Gospel:

> To renounce all things both in private and in common belongs to Christian perfection, not only meeting its demands but meeting them without measure. This is the *principal counsel* of gospel perfection, its *basic principle* and *peerless foundation*. These last three attributes can be supported respectively by arguments from nature, Scripture, and grace [*De Perf. Evang.*, q. 2, a. 2, concl. *Opera Omnia* V, 129].

Yet if this radical poverty is that professed by the friars, and it is nonetheless true that Bonaventure's personal imitation of the founder was not a literal one on all points, then it would seem that, in Bonaventure's view, even the Order ought to focus attention more on a *spiritual* imitation of *Christ's* self-emptying, the spirituality of the New Testament. Would this be sufficient, be it said, to justify his assertions about the role of the friars in history, counteracting avarice with their visibly poor life? God indeed provided for the different stages of history: in the beginning, it was the Apostles who overcame idolatry with miracles and signs; then later, men versed in Scripture and philosophy opposed heresy; but in this last period of time God raised up men who, voluntarily poor and begging their bread, would eliminate the greed of the world.

Be that as it may, it has been argued that in his final work, the *Con- the Six Days of Creation* (1273), he—the later Bonaventure [illegible] experience behind him—assigns an ideal to the friars which is dif- [illegible] at of Saint Francis. Why would this be so? He had been [illegible] unification now for sixteen years and had seen [illegible] potential from the vantage point of [illegible] position of leadership he could

and therefore within the scope of the ignorant and illiterate. He nonetheless affirms that there is also a discipline of the intellect that can replace an ascetic heroism not attainable by everyone. There is a certain *journey of the soul* towards the goal of contemplation, and it is served by learning. And the substance of Francis' ideal is not harmed by its pursuit.

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Parma (men who were ready to marry a sensible approach to knowledge with a no-nonsense adherence to the rigors of the rule and life)—his accumulated experience made him reflect upon a *developed spirituality* which he was now able to promote. Moreover, he *emphasized* the more mystical part Francis played as model in the ascent to God. He also assigned an *eschatological* role to Franciscanism as ushering in the final stage of evangelical *renovatio*. Francis would be, however, one vital step ahead of his sons in this eschatology, he on his own achieving the ultimate mystical transition; the Order, nevertheless, being on the threshold, holding to the ideal and preparing itself to cross over. The *Conferences* contain the Seraphic Doctor's thought on the Church in Earthly Pilgrimage, at least as recollected at that point in time. The perfection of religious Orders and that of contemplative souls correspond hierarchically to the perfection of the *angelic* orders. The order of contemplatives occupies the summit and comprises *Suppliants*, *Speculatives*, and *Ecstatics* (*sursumactivi*). The older monastic Orders that hold possessions in common, go in for prayer and praise—these are the Suppliants. The Speculatives are the Friars, both Preacher and Minor, whose life is a spiritual emptying and cleansing and whose occupation is the study of Scripture. The primary goal of the Friars Preacher is knowledge; the first aim of the Friars Minor is an enjoyment through love of the Divine Goodness, their secondary object being speculation. Speculatives nonetheless, the Minors represent the evangelical order of Cherubim. But the next order is the highest of all; corresponding to the Seraphim, it is made up of Ecstatics, men who have subjected their bodies to their heaven-bound spirits and are destined to aid the Church in a future tribulation. It is an order that still lies in the future, although meanwhile Saint Francis has been given to the world as a sort of blueprint of what it is to be. When he received the stigmata on La Verna, the Seraph in the vision was a sign of the *seraphic perfection* of the Order that would correspond to him:

> What can this be but an order that is *seraphic*? To it, it would seem, Francis belonged. Even before he took the habit, he was found to be absorbed in God. . . . When this seraphic order appears—and it is not easy to say when it will come or what it will be like—it will mark the perfection of the Church [*Opera Omnia* V, 440–41].

Despite the distinction drawn between the perfection of Francis and that of the Order (ultimately clearly expressed and always clearly hinted at), the life of Francis is pondered once again around 1260 as the vital fulcrum for the production of a genuine Franciscan spirituality. It was the close of Bonaventure's first triennium as general, when perhaps more

than ever the focus of his attention was firmly fixed on matters Franciscan and he was inaugurating a plan to present a portrait of Francis to the Order and to everybody else. Among the enactments of the Chapter held in that year was the surprise announcement that the minister general himself had been commissioned to write the "definitive Life." Many an eyebrow must have been raised, and some must have wondered why it was thought the existing biographies, especially the commissioned ones, were not adequate portrayals of the saint. The Chapter, to be sure, recognized the existence of several biographies and, on the face of it, had ordered not quite a new creation but a compilation out of these (cf. *Archivum Franciscanum Historicum* 3 [1910], 76, n. 74).

Thomas of Celano, first of the early biographers and the one on whom others depend, had already identified many important traits of the charism proper to followers of Francis' sanctity. For example, in connection with the Bonaventurean points considered, he had said that "we" can through the exercise of certain virtues and an openness to grace attain the rewards of Saint Francis if our life is somehow *seraphic* "after the manner of the seraphim" (1Cel 114); later he noted that Francis himself saw something of a distinction between his own charism ("I have done what was mine to do") and that of his brothers (2Cel 214 cf. 1Cel 111), and that existentially the Order imitates him as from some distance (2Cel 224). Later still, however, Celano stated the biblical theology underlying the Order's poverty and indicated its consequent production of sanctity (3Cel 1; cf. **The CORD** [Oct., 1984], 259–63].

If accepted merely as a compilation the *Legenda Maior* differs little *materially*, in particular from 1 and 2Celano and the *Legenda* of Julian of Speyer. But its author gives the impression that he is also starting afresh. Something of a personal approach is to mark the new book. He says he undertakes it at the Chapter's request and out of personal devotion to Saint Francis. In order *to get a clearer grasp* of the facts of his life he holds careful interviews with the surviving companions and with those who had known him. He says he wanted to collect the various reports of his statements, deeds, and virtues for careful conservation. None of this is the methodology of a mere compiler.

Leaving nothing to chance, it seems, he aims at a new *interpretation* of Francis viewed theologically, a Franciscan spiritual theology based on a true portrait of the saint. Be that as it may, it was perhaps for what he *omitted* that his critics attacked him most severely, both nearer his time and in our own century. He has been accused of producing a book that sought nothing but pacification and that glossed over any evidence of tension or anything that could be taken as at variance with the way *he* wanted Franciscanism to move. Such criticism is rather unfair and does

not stand up against the appraisal of Bonaventure by other scholars. It is generally acknowledged that no *major* conflicting divisions existed *within* the Order until well after his time. Not until end of century are there parties, sizable and more or less organized. There were certainly conservative and progressive tendencies in existence from after Francis' death which more or less persisted as trends up to Bonaventure's generalship. Their very existence, however, may have occasioned the "omissions" in the *Legenda Maior*, on the grounds that Bonaventure and those who shared power with him thought recording them did the Order no good. And after all, the *Legenda* was not intended to be a history of the Order. A more plausible explanation of Saint Bonaventure's principal concerns is given by Sophronius Clasen (1967). The new biography was written in face of opposition to the Franciscan life, not from within but from *without* the Order. Against any questioning of a divine inspiration for the rule and life of the friars the author is at pains to show that their Rule was approved not alone by the Holy See (and the bull of Honorius III) but by Christ himself; and therefore he looks on the *stigmatization* as the *divine seal* (or bull of approval) upon Saint Francis' life and ideals (XII.12). This man's entire life was one of sanctity; and his holiness is confirmed by the Church; so the Friars Minor trace their origin to a saint. The saint of Assisi lived not for himself but for others, his mission to preach was a divine call; so the preaching his sons engage in, far from being an unauthorized encroachment, is a vocational fulfillment, prescribed by their Church-approved Rule. Saint Francis' vocation was to restore the Church to its primitive perfection; neither the saint nor his sons are innovators rather they are *renovatores* in the truest sense.

By sheer *de facto* supersession of other biographies, even those used for source material, the *Legenda Maior*, quickly becoming the official Life, had an enormous influence on popularizing the story of Saint Francis in poetry, iconography, and devotion. Furthermore, it reveals upon analysis a peculiarly deep understanding of the spirituality of the saint and becomes an interpretation of his role in the Church and in history *in the light of Bonaventure's theology as a whole*. The product of a mystical writer and theologian of the spiritual life who has carefully and cleverly woven together the earlier Lives into a special arrangement, it represents a synthesis of Franciscan spirituality. Not counting the prologue, the work is spread over fifteen chapters. Within chronological accounts at the beginning and end, the core of the work is organized according to *themes*. Nine chapters form *three themes* (numbers being significant for Bonaventure, as reflective of the Trinity and the divine order in the universe). These nine chapters have an inner pattern of their own each of the *threes* corresponds to one of the classical stages of the *spiritual*

journey: the purgative way, the illuminative way, and the unitive way. The first three virtues treated, for example, are austerity, humility, and poverty; and these relate to chastity, obedience, and poverty, the vows of the Consecrated—forming the framework for the evangelical profession of Religious. There also appear between chapters one to four and fourteen to fifteen, respectively, the ratios 2/2 and 1/1, so dear to the Augustinian tradition.

The image of Francis that Bonaventure projects is of a man who grew in the spiritual life and practised all the Christian virtues. Above all he portrays him as a model of "evangelical perfection," of living the Gospel to the full. The prologue is a remarkable statement of Bonaventurean eschatology. It introduces Francis as "the servant of God," who is then daringly associated with several biblical personages and images. Thus, he is likened to the apocalyptic angel of the sixth seal bearing the sign of the living God. This identification is based chiefly upon Francis' desire to share in the passion of Christ, and especially on his receiving the wounds of the Crucified in his body. He is another Elijah, another John the Baptist, sent by God to prepare people for the coming of the Lord in glory. By his conversion, his penitential life, his virtues of obedience, humility, and poverty, he attained the love of God and of his fellowmen which made oneness in Christ a reality. By his extraordinary sympathy with all creatures, he proclaimed in a prophetic and a most joyful manner the universal Fatherhood of God, and somehow realized a restoration of that primeval harmony between humans and their environment which was part of original happiness. Bonaventure highlights the fact (especially in Chapter VIII) that the realistic and deeply felt acceptance of the unity of creatures—human, animal, and inanimate—as a *brotherhood* produced a system of communication and response. The simple recognition on the part of Francis that creatures "had the same source as himself" is reflected in the doctrine of *exemplarism* throughout *The Soul's Journey*.

The *Hexaèmeron* Francis (i.e., Francis as portrayed in the *Conferences* of 1273) is a very lofty and mystical saint with a role in history he is considered almost in isolation as one with an inimitable personal charism. In the *Legenda Maior* he is still a unique saint raised up for the Church; but there he is undoubtedly also the man of virtues, virtues possible of imitation even if outstanding in the man who originally exercised them. Earlier still, when Bonaventure *preached* on Saint Francis, we are presented with a saint with specific virtues which call for imitation, general imitation, but particularly by those who profess his rule and life. One of these sermons, datable to October 4, 1255, expounds what I think must be the incontestable traits of a Franciscan spirituality (*Opera Omnia*, IX:590–97; cf. Brady [1976], 137–40). Francis is proclaimed as a

Gospel man of *gentleness* and *humility*. Based on the Matthaean text, *Learn of me, for I am gentle and humble of heart* (11:29), the sermon takes shape—in typical Bonaventurean fashion—by focusing on three words: *learn*, *gentle*, and *humble*. By application, the words of Christ are given as if they were uttered by Francis. *Learn* (*discite*) refers to *gospel discipleship*; *gentle* connects with the *spirit of fraternity*; *humble* with a sense of *inferiority* or *minority*. Because he was always a perfect learner (disciple), Francis is an excellent teacher: his lessons have two sources, the *example* he himself sets and the *instruction* he gives. This "instruction" is embodied in the Rule which is a holy way of life, approved, in the highest manner of all, by the granting of the divine seal of the stigmata.[5]

The sermon is in two parts: the main sermon, directed to all, concerns itself with learning the true way of holiness from Francis, the authentic disciple, and is thus an application of the first words of the text; the second part is a conference, directed to friars and to the Franciscan way of life. The remaining elements of the text are equated respectively to the concepts *friar* and *minor*: "to be gentle is to be a *brother* to all to be humble is to be *lesser* than all." But even here there is insinuated a more general application: "Of course, not everybody can be a friar minor by habit and profession; but all who wish to be saved should be friars minor by disposition, that is, be humble and gentle." In other words, the evangelical basis of Christian spirituality is unhesitatingly enunciated. There follows a lengthy teasing-out of what it takes to be both gentle and humble. (And even the most fastidious modern exegete could not but take delight in the deftness of the manner in which Scripture is interwoven with the discourse in true medieval style.) What is even more striking about this gentle-humble/friar minor combination is that Bonaventure sees it as the compendium of Gospel law and of the teaching of Saint Francis. In other words, *becoming a gospel disciple by being gentle and humble, following Christ, led by Saint Francis*, is Franciscan spirituality in a nut-shell.

Did Saint Bonaventure, then, shape our spirituality to his own image? I think the answer is No, if the view we have of him is that he had way-out notions of Francis and that he held a modernized Order to be an entirely new creation. And I think the answer must be Yes, if we believe he was a true follower of Francis, who grasped his spirit enormously well, and who, especially through what he wrote and preached, unerringly leads us back to the pattern of Saint Francis' life and to the spiritual power in the words he bequeathed us. Ω

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[5]This is anticipatory rather than reflective of *Legenda Maior* XII.12 and XIII.9. On the disciple as *learner*, see **The CORD** 35:1 (Jan., 1985), 8–9.

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Book Reviews

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Jesus embraced death. Thus the Virgin birth transforms the Oedipal crisis because Mary is free to obey the divine will. This free obedience enables Mary to deliver to her Son the lovableness and desirableness of his separate existence from her.

The final pages are composed of points and meditations during a directed retreat in which Father Moore participated. These rough transcriptions bring the whole book into the cauldron of his personal struggle with Christ crucified. Here the reader sees into Moore's soul. It is an experience I shall not soon forget.

I recommend the book. It is not easy reading, but Moore tends to make his case cumulatively. At the end of the day, Moore has written a very modern book on a very ancient theme. *Tolle, lege*.

Book Reviews

The Twelve: The Lives of the Apostles after Calvary. By C. Bernard Ruffin. Huntington, IN: Our Sunday Visitor Press, 1984. Pp.i–195. Paper, $7.95.

Pioneers of Catholic Europe. By Frederick Cowie. Huntington, IN: Our Sunday Visitor Press, 1985. Pp. ix–174. Paper, $6.95.

The Story of the Church: Peak Moments from Pentecost to the Year 2000. By Alfred McBride, O. Praem. Cincinnati: St. Anthony Messenger Press, 1983. Pp. vi–168. Paper, $7.95.

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

In spite of the bombardment of TVs and VCRs, or perhaps because of it, people look more and more to reading. Three books on church history designed for the general adult reading public have come to light in recent years, and the following remarks are my assessment of them.

Dr. C. Bernard Ruffin has followed his critically acclaimed bestseller, *Padre Pio: The True Story*, with this book on the Apostles. Responding to the challenge of recreating the lives of the twelve Apostles from the barest information, he has examined the best sources available and outlines the life of each of Christ's closest followers as thoroughly and completely as it is possible to do. Scholars and historians such as Papias, Eusebius, Irenaeus, Clement of Alexandria, and St. John Chrysostom are examined and interpreted to provide the narrative for this historically and religiously significant era.

All Christians everywhere owe the essentials of their faith to the teaching of the Apostles, which was handed down to subsequent generations. After discussing the life and work of each of the Apostles, the author concludes by examining some of the difficulties and sharp disagreements in the early Church. He states that there is no evidence that the essentials of the Christian Faith were not proclaimed uniformly by all the followers of Jesus. "All the leaders of the early Church taught that Christians throughout the world were part of one, holy, catholic, and apostolic Church—that is, one Church teaching one doctrine, applicable in its essentials everywhere, linked indivisibly to the teaching of the Apostles" (p. 178).

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Inspired by Christopher Dawson, Dr. Frederick Cowie brings to life the great personalities responsible for the making of Europe from the Age of Augustus to that of Charlemagne. This popular presentation is the first of a proposed series of works designed to put before modern readers examples of what has been done by energetic Christians in the past. The author states that the Church, like the people that make it up, is by nature evangelical and missionary. He makes it clear that the era discussed, 450–850, predates the foundation of Christendom (that is, the making of Christian Europe), and the narrative revolves around those people most instrumental in making the movement come to fruition.

After reading the lives of Patrick, Columban, Gregory, Augustine, Boniface, and Charlemagne, the reader will be left with a personal appreciation of these makers of Christian Europe. Dr. Cowie says he wanted to offer the average reader a "refreshing look" at an old subject, and he has succeeded.

* * *

Father Alfred McBride's one-volume *Story of the Church: Peak Moments from Pentecost to the Year 2000*, grew out of his earlier textbook series, *The Pearl and the Seed*. In this work he attempts to respond to that question increasingly on the Catholic mind: How did we get "here" from "there"—and "where" are we heading next?

Today meets yesterday and tomorrow in this unique and creative approach to Church history. Thirty "peak moments" in this 2000 year story are presented with verve and insight. It is history from a *human* perspective. Through mini-drama, interviews, diaries, and dialogues, we experience the past so that its relevance for our day can be better appreciated.

The book's chapters are focused on a variety of people and topics, including Dorothy Day, Thomas Merton, and John XXIII. The concluding chapter is "The 'Third Advent': The Church in the Year 2000—Tentative Predictions."

Joan of Arc and Catherine of Siena are discussed in "Medieval Woman Who Made a Difference." In several chapters, however, the time span is considerable. The chapter entitled "Heretics" considers Regulations of the Synod of Toulouse (1299) and Vatican II's General Principle of Religious Freedom (1965).

Each chapter has questions for discussion or reflection. Clarifying the relevance of the past to the present is one of the great merits of Father McBride's work. "The Crusades. Holy War: A Sad History," for instance, briefly discusses the peace movement of Ramon Lull (1235–1315), but also the Just War Theory in the contemporary world. The chapter entitled "Friars" considers "Francis: A Turning Point for Poverty" and a discussion between Clare and Francis. A dozen provocative questions on poverty are then addressed in a true and false quiz.

Although the book is basically a popular approach—a very brief survey including only a sparse bibliography and background, it can be a very useful guide for discussion groups for ages 12 to 99 because it is alive to the meaningful questions and values in the Christian's life.

Let This Mind Be in You: The Quest for Identity through Oedipus to Christ. By Sebastian Moore. New York: Winston Press, 1985. Pp. xv–174. Cloth, $14.95.

Reviewed by Father Kevin M. Tortorelli, O.F.M., M.A. (Theology, Washington Theological Union), Instructor in Religius Studies at Siena College.

The persistent question "Who am I?"

focuses the inquirer's attention on the personal self as desirable. Indeed, as desirable absolutely because of "that mysterious reality whose desiring *makes* me desirable." This basic "grammar of desire" is set in the ambivalence the self feels in one's daily life. This ambivalence is "Oedipean," and with this evocation of classical myth and Freud we are brought before human ambivalence as characterized by human impotence and cruel destiny. But the significance of Jesus is the fact and manner in which he liberates us from the impasse of Oedipus. Such is the author's overview of his work and its governing perspectives. The book is developed on the basis of four quadrants which carry along the several features of the argument.

In the first quadrant, the experience of "just wanting" is evaluated as at base the desire to be desired, which in turn stems from the certainty of being desirable, of simply being as desired to be. This grasp of my own goodness is a basic datum of self-awareness. In my feelings I have access to this datum. Further, feelings disclose the proper nature of power as one's awakening to the power of another's beauty and goodness which draws and attracts to communion or intimacy. Thus these elements—desire, its disclosure of my goodness especially in feeling, and the true nature of human power as the attraction toward beauty and goodness—constitute the grammar of desire. This grammar of desire spells hope which is understood as our dependence on the tug of God.

With the second quadrant we enter the sphere of mystery, of the transcendent. Unlike the previous quadrant, which described our self-awakening in terms of direct stimulus, here the experience is indirect. In the present case the arousal of my sense of self is not due to desiring another person but rather stems from within myself. Quite simply, something desires, chooses me.

In his third quadrant, Father Moore sets the Oedipal structure of Freud and the biblical account of the Fall in interaction and mutual interpretation. The result is the pervasive trauma of achieving individual existence at the expense of our total desirability by either our mother or our God. There is the rub. The diminished sense of personal desirability leads to my not feeling good with the result that I don't do what is good. "So not feeling good is the *origin* of the *sin* of not doing what is good. It is the 'original sin,' the origin of sin." On this basis, Moore presents a series of enlightening considerations of sin as it is implicated in international relations and in the personal experience of "flesh and spirit."

With the final, the fourth, quadrant, the experience of Jesus awakening in us our desirableness is sketched, and this experience is the vivid, direct form of encounter with him after his death. In the risen Jesus our sense of being desirable is awakened by the One by whose desire we exist.

Such an extraordinary deed leads Moore in a memorable, beautiful though lengthy Conclusion to consider the intention or the mind with which

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