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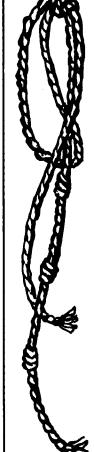
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The CORD

A FRANCISCAN SPIRITUAL REVIEW



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The CORD

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The drawing on page 168 was furnished by Brother John Francis Tyrrell, F.F.S.C., and the one on page 187, by Sister Kay Francis Berger, O.S.F.

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 Clerics¹
EpCust: Letter to Superiors¹
EpFid: Letter to All the Faithful¹
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
FormViy: 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
RegBB: 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
1I, II refer to First and Second Editions.

II. Other Early Franciscan Sources

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

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

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



EDITORIAL

Aging in Community

Until recently, it was considered normal and natural to have the elderly living with the nuclear family. My own grandparents, I admit, didn't actually live in our house; relatively able to care for themselves almost till the end, they maintained their own apartment. But we did visit them just about every week, and they were a real, vital part of our lives. Nowadays, however, the family experience seems to have changed radically in that children rarely if ever see their grandparents; if they see them at all, it seems to be in the setting of a "residence," in which the grandparents and all their problems are safely removed from the family's day-to-day life.

When young people enter religious life, therefore, they are unprepared to cope with the presence of aging religious. In its least attractive form, their reaction is expressed in terms of productivity. Father So-and-so is "dead wood," contributes nothing to the community's finances, and so should be sent away. (Hence the unprecedented emphasis on Infirmaries—houses away from the apostolic mainstream, where the elderly can be put out to pasture.) Only slightly less ugly is the attitude that elderly religious, not being "with it" any longer, do not contribute personally to the life, the spirit, of the community. The contribute personally to the life, the spirit, of the community. The contribute personal them to a "residence," "infirmary," or other place a part.

About the former attitude (regarding finances), the less said no doubt, the better. To the extent that the latter attitude may appear to lave some merit, however, it should be addressed. For from being an obstacle to community living or to the fruitful conduction apostolates, of religious are a rich source of wisdom, experience, and experting ast ages there was a healthy respect for these values, which only the older, experienced religious could contribute.

At any rate, the hurt, the feelings of futility, and the resentment caused in the aging religious by this rejection they face, form only one—and a relatively harmless—result of this recent change in the attitude of the young. Much worse is a reluctance, becoming increasingly prevalent, to disclose health problems or seek treatment for them. More and more often, one encounters the response: "If I say anything about my condition, I'll be shipped off to ——. I'd rather take my chances, live with this, and stay here."

. 1

Neither the physical nor the spiritual health of our older religious—not to mention the vitality of our communities—is helped by the attitude assumed toward them by their younger brothers. May we hope that the next generation will be better enlightened, that these younger religious will not, in their turn, find the wisdom of their maturity spurned and, when their time comes, face deportation? Ω

Fr. Michael D. Milal, for

Missioner's Dream

I dug a lonely plant afield And brought it home to thwart the spring, In hope that added heat and care Would soon a tender flower bring. I sat and watched that plant In growth behind a plated case; No use: for it grew pale and wan, And seemed to rue its sheltered place. One morning bright in early March, As it waxed frail within its court, Liourneved forth into the woods, There found a flowering liverwort. Perhaps some spring with sudden ease There'll flower at length by God's strong grace, What we have failed to bring to flower: A brave. God-fearing Indian race.

Joyce Finnigan, O.F.M.

The Christology of Saint Bonaventure's Sermons on Saint Francis:

The Teacher Taught

MICHAEL BLASTIC, O.F.M.CONV.

THERE IS A CONSISTENCY and unity to Bonaventure's thought about Christ which appears in all his theological works, as Father Zachary Hayes demonstrated so clearly in his work *The Hidden Center*. This article is an attempt to study how Bonaventure expresses this Christology in his sermons on Saint Francis. How does Bonaventure see Francis fitting into his Christological model? And above all, is Bonaventure consistent in applying his speculative Christology in the practical order of Christian life?

Bonaventure's Christological Perspective

FOR BONAVENTURE, Christ holds the center both within the inner life of the Trinity and within the entire order of creation: Christus tenens medium in Omnibus (Hex. I.10). As the hidden center of all reality, Christ is the eternal exemplar, the fullest and clearest expression of the ultimate meaning of all that exists in the created and uncreated orders. This position of Christ as center is not only held in the speculative development of Bonaventure's Christology, but it unfolds also in the economy of Christian salvation: the historical life of the Word incarnate is the concrete example and revelation of Christian perfection, because the Incarnate Word in his humanity is the created expression of the eternal exemplarity of Christ. Bonaventure explains this in his Defense of the Mendicants in the following way:

Fr. Michael Blastic, O.F.M.Conv., Ph.D. Cand. (St. Louis University), is a member of the St. Bonaventure Province who has served six years as master of novices.

We should understand that since Christ is the Word both uncreated and Incarnate, there is in him a twofold principle of exemplarity, the one eterna and the other temporal. By the eternal, I mean the principle according to which he is the brightness of the Father's glory, and the image of his substance, and also the refulgence of eternal light, the spotless mirror of the power of God. . . . It is in this sense that Christ is the uncreated Word the Intellectual Mirror and the eternal exemplar of the whole fabric of creation. But insofar as he is the Incarnate Word, in the actuality of his assumed humanity, he is also the mirror of all graces, virtues, and merits; and therefore the dwelling of the Church Militant should be set up at this example [II.12].

In the mystery of the Incarnate Word, humankind finds its own identity clearly revealed and realized.

Bonaventure's vision of Jesus Christ provides the basis for his metaphysical and practical vision of Christian life. It operates not only a the level of theological synthesis, but also at the level of human experience or Christian existence. It should not be surprising, then, to set this development in Bonaventure's homilies, where he speaks of this exemplarity of Christ using the image of Christ as teacher and model to Christian life. His sermon, *Unus est magister vester Christus* (Haye 1974, 21–46), develops the text of Mt. 23:10: "Only one is your teacher Christ," into a speculative epistemology where he demonstrates the "Christ is the foundation of all true knowledge" (ibid., 21). He conclude the homily by focusing on the practical impact of these principles:

Christ teaches us not only in word, but also in example. Therefore, he whears does not hear perfectly unless he brings understanding to the word and obedience to the deeds [ibid., 40].

The perfection of knowledge, Bonaventure therefore concludes, lies in the imitation and following of Christ in the "humility of faith." Here Christ becomes the pattern of human existence, for Jesus the Incarnate Word of God is "the way, the truth, and the life."

There is a consistent interrelation in Bonaventure's thought between the eternal and the temporal, between God and the created order: speak of Christ as teacher is for Bonaventure to speak at one and the same time of the exemplarity of Christ on the level of Trinitarian life and of the economic relationship between Christ and believer.

In his second Sermon on the Nativity, Bonaventure states that the Word reveals the secrets of the Father as well as the way we "are called to act, to live, to suffer, and to die" (ibid., 62). The Word, clothed in flesh in the Incarnation, reveals the divinity hidden within, the "naked" Word in his existence with the Father. Just as important as the content of revelations.

tion is the mode of revelation—the medium becomes the message. That Jesus Christ became man is not a choice of one of many particular means of revelation, but is the revelation of God in our world. In this same sermon Bonaventure comments that "In this Word made flesh we find the self-emptying of that exalted nature in One who humbled himself and thus put aside all those words which were imperfect" (ibid., 72).

In other words, what Christ teaches cannot be understood apart from the concrete life which reveals this teaching, which is also Word of the Father.

Bonaventure's Sermons on Saint Francis

THE ENGLISH translation of Bonaventure's Sermons on Saint Francis was published by the late Father Eric Doyle in his work *The Disciple and the Master: St. Bonaventure's Sermons on St. Francis.* Four of the sermons included were preached on the Feast of Saint Francis, October 4, in the years 1255, 1262, 1266, and 1267, at Paris. The fifth sermon was preached on the Feast of the Transferral of the Body of Saint Francis on May 25, 1267, probably at Paris.

Bonaventure's major concern in each of his sermons on Francis of Assisi is to demonstrate the relationship which exists between Christ and Francis. This relationship is identified not only in terms of Francis' activity and lifestyle which resemble those of Christ, though this is certainly a part of the dynamic operative. More importantly, the relationship between Christ and Francis is developed in these sermons in terms of an identity which becomes manifest in the flesh of both Christ and Francis.

In the sermon preached at Paris on October 4, 1255, Bonaventure makes the following statement about Francis:

"Learn from me, for I am meek and humble of heart" [Mt. 11:29]. These words from Saint Matthew's Gospel were spoken by the greatest teacher in the world. They could also be the words of that perfect follower of Christ, Saint Francis. . . . But, whether on the lips of Christ or Saint Francis, they are a short and succinct saying, which in concise and plain terms expresses the sum total of gospel perfection [Doyle, 59].

Here, the focal point is Christ the greatest teacher, whose teaching is humility and meekness. Throughout these sermons Bonaventure refers to the humility of Christ in various ways: Christ "sits in the lowest place" (Doyle, 75); through love, he "humbled himself and underwent death" (Doyle, 92); in humility, he washed the feet of the disciples, and "what Christ did, the Christian ought not to disdain to do" (Doyle, 110); Christ humbled himself, "conceived in the form of a servant" (ibid.).

What Bonaventure says about Francis, then, is significant in this context: "I admire the humility of Saint Francis more than all his other virtues" (Doyle, 107). Clearly, what he perceives to be most Christ-like about Francis is his humility, and thus, Francis himself can say, "Learn from me, for I am meek and humble of heart."

That humility is the perspective through which Bonaventure sees. Christ can be seen in the remark he makes in the sermon preached at Paris on October 4, 1255:

To be meek and humble of heart is to be a true friar minor. Saint Francis can say to us: "Learn from me to be meek and humble, that is, to be Friars Minor. Although it is not for everyone to take the habit and profess the Rule of the Friars Minor, it is necessary for everyone who wants to be saved to be a friar minor in the sense of being meek and humble [Doyle, 70].

Gospel perfection, that is, the Incarnate life of Jesus Christ, is summed up in humility. Since Christ was meek and humble, he is the teacher of humility. Francis, too, learning from Christ, was meek and humble, and thus becomes teacher in his own right. Since, then, it is the teaching of Christ which Francis imparts, all are called to become friars minor in that the life of the friar minor fulfills the teaching of Christ. What Bonaventure is saying here about the relationship between Christ and Francis is significant: everything that Bonaventure says about Francis, he is ultimately saying about Christ. That is, Francis, and the true friar minor, does not teach himself or his own doctrine; rather, the message is not his own because it is received from Christ.

In this context Bonaventure makes an interesting comparison between Francis and Saint Paul. In the sermon of 1255, he remarks that just as Saint Paul learned from a direct revelation, Christ chose to teach Saint Francis in the same way. Because of this Saint Francis "would never have dared to teach or write down other than what he received from the Lord. As he himself testifies, God revealed to him the entire Rule" (Doyle, 66).

The entire content of this teaching revealed to Francis is contained in the stigmata of the saint. Again, in the sermon of 1255, Bonaventure remarks:

The whole world, therefore, ought to give thanks to the most High Creator for this sublime gift, that by the stigmata imprinted on Saint Francis, he deigned not only to reveal the way of truth, but to establish it in a wondrous way and for readily intelligible reasons [Doyle, 67].

The stigmata of Saint Francis are the revelation of truth. The point Bonaventure is making here is that Francis himself, in his flesh and blood—not merely in his teaching and example, but even in his physical

existence—is likened to Christ the revealer, who reveals in flesh and blood true human nature and identity. Bonaventure is faithful to his Christology on this point: the Incarnation is the medium of revelation; that is, the flesh and blood existence of Jesus reveals the hidden God. So, the flesh and blood of Francis marked with the cross in the stigmata become the medium of Francis' teaching, which he received directly from the Lord.

This is not an incidental point. For Bonaventure, the revelation is the cross of Jesus Christ, as he states in the sermon preached on October 4, 1262: "Christ's cross is the sign of the most perfect humility and self abasement because on the cross he humbled himself and abased himself to such an extreme for our sake" (Doyle, 91).

In the humility revealed in the cross of Jesus Christ, Christ is poverty, not having even a rag to cover his nakedness. On the cross, humility is seen as lamb-like simplicity and purity, as Jesus is mortified flesh. On the cross humility appears as Seraphic Order, in that in the flesh of Christ the disorder of sin is replaced by the order of humble obedience (Doyle, 85-90). In the Passion and Cross of Jesus Christ, Bonaventure sees the revelation of God—Jesus Christ is exalted as humility, and the crucified flesh of Christ becomes the vehicle for this revelation. The cross is the revelation.

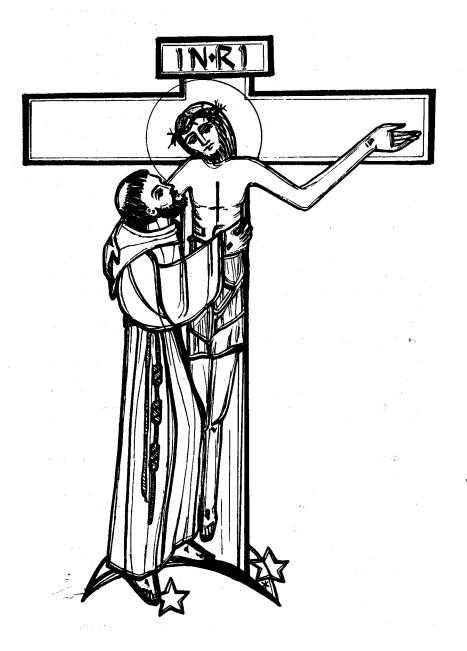
Thus Francis himself becomes a revelation in his stigmata. The sermon preached in 1262 describes the extent of this truth:

Just as iron when heated to the point where it becomes molten can take the imprint of any mark or sign, so a heart burning fervently with love of Christ crucified can receive the imprint of the Crucified Lord himself on the cross. Such a loving heart is carried over to the Crucified Lord or transformed into him. This is what happened with Saint Francis [Doyle, 92].

The stigmata of Saint Francis were not just an external appearance. Francis is totally transformed—the flesh and blood of Francis become humility as revelation of the divine. And this is not merely one part of the truth of God's revelation; it is the whole truth, the entire content enfleshed:

The cross of Christ is the sign of wisdom and the revelation of God's mysteries. This is clear from the Book of Revelation where we are told that "the Lamb who was slain opened the scroll sealed with seven seals," which means he unveiled by his cross all the mysteries of Holy Scripture. The cross of Christ is the key of David; Christ is the holy One "who shuts and no one opens" [Doyle, 93–94].

As the cross of Jesus Christ is the revelation of all the mysteries and



wonders of God, so Francis, marked with the sign of the cross in his flesh, becomes a revelation of these mysteries. In other words, Francis, who is presented to us as humble love incarnate received totally from Christ, teaches us in his stigmatized flesh the content of God's mysteries. He becomes a revelation of Jesus Christ, who is a mystery of humble love.

For Bonaventure, it is the relationship between Christ and Francis that is crucial. Christ's cross is physical humility, and humility is the revelation of God. The humility Francis received from the Lord is thus fully revealed in his stigmata. The cross, then, is the seal and content of Francis' teaching, as Bonaventure remarks in his sermon of 1255:

As it is the Pope's practice to endorse documents with his seal, so Christ, having recognized the teaching of Saint Francis as his own, affixed the seal of his stigmata to his body, and thereby irrevocably confirmed his teaching [Doyle, 66].

Bonaventure sees Francis' relationship to Christ not simply in terms of imitating the action of Christ, but more importantly in terms of Francis' identification with Christ. This identification with Christ fulfills Francis' own true identity while at the same time revealing the humility of Christ. Here the vision of Bonaventure becomes clear: the real identity of each Christian is Christ crucified—humility—and that is why each and every Christian is called to become a friar minor.

But Bonaventure does not see the relationship in terms of ontological identity. Just as the eternal Word of the Father expresses himself perfectly in the flesh of Jesus Christ (the cross is the revelation of God), so Francis becomes a perfect expression, distinct from yet identified with the Word of God, Jesus Christ. It is Francis' flesh which reveals the Word, because it is his flesh that appears crucified, that is, humble.

Bonaventure elaborates on his notion of the stigmata as the revelation of the true identity of Francis:

Saint Francis had the greatest devotion to the Incarnation and the Cross of Christ. On account of his love of the Cross, his skin became a dark reddish color, he was interiorly crucified and transformed into Christ. Because of his love of the Virgin's Son he was transformed, even while still alive, into the Crucified, by the Seraph with six wings that appeared to him [Doyle, 118-19].

The stigmata are an expression of Francis' interior nature—they reveal bodily who he is. Thus the transformation of the stigmata is not a transformation in the sense of becoming or changing into something other or different from what he was interiorly. Rather, the stigmata are a

transformation in the sense of a clear, coherent and consistent, or integral manifestation of his true identity, which is Christ crucified, which is humility. This is the key for understanding the relationship between Christ the Master and Francis the Disciple. The relationship is based on humility, which establishes a likeness and identity with Christ. One can be exalted only by becoming lowly, and it is precisely in becoming lowly that one is exalted or lifted up.

Two images which appear in the sermon preached on May 25, 1267, portray this relationship quite vividly. The first is that of Jacob's ladder:

The Lord says to him: Go up with my help, for I am the ladder on which you can ascend. . . . What is this ladder other than our Lord Jesus Christ himself, the Son of God who through his humanity is set up on earth and by his divinity transcends the heavens? The flesh of Christ, though transformed, remains in union with our earth, and his divinity unites him to the Father who is in heaven. On that ladder, Genesis tells us, "the angels of God were ascending and descending." They were descending to the humanity of Christ who came in the flesh for us; and sighing after divine wisdom, they were ascending to heaven [Doyle, 138].

Here the Christological dynamic is clear. The Word as the eternal and full expression of the Father descends to us in the flesh of Jesus Christ, who is the expression of God's humility. We ascend to God through the same flesh of Jesus Christ in being raised up in him on the cross to God's glory. Francis climbed the ladder of Jacob, that is Christ, as is made evident in the stigmata, which serve as the confirmation and seal on his teaching which he received from Christ and which he became in humility.

A second image used by Bonaventure here is that of the palm tree referred to in the Song of Songs:

The palm tree has a trunk whose lower part is very narrow. The section nearest the ground is thinner than the higher section of the trunk, which is not the case with any other tree. The palm tree is a figure of Jesus Christ, who in his humanity was made a little less than the angels, and was small and weak in this world, and in his divinity is Lord and Creator of the angels and of all things. The fruit of this tree is nothing less than the joys of eternal sweetness and everlasting glory which consists in the vision, possession, and enjoyment of God [Doyle, 140].

Here again, the divinity is connected to creation through the humanity of Christ, as creation is connected to the divinity through Christ's humanity. Note that the small, weak humanity of Jesus (a humbled humanity) is the base of the palm tree which supports the wider and stronger divinity of Christ standing at the top of the tree. Francis climbed this tree to glory by embracing in love and humility the weak, frail humanity of Jesus

Christ.

In reflecting on the identity and function of Francis of Assisi in salvation history, Bonaventure is led to develop his Christology in a very practical way in his sermons on Francis. The focal point for Bonaventure, here as everywhere in his work, is Christ, Christ as the teacher of humility. Teacher, not only in terms of word and example, but teacher primarily because he is humility both in his existence as eternal Word of the Father and as Incarnate Word in the created order. Francis fulfills this exemplarity of Christ by becoming in the flesh that image in which he was created. All of revelation—all of God's dealing with the created order, and even God's intra-trinitarian life—is expressed in the cross of Jesus Christ. What the Christology of Bonaventure ultimately says, is that God is humility. In this context, the stigmatized flesh of Francis becomes a sacrament of God, because it reveals the Word who is fullest and clearest expression of the Father.

Conclusions

- 1. Bonaventure is consistent in the development of his Christology in his sermons on Saint Francis. The double exemplarity of Christ in both the uncreated and created orders is operative in the way Francis imitates Christ. In a concrete way, Francis becomes the application in the practical order of Christian life of the principle of Christ the exemplar.
- 2. Because Christ is the exemplar, the image, and the meaning of all created reality, Francis appears to Bonaventure as a fully actualized creature. That is, there is perfect coherence between spirit and flesh in Francis—he appears to be in the flesh what he is in spirit and truth. Thus, Francis represents humankind created in the image of Christ brought to perfection through the practice of humility. Humility is not merely an attitude; it is a concrete identity—an experience in the flesh. It is what Christ reveals in the Incarnation and Redemption. This approach to Francis is also operative in Bonaventure's Legenda Maior.
- 3. In a certain sense, for Bonaventure, revelation becomes anthropological truth. The Incarnation is revelation which reaches its fullest level of clarity in the cross of Jesus Christ. The cross, the crucified flesh of the Master, reveals the identity of every human being. Humility is the only way to self-actualization and human fulfillment. Thus, when Bonaventure remarks that all Christians must become friars minor to reach perfection and salvation, he is actually stating that Christ is the exemplar of human identity on all of its levels.
- 4. Salvation of the human person is a relationship and an identification with the experience of the Word become flesh. The Word humbles himself to become incarnate, and in that humbling finds the perfect

medium of expression of both the created and the uncreated orders. Since the humbling is the revelation of truth about human existence, it follows that humankind must repeat the experience of the Word, but in the reverse direction: that is, God's humility in the Word become flesh is at the same time his descent to the created order and man's ascent to God. In other words, the creation and the Redemption, the emanation and reduction of creation, take place in humility. For Bonaventure, the Seraphic Order is established in the frail and weak, humbled and crucified flesh of Jesus Christ on the cross.

5. For Bonaventure, Francis is a sacrament: his crucified flesh reveals the truth about God and creation at the same time. Sacraments are an expression of the humility of God—God who humbled himself in becoming flesh. The sacraments therefore represent and create humankind's identity—they exemplify and realize Christ's presence in the created order. This has implications also for Ecclesiology: if humility is the meaning of God and creation, the Church as Sacrament of that meaning must be structured according to humility and meekness, and not according to pride, power, and clout. Again, to paraphrase Bonaventure, the whole Church must become friar minor if it is to reflect the image of Christ, the primordial Sacrament, her spouse.

6. Finally, Bonaventure's Christology is fixed firmly on the foundations of the religious experience of Francis of Assisi. It is Francis of Assisi in his own writings who exemplifies the Christological attitude of

Bonaventure:

Let the whole of mankind tremble and the whole world shake and the heavens exult when Christ, the Son of the Living God, is present on the altar in the hands of a priest. O admirable heights and sublime humility! O humble sublimity! That the Lord of the universe, God and Son of God, so humbles himself that for our salvation he hides himself under the little form of bread! Look, brothers, at the humility of God and pour out your hearts before him! Therefore, hold back nothing of yourselves for yourselves, so that he who gives himself totally to you may receive you totally [EpOrd; AB 58]. Ω

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Saint Michael

If it had not been for the child in me I would never have fallen asleep with St. Michael in the room. I dreamt of lies and revelation beasts eating me alive. I dreamt of Antichrist who keeps me locked in towers all regulation and stiff law. I woke to find one arm

I woke to find one arm raised high above my head holding what, I didn't know...

Michael had put his sword into my hand and gently said:

"This is Truth to cut through

"This is Truth to cut through these lies, and the Blood of the Lamb is the only armor given to children of the Kingdom."

If it had not been for the child in me I would have seen that blazing autumn tree only as nature's last fire; I could have missed his wings tipped around the edges burning vermillion.

William Hart McNichols, S.J., S.F.O.

Franciscanism and Devotion to the Sacred Heart

SISTER MARILYN ELLERT, O.S.F.

THE REVELATIONS AND REQUESTS made by Christ in his apparitions to Saint Margaret Mary Alacoque (1647–1690) served to renew God's ageold invitation to man to ponder upon and respond to his tremendous love. (Pius XII. 36).

Saint Margaret Mary, born in Lauthecourt, France, in 1647, entered the Visitation Convent at Paray-le-Monial in May of 1671 (*Letters*, 6). It was to her that, between the years 1673 and 1675, Christ chose to reveal himself as the Sacred Heart. Since it was through this series of apparitions that the formal practice of devotion to the Sacred Heart was established, we shall study the apparitions to see how the seeds of this devotion were already present in early Franciscan spirituality.

In the first Apparition Saint Margaret Mary is shown to be chosen by God as his special instrument in establishing universal devotion to the Sacred Heart:

Being before the Blessed Sacrament and having a little more time to spare, I felt myself entirely absorbed [investie] by this divine presence, so that I forgot myself and where I was, abandoning myself to this divine Spirit and giving up my heart to the strength of his love. He made me rest a very long time on his divine breast, where he revealed to me the wonders of his love and the inexplicable secrets of his Sacred Heart, which he had always kept from me till then and which he disclosed to me for the first time in such an effective and palpable manner that no possibility of doubt was left to me. . . .

My divine heart is so impassioned with love for men, that no longer able to contain within itself the flames of its burning love, it must be shown forth to them to enrich them with its precious treasures, which contain all the graces they need to save them from perdition. I have chosen you, an abyss of unworthiness and ignorance, to carry out such a great design in order that everything may be done by me [Yeo, 297].

Sister Marilyn Ellert, a member of the Franciscan Sisters of the Sacred Heart, is presently serving as vocation directress for her Congregation.

In the second apparition, Christ showed Saint Margaret Mary his heart:

This divine Heart showed itself to me shining in every direction, more brilliant than the sun and transparent as crystal. The wound he received on the Cross appeared visible. There was a crown of thorns round this divine Heart and a cross above it [ibid.].

It was also revealed to her that the boundless love of Christ's Heart was the source of all the sufferings and humiliations which he had endured for mankind. She was assured that all those sufferings were present to him from the first moment of the Incarnation, and that the Cross was implanted in his Heart. From the moment he had become man, he had taken upon himself

all the humiliations, all the poverty and pains which his sacred humanity was to undergo during the whole course of his mortal life, and the outrages to which his love would expose itself to the end of time in the Most Blessed Sacrament [Husslein, 100].

The third apparition added still another dimension to the Sacred Heart Devotion: reparation for mankind's ingratitude for the love Christ so generously bestowed and continues to bestow upon his people:

Jesus Christ, my sweet Master, showed himself to me resplendent in glory, his five Wounds shining like five suns and flames darting out from every part of his sacred humanity, most of all from his breast which was like a furnace. This opening showed me his loving and lovable Heart, which was the living source of these flames [Yeo, 297].

In revealing the ingratitude of men, Christ disclosed to Saint Margaret Mary the depths of his love and reminded her of the lengths to which he had been moved by his love for mankind. He continued, on this occasion, to speak to Saint Margaret Mary, making known his disappointment that people had repaid him with nothing but ingratitude and forgetfulness for the tremendous gift of his love: "All I did for them I count as little, and would wish, if possible, to do more. But in return for my eagerness, they give me nothing but coldness and rebuffs" (ibid.). He then urged Saint Margaret Mary to make reparation as much as possible for this ingratitude, specifically by receiving Holy Communion on the first Friday of every month. Also, he asked her to make a Holy Hour each Thursday night between eleven and midnight, during which time she should enter into his own Agony in the Garden by prostrating herself on the ground. By doing this she would "appease the divine anger by asking mercy for sinners and soften in some sort the bitter sorrow that Christ felt in being abandoned by the Apostles" (Husslein, 102).

From this third apparition the practices already referred to, characteristic of the devotion, became known and followed: frequent Communion, especially Communion of reparation on first Fridays, and Holy Hours of reparation on Thursdays. The Lord left no doubt about the consolation he would derive from this reparative love.

In the fourth apparition, Jesus again revealed to Saint Margaret Mary his divine Heart and asked that the devotion become liturgical—official. A special feast was to be observed by the Church, and the devotion was to be public and universal, rather than private, in character.

Behold the Heart which has so loved men, which has spared nothing, even to being exhausted and consumed, in order to testify to them its love. And the greater number of them make me no other return than ingratitude, by their coldness and their forgetfulness of me in the Sacrament of Love. But what is more painful to me is that it is hearts who are consecrated to me who use me thus.

It is because of this that I ask you to have the first Friday after the Octave of Corpus Christi kept as a special feast in honor of my Heart, by receiving Communion on that day and making it a reparation . . . for all the insults offered to my Heart during the time that it has been exposed on the altars.

I promise you that my Heart will pour out in abundance the powerful effects of its influence on all those who will render it this honor and who will procure that others shall render it also [ibid., 103].

At the end of this fourth apparition, Christ promised that his divine Heart would show great love to all those who chose to honor it and who by their own devotion inspired others to honor it too.

We may conclude, then, that the primary purpose of these apparitions was to recall for mankind the depths of Christ's love and to establish a public devotion to honor the Lord in his human Sacred Heart:

Devotion to the Sacred Heart is one whose principle is an overflowing divine Love; whose object is reparation; whose character is that of a public cult; and whose effects are the renewal of divine Love bestowed upon the Church and especially upon those who promote the devotion [Yeo, 298].

A further conclusion easily drawn from the above brief exposition of the apparitions is that devotion to the Sacred Heart properly understood lies at the heart of the Franciscan way of life. The great love of Christ for mankind, particularly expressed in his Passion and death, the recognition of ingratitude on the part of men and the need for man to make reparation—all these are realities Saint Francis clearly recognized. In fact, it would not be an exaggeration to say that Francis spent his entire life in reparation and consecration to the Christ from whom all love flows.

Nature of the Devotion to the Sacred Heart

TO UNDERSTAND MORE CLEARLY the formal devotion to the Sacred Heart and its place in Franciscan spirituality, we do well to probe a bit more deeply into the essence of the devotion. Many Catholic writers have made quite clear the point that the very Person of Christ is the devotion's proper object; as Pius VI said in his condemnation of Jansenism, "In reality, they adore the Heart of Jesus as it is; that is, the Heart of the Person of the Word to whom it is inseparably united" (Cognet).

The object of the devotion is, then, the true, living, beating Heart of Jesus, which burns with love for mankind, which was pierced with a lance while on the Cross and now tenderly awaits mankind's love in the Eucharist. Jesus' Heart is a natural symbol of his love for men—the Heart which was "formed in the womb of the Virgin Mother, hypostatically united to the Word of God, and pierced by a lance" (Kern, 149).

As understood in the revelation granted to Saint Margaret Mary, the object of the devotion is not simply the Heart of Jesus overflowing with love for men, but also the Heart *wounded* by the ingratitude of those who fail to give it love for love, and who even despise and insult it in the great Sacrament of its Love, the Holy Eucharist.

"Heart," then, indicates the entire interior life of the God-Man (Husslein, 85): Jesus' charity, zeal, obedience, humility, his joys and sorrows, his sufferings and all the motivations that led him to undergo them. In and through the beating of his Sacred Heart, Jesus' whole sacred Person is revealed to mankind: "It is Jesus, all loving and all lovable, and there, in his breast is the flaming evidence, his wounded heart" (ibid., 86).

The love, therefore, which is proposed as the particular object of devotion to the Sacred Heart is twofold: (1) the tremendous and overflowing love of Jesus for men, which caused that divine Heart to spare nothing; and (2) the wounded love of Jesus, which according to the revelations, felt all the bitterness of human ingratitude and asks that mankind in turn make reparation for this grave injustice.

Devotion to the Heart of Jesus is, then, simply the utmost perfection of devotion to Jesus, since it evidently reduces everything to love, and according to Saint John, "God is Love" (1 Jn. 4:8). When devotion centers in a great consuming love for Christ, it reaches the fullness of its perfection, and this is what Jesus asks of mankind: that each person give him his or her heart. There is no doubt that the love we speak of here is indeed a description of the love which Francis had for Christ.

Through the years, various devotional practices have evolved as a result of the revelations made to Saint Margaret Mary, and these too

should be mentioned in the study of the nature of this devotion. The most obvious of these is the public as well as private use of the Image of the Sacred Heart. The Lord requested that images of his Heart be publicly displayed and venerated.

Secondly, there is the idea of making reparation. Jesus, of course, can no longer suffer, but it is nonetheless true that from the first moment of the Incarnation until his death on the Cross, he clearly foresaw all the ingratitude and all the indignities that would befall him during his mortal life and would continue to befall him in the Holy Eucharist. Frequent Communion and Holy Hours, both offered in reparation for sin, are the most common means by which reparation is made for this ingratitude. From the time of his conversion, Saint Francis spent a lifetime making reparation for the lack of love shown to Christ, who so loved sinners that he suffered and died for them.

Still another aspect to be considered in this context is personal union with Christ. Through it not only can one perform all actions in union with the dispositions of Jesus' Heart, but, thanks to divine grace, one's own heart can be entirely united with that of Jesus in intention, will, and desire (ibid.).

Devotion to the Sacred Heart rests upon the truth of the hypostatic union and the role of Jesus as Mediator.

Hypostatic means the reality of the only-begotten Son become man: one (divine) Person in two (divine and human) natures; as Pius XII puts it in Haurietis Aquas:

The whole validity of the physical Heart of Jesus as a natural symbol of the Person of the Word, rests upon the fundamental truth of the hypostatic union. He who denies this truth, resurrects those false beliefs which the Church has rejected on more than one occasion, because they contradict the doctrine that there is one Person in Christ, while the two natures remain distinct and entire [140–41].

The mediative role of Jesus is emphasized, e.g., by Saint Bonaventure in his treatise on The Mind's Journey into God. Christ himself revealed his Father's will in these words: "I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life: no one comes to the Father but through me" (Jn. 14:6). Although God listens to each person individually as he or she approaches him, all are encouraged to approach him through Jesus, his Son, whom he sent into the world. Devotion to the Sacred Heart means approaching God in this way: through the Heart of the Mediator (cf. Kern, 149).

Saint Margaret Mary and Saint Francis

ALTHOUGH SAINT MARGARET MARY was not a contemporary of Saint



Francis, nor did she follow a Franciscan spirituality, there certainly exists a relationship between the two saints. Both possessed hearts totally united with the Heart of Jesus, and both were drawn to respond in love to the Love Christ extended to them. Biographers of Saint Francis note that his heart was totally spent in loving Christ, and the same can be said of Saint Margaret Mary. The love they experienced for Christ was not only part of their being, but the whole of their soul.

Thomas of Celano, in speaking of the totality with which Saint Francis loved Jesus, says that the Saint was "always occupied with Jesus. Jesus he carried in his heart, Jesus in his mouth, Jesus in his ears, Jesus in his eyes, Jesus in his hands, Jesus in all his members" (1Cel 115; Omnibus, 329). Saint Margaret Mary, too, carried the Lord with her constantly. Evidence

of this is given by the saint herself as she writes to Mother de Saumaise, her superior at Paray-le-Monial:

My soul is filled with such great consolation, dear Mother, that I can hardly stand it. Let me pour some of it into your heart so that mine, which hardly ever leaves the Heart of Our Lord Jesus Christ, may be relieved [Letters, 55].

Sources indicate that the process of Francis' response of love to his Beloved began when he encountered the Crucified in the Church of San Damiano. Francis was deeply touched by the Lord at that moment, and his life was forever changed. "From that hour," his companions testify, "his heart was stricken and wounded with melting love and compassion for the passion of Christ; and for the rest of his life he carried in it the wounds of the Lord Jesus" (Omnibus, 330). The stigmata given to Francis toward the end of his life were merely an external manifestation of the love Francis had for Christ.

Saint Margaret Mary, too, was caught up in compassion for the passion of Christ. Her greatest desire was to live hidden in Jesus Christ crucified, and to be unknown so that no one would have compassion on her suffering. In another letter to Mother de Saumaise she says:

Help me to thank him for these and for all the other gifts. The one I cherish most, after himself, is the precious treasure of his Cross. It accompanies me everywhere, interiorly and exteriorly [Letters, 24].

Reading the lives of both saints, we see clearly that neither seemed able to satisfy the desire for penance and mortification, which served as the means by which both attained complete identification with the suffering Christ.

According to various writers, the Lord, in a vision to Saint Margaret Mary, presented Saint Francis to her as one of his favorite creatures and offered him to her as a guide and pledge of his divine Love (McGratty, 27). This certainly seems to reveal an important link between the two saints.

In the twelfth century God chose Saint Francis to rebuild his Church, and this Francis did by living a life of total love and service to God and to the people God chose to entrust to him. The example of Francis in his loving response to the Lord served to inspire others to make similar responses in love. Some five centuries later, God chose Saint Margaret Mary to reawaken love for him in human hearts. Like Saint Francis, she was prepared for this role by suffering and purification. Both, as they answered the call of Jesus, were destined to grow more and more like Jesus in his sufferings. Jesus suffered freely and willingly, out of love. As

his followers, Francis and Margaret Mary chose likewise to suffer freely and willingly, out of love. The more nearly their souls approached the holiness of God, and the more clearly they saw themselves in the light of God's truth, the greater, it seems, became their awareness of their littleness, of their unworthiness, and of their lack of response to God's love.

We conclude, then, that the formal practice of the Sacred Heart devotion which resulted from the apparitions of Christ to Saint Margaret Mary, simply reawakens and formalizes the elements of the devotion already present in Franciscan spirituality. Ω

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Correction

In identifying Sister Maria Asuncion B. Borromeo, F.M.M., in our April, 1986, issue, we gave what was then her *mailing* address as her assignment. Sister is actually teaching at the Franciscan Institute of Asia in Quezon City, The Philippines.

Sermon on Saint Anthony

SAINT BONAVENTURE

Translator's Introduction

IT IS ALWAYS of great interest and an inspiration to us as Christians to read what one saint has written or said about another. Such is the case with Saint Bonaventure's Sermon on Saint Anthony. Bonaventure undoubtedly admired Anthony, a fellow Franciscan who was honored as a saint by the people even before his death in 1231.

The authenticity of this sermon has been questioned, but Father Ignatius Brady believes it is truly the work of the Seraphic Doctor. He notes in particular how the sermon parallels the chapter on poverty in Saint Bonaventure's *De perfectione vitae ad sorores* (1968). According to John F. Quinn, Saint Bonaventure probably preached this sermon at Padua on April 8, 1263 (1974, 174).

Bonaventure delivered this sermon not only to praise the life and example of Anthony, but also, and perhaps more importantly, to extol the practice of poverty. In this sermon, we find much of Bonaventure's thought on this issue, a topic which has been under much discussion from the time of Francis even up to this day.

The sermon is divided into three basic parts: the "fulfillment of the divine law," the "invocation of the divine name," and the "obtaining of the divine reward"; Bonaventure spends most of his energy, however, in elucidating only the first part. The sermon's structure can readily be seen from the headings which I have added, but a summary outline may prove helpful:

This sermon (Opera Omnia IX, 535-38) has been translated by Brad A. Milunski for a course in Franciscan Studies at St. Hyacinth College and Seminary, Granby, MA, and edited by Father Germain Kopaczynski, O.F.M.Conv., President and Academic Dean of St. Hyacinth's.

Introduction

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This poor man called, and the Lord heard him (Ps. 33:7)1

THAT WORD IS WRITTEN in the psalm and can be understood to refer to any perfect man whomever, and through a certain appropriation it can be applied aptly to blessed Anthony, who was heard favorably today by Christ as a reward for the merit of his poverty. Saint Anthony is esteemed in the preceding words in three ways, indeed, by the fulfillment of the divine law, the invocation of the divine name, and the obtaining of the divine reward. In the first consists the perfection of the active life; in the second, of the contemplative life; and in the third, the reward of both. The fulfillment of the divine law is noted when it is said, "This poor man," for the height of evangelical perfection consists in the excellence of poverty. The invocation of the divine name is noted when it is said, "called." It is not at all doubtful that his loud cry led him to the fount of piety. The obtaining of the divine reward is noted when it is added, "and the Lord heard him," by giving him as his due the longing of his will.

I. Motive and Form of Poverty

REGARDING THE FIRST PART of the text, "This poor man" is employed as if to say that because he is pre-eminent even over other poor men, he must be imitated and singularly venerated. Indeed, his poverty was not only sufficient, but also abundant and perfect, certainly pleasing to God and readily acceptable to men. Those who wish to approach its summit must consider two things: the *motivating cause* and the *perfect form*. Blessed Anthony was moved to the perfection of poverty, and each one of us ought to be moved because of a four-fold motive: (1) divine *counsel*,

¹Scriptural quotations are taken from *The Holy Bible* (Chicago: The Catholic Press, Inc., 1950); OT: Douay-Challoner text; NT and Psalms: Confraternity text. Although I have given scriptural references to entire verses, St. Bonaventure does not always quote all of the verse in his sermon.

which is infallible; (2) divine example, which is blameless; (3) divine protection, which is unsurpassed; and (4) the divine promise, which is inestimable. For the first, rational nature is influenced, the nature of which is to assent to counsels; for the second, sensible nature, the nature of which is to be informed through examples; for the third, irascible nature, the nature of which is to employ the use of protections; for the fourth, concupiscible nature, the nature of which is to be stirred by promises.

A. Motives for Poverty

- 1. Infallible Counsel. The first thing, therefore, that ought to move us toward poverty is divine counsel, which is infallible. Thus, one must assent to it. Concerning this, it is stated in Matthew 19: "If you wish to be perfect, go, sell all that you have, and give to the poor, and come, follow me" (Mt. 19:21). The Lord gave this advice to a rich young man who had kept all the commandments from his youth. And this advice is sound, for to have and to love riches is unfruitful according to what is written in Ecclesiastes [Coheleth] (5:9): "He who loves riches will reap no fruit from them." On the one hand, to love riches and not to have them is dangerous, according to what is said in 1 Timothy: "But those who seek to become rich fall into temptation and a snare and into many useless and harmful desires, which plunge men into destruction and damnation. For covetousness is the root of all evils (1 Tim. 6:9-10). On the other hand, to have riches and not to love them is difficult, according to what we read in Mark: "How difficult it is for those who have riches to enter the kingdom of God!" (Mk. 10:23). And the reason for this is that since it is very difficult to have money and not to love it, it is useful, secure, pleasing, and an act of perfect virtue not to have riches nor to love them. Thus, the counsel of the Lord concerning poverty is sound and unfailing. Because blessed Anthony took heed of this according to the counsel of Christ in the Order of Minors, he wanted to beg and "to have nothing under heaven" (cf. RegB 6; Omnibus, 61).
- 2. The Divine Example, which is blameless and therefore worthy of imitation, according to what is written in 2 Corinthians 8: "For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that being rich he became poor, for your sakes, that through his poverty you might be rich" (2 Cor. 8:9). Thus, the Lord Jesus wanted to be poor, although he was able to be rich, so that by his example he might invite others to poverty that they might know with him through experience how good it is to live in poverty. Almost all in the early Church thirsted for and understood exactly this poverty of Christ, since no one appropriated anything for himself, "but they had all things in common" (Acts 4:32).

Now this had almost been forgotten in the Church of God so that what was said in Ecclesiastes 9 (14-15) had nearly been fulfilled:

A little city, and few men in it: there came against it a great king, and invested it, and built bulwarks round about it, and the siege was perfect. Now there was found in it a man poor and wise, and he delivered the city by his wisdom, and no man afterward remembered that poor man.

And thus he brings poverty back to the memory, speaking to the Christian soul as it says in Lamentations 3: "Remember my poverty and transgression, the wormwood and the gall (Lam. 3:19), to which the holy soul responds, "I will be mindful and remember, and my soul shall languish within me (Lam. 3:20).

But since the ears of men had been deafened to this voice, the Lord renewed the example of poverty through blessed Francis, giving him the mark of his Passion in testimony that he might be believed by all. Blessed Anthony was moved toward his example, so that in the path of poverty he was not only an imitator of Francis, but also an extraordinary imitator of Christ.

- 3. The Divine Protection, which is unsurpassed. Concerning this protection the Psalmist says: "And he was made the refuge of the poor (Ps. 9A:10).2 The poor man is despised by the rich, and thus it is written: "On you the unfortunate man depends; of the fatherless you are the helper" (Ps. 9B:14). Great is the danger to offend the poor man who has such a protector; thus we read in Proverbs: "He that oppresses the poor upbraids his Maker; but he that has pity on the poor honors him" (Prv. 14:31), and "Do no violence to the poor, because he is poor . . . because the Lord will judge his cause, and will afflict them that have afflicted his soul" (Prv. 22:22-23). Certainly the Lord will judge the cause of the poor man and indeed will give a fair hearing to the poor, according to what is written in Job: "But he saves not the wicked, and he gives judgment to the poor" (36:6). Thus, it is most safe to have God as a protector, and this alone, if for no other reason, ought to lead all men to poverty as it inclined blessed Anthony. For he considered that nothing bad was able to happen to him while he was under God's protection.
- 4. The Divine Promise, which is inestimable, and which ought to attract all. It says in Matthew: "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is

²The Quaracchi editors list this scriptural reference and the following one as Ps. 9:9 and Ps. 9:34, respectively. In the text of the Scriptures which I used, the references are noted in the text itself. Ps. 9A:10 actually reads: "The Lord is a stronghold for the oppressed, a stronghold in time of distress.

the kingdom of heaven" (5:3), because the kingdom of heaven is indeed supreme, eternal, rich, and pleasing. And this is owed to the poor who despise everything earthly.

The supreme kingdom is owed to the poor, I say, because of their humility, as we read in 1 Kings: "He raises up the needy from the dust, and lifts up the poor from the dung-hill: that he may sit with princes, and hold the throne of glory (1 Kgs. [1 Sam.] 2:8); eternal, on account of....

The rich kingdom [is owed to the poor] because of need, according to what is said in the psalm: "The poor shall eat and shall be filled" (Ps. 21:27). Indeed, the kingdom of eternal joy is owed to the poor because of the anxiety of the present life, as we read in the psalm: "Let the poor see and rejoice. Seek ye God, and your soul shall live" (Ps. 68:33). Let the poor see these four motives and rejoice; let the rich hear and be humbled in their destitution, for "the great grow poor and hungry" (Ps. 33:11), and in Luke, "He has filled the hungry with good things, and the rich he has sent away empty (1:53).

These four counsels are sufficient to move a heart however hard. The first two, namely, counsel and example, pertain to a twofold apprehensive nature; and the last two, namely, protection and promise, pertain to a twofold affective nature. And from these four a fourfold poverty is effected, through which the soul is lifted to the things above in a four-horse chariot, the driver of which is Christ. And thus, since the motives which result in poverty have been examined, the *perfect form* of poverty remains to be seen.

B. The Perfect Form of Poverty

THE PERFECT form of poverty in which "that poor man" walked arises from a fourfold condition. For this, that perfect may be perfect, it is necessary that it be high and deep, wide, and long, so that man "may be able to comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth, and length and height and depth" (Eph. 3:18).

1. Poverty as "alta." Poverty ought to be high from the excellence of profession, according to what is written in 2 Corinthians: "Their very high poverty and simplicity has resulted in an abundance of generosity" (lit. "riches"—divitias) (2 Cor. 8:2). High indeed is the perfection of poverty in which nothing is possessed individually, but all is possessed in common; higher is that poverty in which nothing is held individually and

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in which not all things but only some are held in common; highest is that poverty in which nothing is held either individually or in common.

The Friars Minor and blessed Anthony professed this, of whom it is said in the Rule: "The friars shall appropriate nothing to themselves, neither house nor place nor anything" (RegB 6; Omnibus, 61). And

³Here, the Quaracchi editors note that two lines are missing in the texts of the codices used for this sermon.

likewise blessed Francis says in the same Rule: "This is the pinnacle of the most exalted poverty; and it is this, my dearest brothers, that has made you heirs and kings of the kingdom of heaven, poor in temporal things, but rich in virtue" (ibid.).

Christ practiced this poverty, as we read in Matthew: "The foxes have dens, and the birds of the air have nests; but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay his head" (Mt. 8:20). The apostles also practiced this poverty, in the person of whom the Apostle says in 1 Timothy: "But having food and sufficient clothing, with these let us be content" (1 Tim. 6:8). The Lord had commanded them to have no anxiety when he said in Matthew: "Therefore do not be anxious, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or, 'What shall we eat?' or, 'What are we to put on?' For he who feeds the birds and clothes the lilies" (6:31, 25) will clothe and feed you without anxiety according to what is said in Luke: "When I sent you forth without purse or wallet or sandals, did you lack anything? And they said, 'Nothing.' "(Lk. 22:35). If, therefore, the Lord nourished his stubborn and unbelieving disciples among the Jews without anxiety, how wonderful if now he feeds the Friars Minor, those who profess this same perfection now among his faithful people.4

2. Poverty as "profunda." Poverty ought to be deep from a submissive obedience, according to that which is said in Isaiah: "But to whom shall I have respect, but to him that is poor and little, and of a contrite spirit, and that trembleth at my words?" (Is. 66:2). In this the Lord shows that he loves no one for his poverty unless he has humility joined to it, for poverty with pride is hateful to God and to men, as we read in Ecclesiasticus [Sirach] (25:3-4): "Three sorts my soul hateth, and I am greatly grieved at their life: a poor man that is proud; a rich man that is a liar; an old man that is a fool and doting." The poor man who is proud is a hypocrite, an apostate, and, I might say, it is as if he is a type of pestilence as it says in Proverbs (28:3): "A poor man that oppresseth the poor is like a violent shower, which bringeth a famine." The Lord does not love such poverty, but rather, humble poverty, about which it is said in Proverbs (18:23): "The poor will speak with supplications, and the rich will speak roughly."

Blessed Anthony was such a poor man who was diligently versed in every kind of lowliness and humility according to that which is read concerning him: "He trained himself more in the beginning of his conversion by washing dishes than by investigating the Scriptures.⁵

3. Poverty as "lata." Poverty ought to be wide from abundance of tribulation, as it says in Revelation: "I know thy tribulation and thy poverty, but thou art rich; and that thou art slandered by those who say they are Jews and are not, but are a synagogue of Satan" (Rev. 2:9). Poverty, when it is an abundance of tribulations, prepares in a good soul an abundance of consolations, according to the text of 2 Corinthians: "For as the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so also through Christ does our comfort abound" (2 Cor. 1:5). Such a soul is rich, for they who glory in poverty have much more of an abundance. Because of this the Apostle says: "... as poor yet enriching many, as having nothing yet possessing all things" (2 Cor. 6:10). Such was blessed Anthony, about whom what is said in Ecclesiasticus (11:12–13) can rightly be understood:

Again, there is an inactive man that wanteth help, is very weak in ability, and full of poverty; yet the eye of God hath looked upon him for good, and hath lifted him up from his low estate, and hath exalted his head, and many have wondered at him, and have glorified God.

4. Poverty as "longa." Poverty ought to be long from a lasting perseverance, as it says in the psalm: "I am afflicted and in agony from my youth" (87:16). "I am," he says, and not "I was," for poverty was constant and continual for him in the manner of something which is eternal, and it was not spoken of as something of the past. He knew that it was written: "For the needy shall not always be forgotten, nor shall the hope of the afflicted forever perish" (Ps. 9A:19). Besides, the Apostle says in his letter to the Hebrews (10:34-36):

[You] have joyfully accepted the plundering of your own goods, knowing that you have a better possession and a lasting one. Do not, therefore, lose your confidence, which has a great reward. For you have need of patience.

Blessed Anthony had such poverty, for from his infancy until the end of his life he did not cease to be poor. And thus, since "he has persevered to the end" (Mt. 10:22), he has received his reward, according to that which is sung concerning him: "Behold, you see crowned him whom you saw threatened and concealed by an old sack."

This is, therefore, perfect and excellent poverty, which has a fourfold state as told above and which encompasses in itself the height of total

The Quaracchi editors note that these same words occur in Bonaventure's work De perfectione vitae ad sorores, III.7 (Opera Omnia, VIII).

⁵The Quaracchi editors supply a reference to a work of Surius, a Carthusian

spiritual writer of the sixteenth century, on the life of Saint Anthony. The incident referred to by Bonaventure parallels the story concerning Bonaventure's elevation to the cardinalate. He apparently was washing dishes when the red hat was brought to him, and he insisted on first finishing his work.

⁶This quotation is not documented by the Quaracchi editors. Might it refer to a song popular in Bonaventure's day?

evangelical perfection. This was so in blessed Anthony, and thus it can rightly be said about him: "This poor man called, and the Lord heard him" (Ps. 33:7) when he was set apart by the fulfillment of the divine law.

II. Anthony's Perfect Praise

BUT SO THAT PERFECT praise of him may lack nothing at all, he is also commended by the *invocation of the divine name* through that which is written: he cried out. He called upon the divine name through the cry of preaching, of confessing, of prayer, and of exultation. The first cry ought to proceed from a prudent zeal; the second, from astute judgment; the third, from a devout desire; and the fourth, from divine joy.

- 1. Zeal. Blessed Anthony cried out in this manner by preaching with discerning zeal, to which the Lord exhorts Isaiah: "Cry, cease not, lift up thy voice like a trumpet" (Is. 58:1). This cry, which was the result of a prudent zeal, was not always shrill but also at times was alluring, as it says in John (7:37): "Jesus stood and cried out, saying, "If anyone thirst, let him come to me and drink."
- 2. Judgment. Anthony cried out in confessing with astute judgment. He cried out, I say, by making clear his own sins, not just in part, but totally, about which it is said in the psalm (31:3): "As long as I would not speak, my bones wasted away with my groaning all the day." This crying out ought to be done with sound judgment, that it may be joined with contrition and satisfaction, according to what we read in Jonah (3:7-8): "Let neither men nor beasts, oxen nor sheep, taste anything: let them not feed nor drink water. And let men and beasts be covered with sackcloth, and cry to the Lord with all their strength."
- 3. Desire. He cried out in prayer, which is said about Samuel in 1 Kings [Sam.] (15:11): "And Samuel was grieved, and he cried unto the Lord all night." He cried out, I say, in prayer. This ought to be from a devout desire as is said in the psalm: "You have granted him his heart's desire, Lord, you refused not the wish of his lips. For you welcomed him with goodly blessings, you placed on his head a crown made from precious rock," a crown of gold, in fact, one doubly golden, namely, of preaching and of virginity, for he served the Lord from his infancy.. And since the most ardent desire of martyrdom burned within him, we can sing concerning him: "O blessed soul, even though the sword of the

persecutor did not bear you away, you did not lose the palm of martyrdom." Ω

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Melodies

As if he were a composer modulating his song for the sun the moon. the earth and stars for men of peace and men of war. The detail of this flower of this bird, or this worm occupied him in song for so long where seconds were hours of a melody plucked upon the heart-harp (soothing fear) by the poor little man with the open soul and open hands.

Séamus Mulholland, O.F.M.

Bonaventure uses de lapide pretioso, but the Scriptures state directly, "a crown of pure gold."

⁸Antiphon from the Roman Breviary, Second Vespers for the Feast of St. Martin, Bishop and Confessor.

Book Reviews

Luther and His Spiritual Legacy. By Jared Wicks, S.J. Theology and Life Series, No. 7. Wilmington, DE: Michael Glazier, Inc., 1983. Pp. v-182. Paper, \$7.95.

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

Martin Luther's complete writings comprise almost one hundred volumes, and even the most ambitious student would find reading them a life-long pursuit. Because of this, Luther and His Spiritual Legacy is a work that deserves our attention. Professor Jared Wicks of the Gregorian University has written, moreover, a scholarly and interesting synopsis of much of Luther's life and thought. His study is a useful and basic guide that gives Luther's main thoughts within a good balance of historical continuity, primary sources, and a select bibliography throughout the text.

Wicks is convinced that "Luther has much to say to us about living the Christian life" (p. 7). He demonstrates how Luther's teaching on conversion, on trust in Christ and His word, and on life-long healing from sinfulness can

lead us to fuller Christian authenticity.

In the first chapter, "Images of Luther," the historical interpretations of Luther are discussed. The chapter is concluded, as is each of the seven chapters in the book, with a select bibliography (there is also a general bibliography at the end of the book). "The Eve of the Reformation" and "Luther's Life and Career to 1512" are successive chapters that furnish historical background for the main chapters to follow. Luther's clash with Catholics, Calvinists, and Anabaptists over the Church and the sacraments and the central points on doctrinal authority and the Lord's Supper are treated as divisive issues within the historical context of Luther's career.

The narrative contains much of Luther's thought, and from beginning to end Wicks skillfully demonstrates that Luther was a creative religious genius. Of the many themes discussed in Luther's thought, "the 'clothed' God of the Incarnation" is the central node in his teaching. Faith gains its nourishment, not from that "vague God," the Absolute, but from God's splendid gift offered to us in Christ. Luther's spiritual counsel is that our spiritual survival is an encounter with Christ's saving grace.

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