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DECEMBER, 1987

The CORD

A FRANCISCAN SPIRITUAL REVIEW



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Volume 37, No. 11

The CORD

A Monthly Franciscan Spiritual Review

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

I. Writings of Saint Francis

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
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
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).

Reflection:

From Assisi to Greccio: the Journey of Francis' Imagination

JOSEPH DOINO, O.F.M.

EVERAL years ago I came upon a splendid book written by Romano Guardini entitled Focus on Freedom. As one who had been privileged to visit Assisi (and later to have revisited it for some lengthy periods of time). I found it easy to identify with the description of the author's own experience (p. 9). In fact I believe that any pilgrim who has had the opportunity to simply walk Assisi's streets alone and without constraint of time would agree that initially there arises within the spirit a deeply felt desire to be one with the "hewn hardness of stone, row on row, the cubical masses suffused with light standing in the purity of wind and sunlight." Yet as one gets lost in the warmth of this happy feeling "the power of the form of nearby things, felt in all the fibers of one's being, suddenly stretches out into a great distance of yearning and infinity — without losing itself, without the slightest obscuring of its clarity of outline." Thus, the desire simply to be there, to be one with the "simple cubical masses suffused with light standing in the purity of wind and brilliant sunlight" must contend with the drawing power of the marvelous Umbrian plain with its hills rising in mysterious light. It is an unusual tension that courses through one's being and Francis, being the intuitive and dramatic person that he was, must have experienced it deeply.

In his youth Francis seems to have opted out of this tension of the circumscribed present and the beckoning of the infinite. His imagination gave way to dreams and fantasies of distant warfare, of a Francis returning in resplendent glory, acclaimed by Assisi's citizenry. He seemed more intent upon a kind of Quixotic quest, trying to attain to impossible dreams with impossible measures. The romantic call of far they places festivated more in him than did the desire to embrace the hard consures of sisis's reality. More and more his dreams of glory made process this father's lucrative cloth business stretched his imagination are assisted to ward other lands. His path to glory was away from the lands. His path to glory was away from the lands of granders that distracted his

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imagination from the reality of the stony and impersonal coldness of the city's ethos. His search for glory would not allow his imagination to tolerate anything but self-serving and unreal visions.

Francis' imagination had to undergo a painful purification. He would have to learn by experience the great Christian truth that the way to true glory, to God, is not by way of a Mary Poppins' flight over the hard contours of everyday reality. Paradoxically it is precisely in and through the finite, the concrete, that one comes to that which alone can satisfy the hunger and longing of the human spirit.

The process of purification is well known. There was defeat in battle, and a year's imprisonment followed by a long illness led to some sobering realizations. When he looked far afield for consolation he discovered that nature had lost its appeal and failed to arouse his imagination. "He wondered," says Celano, "at the sudden change that had come over him." (1, 3). Yet when he heard of another military exploit, Francis "still looked forward to accomplishing great deeds of wordly glory and vanity, and puffed up by a gust of vainglory, vowed that he would go to Apulia to increase his wealth and fame." (I,4) But God began to displace Francis' fantasies with visions that were both gift and challenge. Francis responded by taking his fantasies into a cave where he submitted them in pain and groaning to God's designs. Here he learned and accepted that his fantasies were conditioned by the world of cloth, the symbol of power and money.

He would literally have to divest himself. Slowly the naked figure of the crucified Christ began to take hold of his inner mind; it began to exercise its demands upon his imagination as previously the world of fine cloth had done. Its power enabled Francis to abandon his cowardice and face his enraged father in public.

The image of the submission and compassion of the crucified Son took hold of Francis' consciousness. Francis joyfully walked into the "freedom of the children of God"; he could truly call God his Father. Stripped of all that had enslaved him, impervious even to the attacks of robbers who threw him naked into the snow, he sang a completely new song of glory.

One last reality, however, challenged the authenticity of his freedom. As liberated of his fantasies as he felt, the reality of the leper had no place as yet in his Christ-centered imagination. Celano (I,17) tells of it in this way: "So greatly loathsome to him were lepers, that he would look at their houses only from a distance of two miles and hold his nostrils with his hand." No biographer of Francis will ever overlook that which Francis himself memorialized in his Testament — the remarkable encounter when "he met a leper one day and made stronger than himself, he kissed him." (1 Cel 17). This sparked the complete rebirth of the imagination of Francis.

In embracing and kissing this despised portion of human reality Francis encountered God. He knew that he had not so much embraced Christ as that he had been invaded by "sweetness of body and soul" (Test); the undreamed of invasion of God's agape, had entered dramatically into Francis' life in the most unimaginable way possible — in the kiss and embrace of the leper. Francis' imagination had become thoroughly christified. Now indeed the last portion of reality reserved to Francis' selfishness had been surrendered to and retrieved by God's saving love.

For Francis the journey of the Son of God into human history had assumed overwhelmingly dramatic proportions. Now at last the depth and drama of the human birth of God siezed his imagination as it had siezed his life. He continued his committment to the cutting edges of everyday reality: he continued to serve lepers, to clean their wounds and to kiss them. He came more and more to sense the mystery of God's invasion of history in the Incarnation. In Celano's words (I, 84) it was "the humility of the incarnation and the charity of the passion" that took hold of his memory with such intensity "that he wanted to think of hardly anything else."

Three years before his death Greccio burst in upon his imagination and the cave of Greccio became a living symbol of the reconciliation Francis had experienced. "Greccio", says Celano, "was made, as it were, a new Bethlehem,." (1 Cel 85) Francis summoned the brothers and people of every walk of life to re-member their Christian lives, to allow the forgotten Child of Bethlehem to invade their imaginations. In this way, and in this way alone could they accept their human stories as did the Son of God. In Him they would discover the power to embrace with hope the struggles of time and place, to walk into the sometimes resisting and punishing edges of human history with fidelity and with the conviction that only in this way does one come realistically to the glory which God alone can give.

Greccio became much more than an incident in the life of Francis and his followers. It would always remind him of the extent to which God's love had taken hold of his imagination. It would enable him and the brothers to imagine great journeys to far away places. They could entertain the call of distant lands, but they would journey as did the Lord accepting and welcoming the harsh realities of life with the hope that precisely in this unexpected transformations could occur. Francis loved Assisi. He had learned its lesson well. At Greccio the tensions of his christified imagination were played out in unforgettable creativity. As "each one returned to his home with holy joy" (1 Cel 86), it was a home-coming whose dimensions reached far beyond time and space. All of us continue to share in its richness.

The Martyrology On Christmas Eve Morning 'In Bethlehem of Judea'

The old chronograph itemized
The one who came, alotting Him
A place like anyone's in the queue
Of time. The last and greatest word
Of God a gloss in the margin
Of humankind. Like us He stands
On the bank in the sinners' line.

The sickle-thin arc of the moon Lies on its back one end of sky Under a star, like a slender Lady playing with a baby. Night is not over; but morning, With a bird or two and distant Dog bark, is beginning to stir.

Open the wicket, then, and move
Through to where beneath the black spire
They have longed in the quiet hours
For the Just One to fall like dew.
The One who must come still is He
That came in time past and is He
—Who comes in the Now of this day.

We had unravelled, as we thought, The code of the prohpets. Yet He, Catching the common in us all, Was catalogued for our surprise. The ancient scribe's crude innocence We would remember and applaud, Watching the moon cradling a star.

friar GREGORY ó seanacháin

The Laity in Global Perspective

FR. ANSELM MOONS, O.F.M.

INTRODUCTION

It was with great hesitancy that I accepted the invitation to address this audience of academic excellence, which is honouring this evening the person of Fr. Joseph C. Wey, C.S.B., Professor Emeritus and former Superior General. However, the courage to meet this challenge I found in the importance of the theme of my talk: "The Laity in Global Perspective." The Church today is discovering the importance of the laity. The Holy Father will discuss the issue with Bishops from all over the world in October of this year. It is no exaggeration to say that the future of the Church depends on the laity. I should mention here that the laity represent more than 99% of our Church members, while the clergy — with all their rights and obligations — do not represent more than 0.06 which is less than one percent!

A final remark to bring this introduction to a close: the words "global perspective" in the title of this talk are there to remind us that our church is a missionary church. Therefore, I want to approach the topic of the laity from my own missionary experience.

CHAPTER ONE: THE CLERICAL IMAGE OF THE CHURCH

1. The profound clericalization of the Church

Cardinal Suenens of Belgium, in a recent interview, expressed his disappointment that one of the dreams of Vatican II has still not been

Fr. Anselm Moons, O.F.M., internationally known and respected specialist in missiology, is director of the newly established Franciscan Mission Service in Silver Spring, Maryland. He delivered this lecture on July 15, 1987 during a convocation at St. Bonaventure University honoring Fr. Joseph Wey, C.S.B., as first recipient of the Franciscan Institute medal for Franciscan Scholarship. Fr. Anselm is a member of the Dutch province of the Order of Friars Minor.

realized. The laity, he said, is still not recognized in the Church. Twenty years after the Council, where are the laity?

Priests are still seen and addressed as "Another Christ" to whom all authority is given. The clergy evaluates and controls theological reflection and teaching in the Church. The clergy forms and guides the conscience of the people. The clergy absolves them from their sins and the clergy are the ordinary ministers of the sacramental life. In a word, in all religious matters, the clergy has the authoritative voice.

Even in secular matters the clergy speaks with authority as soon as there is a bearing on religion and conscience. The hierarchy has a decisive word on war and peace, nuclear energy, economics, genetic problems, sexual behaviour, marriage life, family education, medical ethics, ecology, problems of labour, tourism and migration. In most of these areas the clergy cannot speak from personal experience, and, therefore, relies on theories and logical applications. The clergy has some of their historical privileges. They have their own dress, their own clerical institutions of education. For centuries the clergy reserved the reading of full Bible to themselves, and did not allow laypersons to enter into their theological schools. The clergy even tried to severely limit the contact with people of other faiths.



2. Negative impact of clericalism on the Religious

This extreme clericalism does not favour a healthy understanding of the rightful place of the secular faithful. But the seculars are not the only victims. The religious also suffered from this clerical predominance. Just a few examples: Celibacy, the specific characteristic of the religious, was eventually imposed upon the diocesan clergy. This imposition definitely blurred the difference between the two groups in the church. On their part, the clergy made the religious take over some of their duties which estranged the religious from their own identity. Church leaders used religious as stop-gaps when no clergy was available. Religious became, in the eyes of many people, helpers of the bishop and his assistants with lower pay. In mission countries the religious were usually the first representatives of the church. For many centuries the religious were the missionaries. Religious brought the new faith, the new code of life, the new cult. Religious built chapels and churches, schools and hospitals. The religious were the leaders, the pastors, the clergy. The religious were the Church. The distinction between the Reverend Parish Priest and the Reverend Brother Religious was totally lost on the new converts.

I sometimes wonder whether people in the first world know much better. Do the people easily distinguish between clergy and religious? If the clergy is a status by itself, where do the religious belong? Do the people see the religious as belonging to the laity? Even the Vatican does not see the Franciscan orders as lay, and wants to classify them as a clerical order!

3. Resistance from the Religious against clericalism

Religious have protested against this clericalization from the beginning. Already in the third century, Pachomius, the founder of Monasticism, did not allow his monks to be ordained by bishops. Another example of such a protest, closer to us in time and in affection, is Francis of Assisi who strongly resisted any change that would rank his religious family amongst the clergy. Francis stubbornly refused to call his religious family by the name "order" and, instead, always called it a fraternity. Francis refused the clerical rule of St. Augustine and wrote his own. The titles of "Father" or "superior" Francis did not want, but spoke of "ministers" and "servants". Francis called himself simply "your little brother." And, finally, the friars were to preach as the laypreachers of that time. They were not allowed to ride a horse like the clergy and the nobility used to do to address large crowds in the open.

4. Theological foundation of clericalism

This protest against clericalism met with little success. In fact, clericalism claims even support in theology. We might perhaps call it rather a one-sided Ecclesiology. This Ecclesiology presents a church model which places the ministry in the center. Their power comes, by delegation, from God through Christ, the Pope and bishops, down to the lower clergy. This church model leaves little room for the laity. They are often identified as the "learning church" which has to listen when the "teaching church" speaks to them, obey when the clergy uses its authority, and be receivers when the clergy dispenses the sacraments.

CHAPTER TWO: THE LAY CHARACTER OF THE CHURCH

1. The Jesus Movement

Recent church history and biblical scholarship has come up with some evidence of a different church model. This model pictures Jesus as the leader of a new Jewish lay-movement which strongly criticised the temple, sacerdotal powers, ritualism and an extremely legal interpretation of religion. Jesus worshipped in a different way: he sacrificed his own life. For his early followers there were no new rules for cult but the awareness of new life, under the leadership of both men and women. Later on, the letter to the Hebrews calls Jesus a priest, but, even then, the title is special and different. Jesus is a priest in the line of Melchisedech who was outside the cult and animal sacrifice. Jesus' sacrifice is eminently spiritual, in the words of both Peter and Paul. The true worship is the sacrifice of one's own life for the sake of the Kingdom.

2. The Church of the Spirit

The earliest experience of Jesus and his followers was first captured in a theology which we call a pneumatic Ecclesiology: (that is) an understanding of the Church in which due attention is given to the Holy Spirit. It is the Spirit who overshadows Mary. Jesus is announced by John the Baptist as the one who baptizes, not with water, but with the Spirit. After the resurrection, the Spirit is poured out over all, young and old. All of us are living stones of a *spiritual* temple. All of us are holy priests offering spiritual sacrifices.

Again, all of us receive the same life from the Spirit, and this sharing of life is the Church. Whatever belongs to the Church, belongs also to us. If the Church is one, holy, catholic and apostolic, then all of us are one, holy, catholic and apostolic. This sharing of life and sharing of faith is the very heart of the church.

To draw one more conclusion from this gift of the Spirit: the life and the faith we have received, is not for us alone; on the contrary, it is a gift to be shared, a privilege to be passed on to others. In other words, every member has a mission in the world. Every one has to work for the Kingdom. Every one has to make use of every opportunity and has to make use of all talents given, all expertise available, all experience that can be drawn from. All life of the Church is apostolic, and, therefore, Ecclesiastical Authority has to function within the laity and their talents, not separated and above them. Authority is not power but service.

All life of the Church is apostolic, and, therefore, Ecclesiastical Authority has to function within the laity and their talents, not separated and above them.

3. Another perspective on Ministry?

To complete this reflection on ministry as service, I want to put ministry in another perspective. History teaches that a movement cannot last long without appropriate structures. The purpose of these structures is to support the movement, particularly at moments when the movement loses its first zeal and fervour. Therefore, structures are necessary but come in second place. If we apply this to the Church, we can say: the ideal lay-movement could, for a while, do without the structure of the clergy, but a clerical hierarchy without lay-people makes no sense.

History gives us some concrete examples which we all know:

- when the nomadic Jewish people completed the heroic journey through the desert, they wanted the structure of a king, like the other peoples around them.
- The inspiring examples of the desert fathers eventually needed the firm structures of organized monasticism.
- The struggle for liberation in Latin America has led to the structures of basic ecclesial communities. A typical example in our own time!

This perspective on ministry suggests an interesting conclusion with regard to mission. The first ones called to mission and to witness are the laity. The role of the clergy is to serve the laity in their mission to the world.

CHAPTER THREE: LAITY IN MISSION

In a third and final chapter of this short reflection on the Laity in Global perspective, I would like to illustrate that a missionary church should come across as a lay-church in which the clergy serves as servants to the People of God. They are ministers of the community. Their role is so well expressed in the words which the Popes apply to themselves: "Servants of the servants." This view on laity and mission has a special relevance for Asia and Africa today. Here are just a few examples:

1. Majority of the church in rural areas.

People often think that the majority of humankind lives in cities. That is not true. The vast majority live in rural areas. And the most important social pattern of the family still prevails. And, therefore, the real leadership lies with the head of the family. This can be the father, the grandfather, the uncle, the mother, the daughter-in-law, or whoever. But surely with the laity. The most important value of these rural people in the Third World is social. The really pressing demands are carried out in a common effort and for the sake of a common reputation. A church in this rural setting really needs lay-leadership which can care for these many small rural communities. What is expected most from these leaders is counseling in problems, guiding the community toward decisions, and the witness of their own lives.

2. Life of prayer

The people's life of prayer also suggests this lay-model of leadership. Because of the lack of priests, the liturgical celebration with an ordained ministry is often the exception and surely not the daily model of prayer. Therefore, leadership in prayer must go hand in hand with the leadership of a local society. It does not matter whether this is the head of the family or of the village community. The concrete method to train such leaders is, of course, a matter of study and policy.

3. Inter-religious dialogue

Another field where the laity should come first is the challenge of inter-religious dialogue. Until now, the dialogue with other religions was reserved to scholars and experts. Experience has taught us that these learned discussions lead to little result. Instead, nowadays every one is convinced that much more importance must be given to what is called the dialogue of life. Without words but with good deeds and respectful attitudes, contacts are being made between members of different faiths.

Contacts on the level of daily life, and, from there, friendship and understanding can grow. Only from this mutual understanding in daily life will scholarly discussion have any chance to be fruitful and lasting.

4. Inculturation

Similarly, the role of the laity in problems of inculturation is very important. Inculturation really means that the church feels at home in the daily life of the people of a particular country. The laity are really the best people to feel what is going on in the very heart of the people because they are so close to them in daily life. A celibate clergy will always remain a little more remote from the people. Their guidance will have to take into account the experience of the laity. Should we not add here, that a clergy which is celibate, is itself in many cultures a foreign element to begin with, hardly suited to discover the soul of an alien culture?

5. Basic Christian communities

The most promising and contemporary example of lay-mission is, without doubt, the Basic Christian Community. In a basic christian community the people themselves read and discuss the Word of the Bible, draw their conclusions, and implement the conclusions into action. This action can take place within their own community but can also be directed towards human society, the secular world, and political structures. Very often they have become strong instruments of social liberation. The institutional church, however, often looks at these communities with suspicion and fear. They should be no threat to the clergy but the ideal place where the clergy can serve the community most effectively.

6. Global jussues

A final example of the lay-mission in the church. Nowadays all christians are faced with the problem to formulate christian responses to problems and issues of global dimension. The examples are plentiful: peace, disarmament, nuclear energy, hunger, population explosion, trade, economics, migration, ecology, etc. In all these areas the Church should and does wish to speak. But her voice will carry no weight unless it bases itself on expertise and experience. Just principles will not convince people. This simple fact shows that in these matters we need a laity that can speak as church. To make this possible we have to develop new models in which competent expertise and appropriate authority can work together harmoniuosly. The happy result of this collaboration between lay expertise and clerical authority will be a new respect between these two, and, on a larger scale, a world-wide recognition of the voice of religion.

CONCLUSION

It is time to bring this reflection to a close. I hope that all of you can see the need of a profound change in the image of the Church. Too often the Church is still identified with the hierarchy and the clergy. We are just not trained and educated into seeing our church as a lay-church. Occasionaly we do say to the laity: "You are the Church." Popes and Bishops repeat these words in official statements. But they do not come from the heart and they are not the result from an experience of life. Clergy usually thinks of the laity when there is a shortage of priests. We have sisters, brothers, seculars in charge of parishes. We have eucharistic ministers. Why are they there? As long as lay-persons cannot give a homily, and are more tolerated than welcomed in the local community, and do not have their own authority in mission, the clergy itself needs conversion, in its service to the People of God. I hope and pray that all of us may see the day that the Catholic Lay-Church is recognized! That will be the day!

Thank you.

A Night of Nights

It is Night
Stars blinking winking
in the sky
A major Star scintillates
above them...
who-what-why?

far far below a SPOT dispells darkness fascinates captivates

O could it be, could it be Christ in the manger could anything be stranger?

O heavenly Day — our High Priest comes to pay our Way (could any TRUTH be stranger)



A Prayer

HOLY MOTHER
Let me
worship with thee the Lord Jesus
in His Infant Majesty!
Let me, O let me hold Him
in my arms but a moment, Mother,
and know His charms!
Permit, that I caress Him
unworthy me and I
shall clothed be
in dignity!

Sister Mary Colette Logue, O.S.F.

Christmas '87

yet
still
under a blue black
winter sky
a child
cries
for you
lady
maiden
mother

Bernard Kennedy, O.F.M.



At Greccio

I saw you almost submerged under the gold of cornfields. you were walking, and I heard your voice singing a song to soothe the tired birds.

At Greccio, I saw the candlelights, and heard the cattle crunch the dry December straw

and when the night fell silent as a dream I felt the smile that caught you enraptured and instantly captured

all your moments and in the cornfield the birds were no longer tired.

Séamus Mulholland, O.F.M.,

An Advent Lectio Divina with St. Bonaventure

Fr. GREGORY SHANAHAN, O.F.M.

In a previous issue (November Cord) we suggested that the Sermons of St. Bonaventure be used as a resource for various forms of biblical meditation. The sermons themselves are clearly the fruit of a profound 'inspection' of the Scriptures and an attentive treatment of God's word in its various 'senses.' The well defined medieval system in which a passage or line was selected (to form Theme, Protheme etc.), its elements isolated for reflection upon and re-connected for overall meaning, mounts the structures from which a contemplative reading of the Word may be launched. For if lectio divina is a 'prayed reading' (and the Sermons are largely an exercise in this), lectio itself is the initial stage of an ascending series leading to contemplation: read, think, study, meditate, pray, contemplate. The frequent repetition of a key-text, characteristic of a medieval sermon, is in line with the technique of contemplative reading. Relating the key-text to other parts of Scripture, also characteristic of the Sermones, can have the effect of opening up for us 'doors of perception " through which we view a familiar passage or word with new eyes.

A respect for words in their significance and symbolism, and an adroit employment of them, are features of the Bonaventurian writings; in this we find the 'anchor words' for sustaining an otherwise wordless prayer. Thus, the Sermons lay before our eyes biblical words which are repeated again and again, so that they tend to haunt our memory. We need not fear this to be naïve; medieval preachers for the most part did this word-tracing neither haphazardly nor with credulity. They were conscious of 'the one Word spoken in all words,' and they experienced themselves as somehow searching from within that Word. Words held a Francis-like

Friar Gregory of the Irish Province is a member of the community at The Friary Ennis County, Clare, Ireland. He serves on the editorial board of THE CORD, to which he has contributed several articles.

If, however, we feel let down by some seemingly strange exegesis or by a point drawn from an uncorrected text, this need not disturb our prayerfulness nor keep us from deriving some profit from what we read. The main thing is that we approach, receptive to eventual meaning, bending the knees of our heart (Breviloquium, prologue).

Quite a number of the Sermons have reached us only in the form of schemata, plans, or reported summaries. Sometimes these give a condensed though fairly detailed outline of the shape the sermon took or would take; often they merely indicate some texts and add comments. But it is precisely these schemata which prove to be the most serviceable prayer tools. These plans leave us with the essential scriptural selection and sometimes contain relevant patristic comments (more frequent in the full sermons) which, as is well known, constitute the secondary part of the material of traditional lectio divina. The four Advent sermons chosen here as examples are schemata as they show perhaps how effectively a reader may be involved in the spiritual riches of a liturgical season through such a presentation of the word of God. As the vast majority if not all of the Bonaventurian sermons were written and delivered within the ambit of Season or Feast, they are particularly helpful in linking contemplation with the liturgical cycle and therefore with the 'hidden mystery of Christ' experienced and worshipped in the Church's life.1

I. The White Cloud

Theme: Then I looked, and lo, a white cloud, and seated on the cloud one like a son of man (Apocalypse 14:14).

The holy Evangelist John, held in suspense by what heaven was bringing to light, astounded by this sublime revelation, unfolds for us in these words the mystery of the blessed Incarnation. He does so by means of a double metaphor: the *white cloud* for the most graceful purity of the chosen Virgin who is conceiving; the *one seated on the cloud* for the noblest pre-eminence of the super-blessed Offspring who is conceived.

We ought to take into account that this mystery is such a hidden one as to be beyond the range of all natural insight; so lofty that the liveliest

intellect is powerless to probe it; so profound that it is beyond all telling, no power with words can express it. For this reason, the Holy Spirit discloses it under a variety of figures of speech, so that where one of them fails another supplies for it.

The most graceful purity of the Virgin chosen to conceive and the conception itself are singled out in sacred Scripture not only by the metaphor of the bright or shining white cloud, but also by that of

(i) the BUSH which in a marvellous fashion was in flames without being burnt up; this was to show that tainted nature had nothing to do with it:

He looked, and lo, the bush was burning, yet it was not consumed (Exodus 3:2);

(ii) the BRANCH that grew green and flowered in marvellous fashion and showed that the conception was independent of successive temporal events:

There, already sprouting, was Aaron's branch, standing for the House of Levi. Buds had opened, flowers had blossomed (Numbers 17:8);

(iii) the FLEECE which was miraculously rained upon and covered in dew and showed that here was a conception from which the pleasure of violent desire was absent:

[Gideon] squeezed the fleece and wrung enough dew out of the fleece to fill a bowl (Judges 6:38);

(iv) the CLOUD wondrously bearing moisture to signify a conception which was accompanied by the fulness of original grace:

like clouds in a time of drought (Ecclesiasticus 35:26);

(v) the RAINBOW glistening marvellously to signify a conception which was accompanied by the fontal fulness of wisdom:

See the rainbow and praise its maker, so superbly beautiful in its splendor (Ecclesiasticus 43:12)

- (vi) the ARC in the cloud, which is like Christ in the Virgin, quadrucolored, possessing, as he does, a cognition that is *innate*, *infused*, *acquired*, and *glorious*:
- (vii) the STAR that guides in wondrous manner to signify a conception which was accompanied by an uprightness of life that merited the highest esteem:

Like the morning star among the clouds, like the moon when it is full (Ecclesiasticus 50:6)

2. He Who Comes

Theme: Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord (Matthew 21:9).

These words are read in many a church on the first Sunday of Advent. In two ways they describe the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ into this world: (a) Blessed is he describes his coming as grace-giving and wonderful; (b) who comes in the name of the Lord describers it as fruitbearing and entitled to respect.

a) The advent of the Son of God into this world was *blessed* in four ways. It was blessed at the *Incarnation*, due to plenitude of grace; this is what John's mother says to the blessed Mary:

Blessed is the fruit of your womb! (Luke 1:43).

It was blessed in the way he lived, for the quality of excellence in his life; it is written:

Blessed will you be in coming in,

and blessed going out (Deuteronomy 28:6)

It was blessed in his *preaching*, for it was marked by the perfection of doctrine; as was written:

Blessed be the Lord, the God of Israel

... and blessed be these words of yours² (1 Samuel 25:32).

It was blessed in his actions, for sanctity and blamelessness were his: Let Aser be blessed with children (Deuteronomy 33-24)

- that is, 'with exemplary actions.'3
- (b) We say the Son of God came into this world in the name of the Lord, for he came
- (i) with zeal for his father's praise and honor; he himself said as much to Jews who were ungrateful:

I have come in my Father's name, and you do not receive me (John 5:43);

(ii) with zeal for peace and harmony, such as the assembly in the Book of Judith petitioned for:

come to us a peaceable lord, and use our services as it shall please you (3:6)⁴

(iii) with zeal for absolute truth and justice; this is what he himself spoke of:

For this I was born, and for this I have come into the world, to bear witness to the truth (John 18:37);

- (iv) with zeal for kindness and mercy; this was his own saying: For the Son of man came to seek and to save the lost (Luke 19:10);
- (v) with zeal for the highest poverty; for it is written: See now, your king comes to you; the just and saviour. he is poor and riding on a donkey, on a colt, the foal of a donkey (Zechariah 9:9):5

A respect for words in their significance and sumbolism, and an adroit employment of them, are features of the Bonaventurian writings.

(vi) with zeal for the cleanness of chastity and purity; John the Baptist testified to this:

He who is of the earth belongs to the earth, and of the earth he speaks; but he who comes from heaven, that is, from human nature at its peak, or, purity at its peak, is above all (Cf. John 3:31 + Glossa ordinaria)

3. Show Me Your Face

Theme: If I have found favor in your sight, show me your face (Excodus 33:13).

'O DEVOUT SOUL, what a great desire had the Saints of old to see the face of Christ in his humanity!' (Augustine, Enarratio on Psalm 134). There was Moses, highly favored in God's eyes, and none but this was his chief request of God. Anyone therefore, in the season of the advent of our Savior's grace, who wishes to adore and contemplate Christ incarnate and look upon that face of his which is longed for by all the elect of God. must take care to have credit with God and not with the world. He will then show him his face which is the image and perfect copy of the Father's nature.

Now, favor in the eyes of God is found by the following four means.

(i) Reverence for and worship of the divine Name: You have won my favor and . . . I know you by name

(Exodus 33:17)

This was said to Moses, the great worshipper of the Divinity.

- (ii) Love of purity in mind and body: The one who loves purity of heart, and whose speech is gracious (that is, whose understanding and desiring are chaste) will have the king (that is, God) as friend (Proverbs 22:11).
- (iii) The humility of inborn getleness: The greater you are, the more you should behave humbly, and then you will find favor with the Lord

(Ecclesiasticus 3:20).

And, You have found favor with God (Luke 1:30) is what was said to the humble Virgin.

(iv) The grace and beauty of a pious and religious manner of living: Esther found favor in the king's sight. She sought not women's ornaments, for she was exceedingly beautiful (Cf. Esther 2:17 + 15).

Now, the face of the Word Incarnate will be shown by the Father of graces to the one who has the four dispositions just mentioned and who through them has obtained the favor of God. And that Face possesses four qualities:

Firstly, it is GLORIOUS, and as such is the fountain and destination of all honors and dignities; the Apocalypse (1:16) points to its majesty and

his face was like the sun shining with all its force.

The Psalmist [longing for the divine presence in the Temple] says: When shall I come and behold the face of God? (Psalm 41:3).

Secondly, it is LUMINOUS, and as such is the fountain and destination of all study or science, and all insight:

At present, we are looking at a confused reflexion in a mirror; then, we shall see face to face (Corinthians 13:12) - that is, in perfect clarity.

The Psalmist [praying to be taught the divine decrees] cries: Let your face shine on your servant (Psalm 118:135).

Thirdly, it is GRACIOUS, and as much is the fountain and destination of all desires and purposes:

You are a figure of wonder, my lord, and your face is full of graciousness (Esther 15(5):17).

Fourthly, it is AFFLUENT or abundantly provided, and as such is fountain and destiny of all consolations and delights or the resting-place from all hardships and misfortunes:

I have seen God face to face, and yet my life is preserved (Genesis 32:30).

4. Meet The Bridegroom

Theme: After me comes a man who ranks before me(John 1:15)

CHRIST COMES after, firstly, 8 as the bridegroom coming after the groomsman. 9 The groomsman it is who handles the message sent out in advance of the bridegroom's arrival. And indeed it is clear, from the Old and New Testaments, that Christ comes into the world as a bridegroom. In the Old Testament:

He has set a tent for the sun, which comes forth like a bridegroom leaving his chamber (Psalm 18:6)¹⁰

In the New Testament:

Behold, the bridegroom! Come out to meet him (Matthew 25:6).

It is clearly stated that John is the groomsman:

The bride is only for the bridegroom; and yet the bridegroom's friend, who stands there and listens, is glad when he hears the bridegroom's voice. This same joy I feel, and now it is complete. He must grow greater, I must grow smaller (John 3:29.30).

The Apostle, also tells us that Christ is a bridegroom:

This is a great mystery, and I mean

in reference to Christ and the church (Ephesians 5:32).

Christ is the Church's Bridegroom, since no one else but he has the ability to make the Church fecund. 'How does the Church become fecund? By conceiving as a virgin' (cf. Augustine, On Virginity, ch. 2, no. 2; Sermon 213, ch. 7, no. 7).

But by what means did she conceive? By the Holy Spirit, of course.

But who can provide the Holy Spirit? He, surely, who can provide us with a bridegroom. That is why you have John the Baptist with power to baptize with water, but it is Christ who has the power to really baptize, since only Christ can give the Holy Spirit. So it was that Christ breathed into the Apostles the Holy Spirit; thus he was a bridegroom, coming forth, as the Psalm says, like a bridegroom leaving his chamber. Christ is human being as well as God, on account of the union in him betweeen divinity and humanity. He is the one in whom are graces in their abundance, the one of whom the Gospel speaks:

Behold, the bridegroom! Come out and meet him

(Matthew 25:6).

Again it is written:

Daughters of Zion, come and see King Solomon, wearing the diadem with which his mother crowned him on his wedding day, on the day of his heart's joy. (Song of Songs 3:11).

The 'day' here spoken of is the birthday of the Lord, a day for rejoicing, and a day on which everybody should be joyful. This joy is the kind which Christ brings; it does not belong to ungodly people. Those who want to come to this wedding should go to confession — although some there are who only make sport of people who do that. But because Christ was born, for the mercy of God. Let us cast off the works of darkness and put on the armor of light. It is not night anymore, the light is here. God forbid that anybody should be in mortal sin on that day of the Lord's nativity!

And so it was that Christ came after John, just as bridegroom comes after groomsman. . . .

Footnotes

¹The sermons, from *Opera Omnia* (Quaracchi) Tome IX, are 1) Sermon 7 (1st Sunday Advent), 32 - 33; 2) Sermon 15 (1st Sunday Advent), 39; 3) Sermon 2 (2nd Sunday Advent), 48; 4) Sermon 2 (3rd Sunday Advent) — excerpt from subsequent *Collatio*, p. 65.

²Modern versions read wisdom/discretion.

³Modern versions read Most blessed of the sons may Asher be!

This is not verse 6 in modern versions but the general sense is conveyed in verses 1-5 in these versions. The Sermon (though not the Vulgate) has a capital 'D' for dominus (lord/master).

⁵In modern versions the just and savior = victorious and triumphant, and poor = humble.

⁶Translations based on the Vulgate have *face* here instead of the original ways;/verses 20 and 23, however, have *face*.

⁷This is rather the key-text of this excerpt from the longer Sermon 2 for 3rd Sunday Advent of which the *Thema* is Jn 1:26.27.

⁸Two other sections follow in the sermon in which Christ is said to come after John as a king follows his messenger, and as noonday comes after dawn.

⁹The word used is *paranymphus*; the gospel text has simply 'friend of the bridegroom'.

¹⁰For this verse applied to Christ, see Christmas Office of Readings, antiphon 2.



The staff of the Franciscan Institute joins the Editors in wishing you a very blessed Christmas and every grace and good from our heavenly Father throughout the new year.

Book Reviews

Narratived Space and Mythic Meaning in Mark. By Elizabeth Struthers Malbon. San Francisco: Harper & Row. 1986. Pp. xi-212. Cloth, \$24.95.

Reviewed by Father Charles J. O'Connor, O.F.M., S.T.D., Assistant Professor of Scripture at Christ the King Seminary, East Aurora, N.Y.

Elizabeth Struthers Malbon in her book entitled, Narrative Space and Mythic Meaning in Mark, seeks in her words, an "audience of those who are willing to follow out a new methodology for the sake of increasing their understanding of an old — but ever current — text" (p. xii). Technical studies concerning the gospel of Mark abound, but few cover the ground of this present work. Malbon utilizes a brand of structural exegesis to arrive at a fuller understanding of this synoptic gospel.

Specifically, the author's method is adapted from that used by Claude Lévi-Strauss in his study of myth. Malbon's method assumes that underlying the 'apparent' content of the gospel, represented by a diachronic sequence of spacial orders or suborders, there existed a mythical schema or synchronic structure constituting the text's 'latent' content, i.e., "the formal theoretical organization of its narrative facts or relations" (p. 38). According to Malbon, having access to this latent content of the gospel, leads one to a deeper theological understanding of the text.

After defining her methodological

terminology in chapter one, entitled, Investigating Markan Space, Malbon proceeds to analyze the gospel's Geographical, Topographical, and Architectural Space in chapters two, three, and four respectively. The mythic pattern or schema which is latent in the rather confused sequence of each of these particular special relations is one of opposition, which in its development in the gospel moves towards mediation. In studying, for example, the chronological sequence of the architectural suborder in Mark, Malbon avers that it "is not a static tableau of stage settings but a dynamic pattern of movement within narrative space. The buildings of the Gospel of Mark enclose more than space; they capture the varied responses made to Jesus by those around him, those he healed, taught, challenged" (p. 117).

In the final chapter of the book entitled Integrating Markan Space, the author uncovers the mediation underlying all three suborders of Markan-space, viz., the medition of the fundamental opposition between chaos and order which she, following Lévi-Strauss, describes as archetypical of myth. The gospel ends with the mediation of this oppositon by a new order founded upon Christ's resurrection which constitutes less a set of spacial boundaries and more a direction into a new future - a transformed life for all disciples in union with their crucified and risen Lord. Such a life involves from Jesus' followers a risk to involve themselves in the paradox of the Lord's own life which was one of power and suffering.

Readers may be put off somewhat by the first chapter of this book because of its technicality and their unfamiliarity with what can be a complicated and involved method of exegesis. However, perseverance through this chapter will lead to easier reading in the chapters which follow. And the investment that one makes in getting through the entire work will pay dividends in the end by opening the reader to a deeper undeerstanding of the meaning of this rich gospel.

Poets, Prophets, and Pragmatists. A New Challenge to Religious Life. By Evelyn Woodward. Notre Dame, IN: Ave Maria Press, 1987. Pp. 248. Paper, \$6.95.

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

This book flows out of over ten years of experience in counseling individual religious and consulting with religious communities of men and women. It consists of six major essays. The first "Orientation" lays the groundwork of describing the status quo in religious life as one of pluralism, introducing the idea of "story" and describing the qualities of poetic insight, prophetic challenge, and pragmatic planning which should characterize leaders (or the leadership) in religious life. The second chapter explores the reality of community, the third describes a spirituality based on empathy. Chapter four deals with conflict in religious life, Chapter Five with Formation, and Chapter Six, Coping with Stress and Burnout. In my judgment any of these chapters can be O.F.M., Campus Minister at St. read apart from the rest, for they are Bonaventure University.

full of examples and insights and draw conclusions commensurate with them. At the end of each chapter, there are questions for individual and community reflection and discussion.

Although her experience has made her very much aware of the harmful effects of some of the religious practices and discipline of the old days, it is clear that she does not condemn all that was going on in religious life prior to 1960. She seems alert to the dangers inherent in religious life today - too much "navel-gazing" that is, self-centered concern with community relationships to the neglect of community mission: the cop-out from dealing with problems by pleading "we don't have the skill"; the danger of building ghettoes of likeminded individuals. A point that is underscored is that diversity should spring from the ministry of a community, not from its conflicts.

It seems to me that reading one or another of the chapters would make a good community project for a year. The chapters are not hard to read, although the physical appearance of so much print is somewhat discouraging. Any religious can profit from this book.

Inheriting the Master's Cloak. By John Wijngaards, MHM, Notre Dame, IN: Ave Maria Press, 1985. Pp. 191. Paper, \$4.95.

The Wounded Stag, by William Johnson, S.J., San Francisco; Harper & Row, Publishers, 1986. Pp. ix-203. Paper, \$8.95.

Reviewed by Fr. Daniel Hurley,

"Creative Biblical Spirituality" is the sub-title of a book entitled Inheriting the Master's Cloak. The work is written by John Wijngaards, a Mill Hill Missionary from Great Britain. The author has for his purpose an explanation of the Old Testament as a "source of continuous inspiration in our spiritual life" (p. 11). He recognizes the difficulty people have in reading the Old Testament writings but emphasizes that what the sacred writers wrote has a bearing on todays' living when it is understood in the way Iesus understood such writing (p. 13).

Dividing this book into three parts, the author, in twenty chapters, writes about the use of the Old Testament in understanding the God of the Old Testament (Part One), in making the most of reading and prayer (Part Two), and in discovering the roots of Christian discipleship (Part Three). It is not until Part Three that Father Wijngaards makes clear the meaning of the title of the book, that is, in Chapter sixteen: "Prophets and Witnesses of our Master." The prophet Elisha succeeded the prophet Elijah and his succession was symbolized by the accetance of Elijah's cloak when Elijah was taken up into heaven (p. 153). The arrangement of the various chapters by the author enables the reader to discover the importance of the Old Testament in the understanding of Christian spirituality. After coming to an appreciation of the God of the Old Testament, the reader approaches the reading of Scripture in the light of that appreciation and then is able to apply such reading to the living of the Christian life (Christian discipleship). We disciples of Jesus Christ have inherited Jesus' mission; with his

help we carry out his redemptive purpose (p. 157).

Perhaps the most important chapter in the book is Chapter Ten, "Blind Guides That Swallow Camels." In this chapter, the author explains the different meanings that sacred writing has. These meanings are the ways that the words of the sacred author are to be understood. They are five: 1) the literal sense — the meaning intended by the author; 2) the fundamentalist sense the meaning based on a word-for-word interrpretation of the text; 3) the accomodated sense — a meaning imputed to the text on account of free association of thought; 4) the applied sense — the application of the literal meaning to one's own life; and 5) the fuller sense - a more complete meaning of an Old Testament passage in the light of New Testament revelation. In successive chapters, Father Wijngaards explains these various senses of the Old Testament texts.

The author has a good understanding of the Books of the Old Testament and makes appropriate use of quotations so that the reader is able to see that the Old Testament does have meaning for Christians of today. His use of New Testament passages shows that Jesus knew the Old Testament writings and used them himself, and explained their meaning in the light of his own teaching. The reader of today will benefit from reading the Old Testament if he or she makes use of Father Wijngaards book, Inheriting the Master's Cloak. We in the Twentieth Century are heirs to the kingdom that the Old Testament foreshadowed and that Jesus preached.

Originally published in cloth edition in 1983 under the title Christian Musticism Today, The Wounded Stag takes its name from a sentence of St. John of the Cross: "The wounded stag appears on a hill." The sentence is found in the thirteenth stanza of "The Spiritual Canticle" and the term "wounded stag" refers to Jesus himself (p. 17). The author explains the significance of the title in a quotation from "The Spiritual Canticle": "Beholding that the bride is wounded with love for him, he, because of her moan, is wounded with love for her. Among lovers, the wound is a wound for both, and the two have one feeling" (p. 17). A book on Christian mysticism must center itself on the person of Jesus. William Johnson is a wellknown spiritual writer and a teacher of mystical theology at Sophia University in Tokyo. This book on Christian Mysticism is a good resource for people interested in understanding what is meant by mysticism and what is meant by Christian mysticism. The author acknowledges that people of different religions come to know God and to experience a mystic relationship with God. He states, however, that the experience of Christian mystics has distinctly Father Christian characteristics. Johnson defines these Christian characteristics as the Hebrew and Christian Scriptures, the celebration of the Eucharist, and the community (p. 10).

From the Scriptures, the individual learns of God's relationship to his people and of their relationship to God, a covenant relationship (Chapter 8). Again, through the reading of the Scrip-

tures, the individual understands the person of Jesus Christ and the relationship of Jesus to his disciples. Through the Scriptures, the individual appreciateds how Jesus identifies himself with his disciples and how each disciple can identify himself or herself with Jesus. This identification is explained in the chapters on Presence and Absence (Chapters 4 and 5).

Through the celebration of the Eucharist, the individual nourishes himself or herself on the life-giving Body and Blood of Jesus Christ (Chapters 10 and 11). The person of Jesus, the life of Jesus, the call of Jesus these bring the individual into an awareness of the presence within himself or herself of a transcendent God who permeates the life of each individual person. Identifying with the person and the life of Jesus, the Christian is able to understand the covenant relationship; of God (Jesus) with the people (friends). The Christian so identified with Jesus forms a similar relationship with the community that is the people of God. The Christian mystic is not separated from people but identifies with them in their poverty and their needs, just as Jesus does (Chapters 12 through 15).

Father Johnson gives a good history of Christian mnysticism as well as an appreciation of the Christian mystic in today's world. From his own experience, the author speaks of the "desert experience" as understood by Christian authors. His personal acquaintance with the Buddhist and the Moslem prayer experiences enables Father Johnson to set forth the distinguishing features of Christian mysticism. This reviewer recommends The Wounded Stag to all sincere religious worshipers. This

book will not only give the reader information but will also benefit the reader's personal experience of the presence of God.

Frank Duff: Founder of the Legion of Mary. By Robert Bradshaw. Bay Shore, New York: Monfort Publications, 1985, 267 pp. Paper, \$5.95.

Reviewed by Friar Thomas Bourque, T.O.R., Chairperson of the Philosophical and Religious Studies Department of Saint Francis College of Pennsylvania.

The Marian year is meant to promote a new and more careful reading of what the Council said about the Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of God, in the mystery of Christ and of the Church... We speak not only of the doctrine of faith but also of the life of faith, and thus of authentic "Marian spirituality," seen in the light of Tradition, and especially the spirituality to which the Council exhorts us. Marian spirituality, like its corresponding devotion, finds a very rich source in the historical experience of individuals and of the various Christian communities present among the different peoples and nations of the world.

— John Paul II

Mother of the Redeemer. #48

John Paul II invites all men and women to reflect upon their journey of faith with Our Lord in light of our relationship with his Mother Mary. If one individual is to come to mind when we reflect upon the journey of those individuals who truly embrace a life of faith in our Lord and his Mother, Frank Duff would be that individual.

Frank Duff, known throughout the world as the founder of the Legion of

Mary, is a man who embraces a life of prayer, faith, action and contemplation. During this Marian year, a reflection on his journey with the Lord and His Mother would truly provide one with faith-filled reading. This short biography of Duff's life is more an encounter with Frank, the person and the disciple of Christ, than it is a historical biography. The reader will find this biography to be easy reading and enjoyable reading.

As Father Robert Bradshaw attempts to capture the spirit and the essence of who Frank Duff was, he also captures who he was as a disciple of Christ. Bradshaw also shares with the reader his personal and intimate friendship with Duff. In doing so, he gives the reader the opportunity to get to know Frank Duff in a personal and intimate manner. The selections in this book are from meetings, recordings and encounters which the author had with the founder of the Legion of Mary.

As one thinks about the thousands of followers the Legion of Mary has in our country alone, one begins to wonder about the personality and charism of the founder of such a movement. When I first began to read Frank Duff: Founder of the Legion of Mary, I was not convinced that his story would be interesting or inspiring. However, after encountering the personal approach used by Bradshaw in his interpretation of who Frank Duff was, I became engrossed in the book and found myself reflecting upon the gentle and simplistic qualities of this gifted man.

The one quality that remains with me after reading this biography is Duff's desire to be a saint, a desire not rooted in vanity or selfishness, but in search for blessedness and happiness. The one

thing that motivated Frank Duff was his quest to be happy in life and in his relationship with God. The many things which Duff accomplished were done to bring happiness to his life as well as to the lives of others. As one reads Frank Duff: Founder of the Legion of Mary, one quickly finds out that Duff's human heart found fulfillment in God alone.

Bradshaw truly captures one's attention and stimulates the reader's interest in learning more about Frank Duff. Although one may be caught up in historical background and events, the author allows the reader to learn more about Duff's journey of faith and his search for happiness with the Lord. As one reads through the pages of this biography, one quickly finds oneself reflecting upon the prayer and faith journey of a simple man who loved his God. Duff's prayer did take on many different forms and styles, but his desire for God always remained intense. For the founder of the Legion of Mary, prayer was a way of life and his desire for God was his way of finding God. In finding God through prayer and desire. Duff was very much at home with God and his follow brothers and sisters.

As the Church continues to celebrate the Marian year, its members should continue to reflect upon the lives of those many individuals who have given the Church a great deal in example, witness and faith. Frank Duff is one of these individuals and Frank Duff: Founder of the Legion of Mary will invite all of its readers to reflect upon their own personal journey of faith with the Lord and his Mother Mary. All are called to live out their faith and this inspiring book will challenge all to do so.

SHORTER BOOK NOTICES

How to Start Your Romance With God. By John M. Scott, S.J. Chicago, Ill.: Franciscan herald Press, 1987. Pp. 143. Paper, \$7.95.

Reviewed by Phil Eberl, Instructor in the school of Education at St. Bonaventure University.

"This book is intended to save you the embarrassment of having to make a confession similar to that of Pope Paul's and Augustine's. The purpose of this book is to help you realize that we can begin our romance with God through the gift of wonder" (p. 90). This wonder is a result of an awareness of everything around us: the sun and clouds; space and stars; mountains and music; but most of all and of divine importance, our fellow travelers on this planet earth.

With innumerable quotes from people in every "walk of life" the author asks us to become observant of everything in our life; then to hope and trust in what we see, hear, and touch as God sent. If we wish to "romance with God" we must know Him, and to know Him is to find Him in His created wonders that are part of our daily life.

Illustrated with pictures and poetry Fr. Scott's book can be used for meditation, reflection and prayer. Or, if you wish, read on a weekend in the mountains; for enjoyment in realizing that one person, the author, has led a fascinating life in his own "romance with God."

The author is to be commended for his excellent format, style, and selection of pictures to accent his concept of romance. This is, indeed, a book for those who seek to find God in the reality of life and love.

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