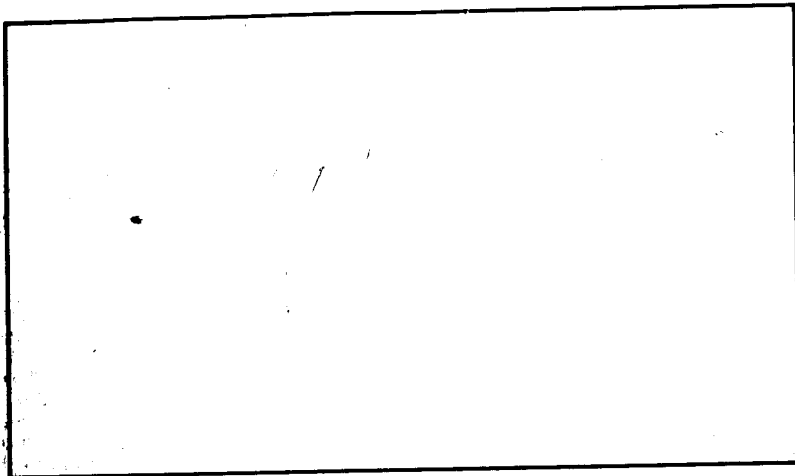


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The CORD

A FRANCISCAN SPIRITUAL REVIEW

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The CORD

A Monthly Franciscan Spiritual Review

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Standard Abbreviations used in The CORD for Early Franciscan Sources

I. Writings of Saint Francis

- | | |
|--|--|
| Adm: Admonitions | Fragm: Another Fragment, Rule of 1221 |
| BenLeo: Blessing for Brother Leo | LaudDei: Praises of the Most High God |
| CantSol: Canticle of Brother Sun | LaudHor: Praises at All the Hours |
| EpAnt: Letter to St. Anthony | OffPass: Office of the Passion |
| EpCler: Letter to Clerics ¹ | OrCruc: Prayer before the Crucifix |
| EpCust: Letter to Superiors ¹ | RegB: Rule of 1223 |
| EpFid: Letter to All the Faithful ¹ | RegNB: Rule of 1221 |
| EpLeo: Letter to Brother Leo | RegEr: Rule for Hermits |
| EpMin: Letter to a Minister | SalBMV: Salutation to our Lady |
| EpOrd: Letter to the Entire Order | SalVirt: Salutation to the Virtues |
| EpRect: Letter to the Rulers of People | Test: Testament of St. Francis |
| ExhLD: Exhortation to the Praise of God | UltVol: Last Will Written for Clare |
| ExpPat: Exposition on the Our Father | VPLaet: Treatise on True and Perfect Joy |
| FormViv: Form of Life for St. Clare | ¹ I, II refer to First and Second Editions. |

II. Other Early Franciscan Sources

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

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

AB: Regis J. Armstrong, O.F.M.Cap., and Ignatius Brady, O.F.M., ed., *Francis and Clare: The Complete Works* (New York: Paulist Press, 1962).



The Franciscan's Call To Conversion

ALL OF US have been called by God. God ordinarily manifests this by attracting us to Christian life, usually due to the example of another. We respond to God's call by rejecting whatever could separate us from God and by turning to God by doing good to our neighbor. This is so because Jesus combined the laws of love for God and for neighbor into the one great commandment (Mt. 22:34-40). St. Francis too reminds us of this in the prologue to both the Secular Franciscan Order and the Third Order Regular Rules.

That we have been touched by God is something vitally important to our spiritual lives. The Testament of St. Francis brings this out. In his last illness he vigorously proclaimed to all who would follow his example that "God inspired me." God had called him. He was God's work as we are. Why did he persevere? What impelled him to go on despite difficulties even in bringing the message of the Gospel of peace to others? It was faith in the call of God. This faith put hope in Francis' life, an active hope that manifested itself in deeds of love for God and for the People of God.

St. Francis' steadfastness in living the Gospel was the result of his awareness of God's call. Unless we are aware that we are God's work, our concern to become more and more a gospel people could weaken. Humanly what sustains us is the gift of memory. It enables us to reflect prayerfully and gratefully on those moments of grace and inspiration when we experienced God's call.

Franciscans are people who seek to turn continuously to God throughout life by following Christ after the example of St. Francis.

Fr. Thaddeus Horgan, an Atonement Franciscan, is a member of the Life and Life Committee of the Franciscan Federation, a member of the editorial board of THE CORD, and managing editor of Ecumenical Institute of the Graymoor Ecumenical Institute.



Like Francis our first task is to set about renovating our own lives. By doing that first the Lord led Francis to embrace the apostolic mission: "rebuild my Church." His own life made that mission credible. Today franciscans, secular and religious, can be a force for the renewal of the Church, the objective of the II Vatican Council and of the efforts of Pope John Paul II, only if their commitment to personal renewal and the renewal of their fraternities is fully alive.

Francis always viewed conversion joyfully because he knew he was called by God. He was of value to God. This awareness is the human ground for spiritual joy. Unfortunately Francis is often depicted as an idealist which makes it easy for some not to take him seriously. But he was a realist because he was grounded in the Gospel which proclaims that Christ redeemed all humanity and that redemption is available to all. At the same time the Gospel tells us that we are weak, faltering, dependent, and sinful. Consequently Francis called himself the most despicable and unworthy of God's creatures. But this never depressed him. He never lost his joyousness because he knew himself to be a redeemed sinner, loved by God. God's love for all is manifest in the gift of the only Son sent into the world (John 3:16). God offers us life in the Son through the power of God's Spirit. Francis had this balanced view of himself and others. Sometimes we get discouraged. Conflict and violence seem to be such a large part of the human experience. But by faith we know that they can not defeat God's people. The good news of Jesus Christ is that all inhumanity can be overcome. All peoples in Christ do have the capacity to be instruments for peace.

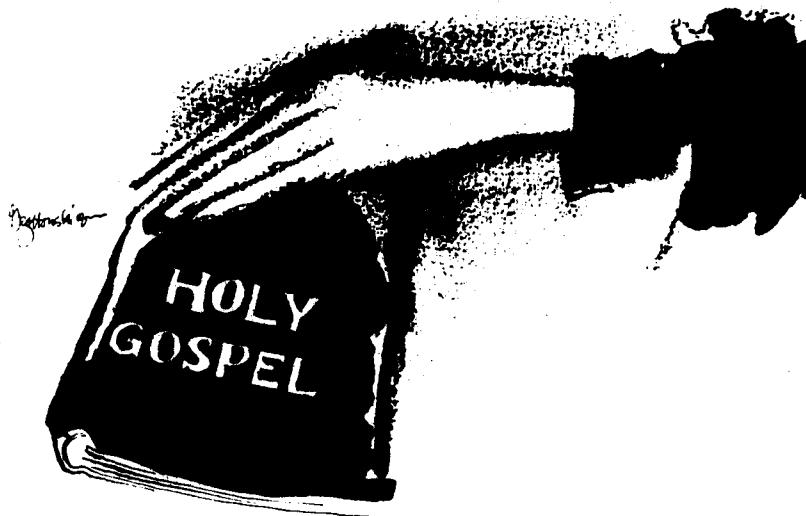
The distinct charism of Secular Franciscans and Third Order Regular Franciscans within the larger franciscan family is biblical repentance. In essence it is acknowledging our call to turn to God, to believe in Jesus as the Messianic Lord of life, and to live our Gospel belief by "putting on the Lord Jesus Christ." To accomplish these goals we have to see ourselves in a larger context than our self perception dictates. That context is to see ourselves as people called by God. God does not call us to what we can not do. In this three year conversion experience Francis questioned whether he could be more than a merchant's son destined to be a merchant. The Gospel challenged him. God led him first to put on Christ. Then Francis understood that God intends people to live as Jesus did. And they can.

All of us can recall moments in our lives when we experienced something that opened us up to new horizons. Francis thought he

could not stand lepers only to find that he could embrace them. He discovered that God could open him up so much more than he had perceived. To use Francis' own words, by changing one's values the spirit of the world can be replaced by the Spirit of the Lord! This was done by grace, and by cooperation with grace, that is, by assimilating and interiorizing the values manifested by Christ in the gospels. These values generally are associated with the Sermon on the Mount, especially the Beatitudes. Christ for Francis and franciscans is the only way, the truth and the life. Evangelical or gospel life, then, describes that style of living Francis projects to his followers.

Putting on the Lord is not play-acting or merely imitating Christ; it is literally making part of ourselves the values and motives of the Lord. This is the lifetime task. Francis faltered, was tempted, and prayed for strength even after his conversion. Like him we too may become tired of trying. At times it seems we are getting nowhere. We may even doubt our call especially when we feel frustrated. We want to be truly turned to God, but we slip up and feel we lack God's grace. This is time for deep faith and hope. Perseverance is essential. Think of the Christ in Gethsemane. Despite his feeling of loneliness and sense of abandonment he persevered and became humanity's redeemer. Francis discovered Christ's perseverance in the Gospels. In this he found assurance, motivation, and inspiration. So do we.

Thaddeus Horgan, S.A.



The Earth, A Companion on the Spiritual Journey

WAYNE SIMSIC

IS IT POSSIBLE to explore a deeper relation with the earth, and, in doing so, uncover a spirituality that includes the earth in the soul's journey to God? Those who identify with the spirit of St. Francis of Assisi would say, "Yes." They are not being romantic or sentimental, however, they realize, like the people of Israel realized, that a spiritual journey involves not only the human community but the land as well.

In his classic work, "Leisure: The Basis of Culture," Josef Pieper defines the human spirit as the capacity for relationship and adds that this capacity is not limited but includes all reality.¹ Drawing on the tradition of Western philosophy, he explains that the words "spirit" and "world" are not only related but "their correspondance complete."² Human experience, then, is not self-contained. We interact dynamically and intimately not only with the lives of others but with our environments. "Our relationships with our environments are not something we have but something through which we come to be," writes John Shea.³

It is clear, though, that a spirituality of the earth is quite difficult today. We no longer feel the intimate participation with the world that past ages have felt. Our souls are not so easily changed by the creatures and things of this planet.

For example, we could never recapture the immediacy that characterized the primordial experience of the planet nor would we want to recapture it. Our participation today, after the resurrection of Christ, has a different character. It begins at the center of a heart that is alive with Christ. In other words, if the inwardness of our lives is grounded in Christ's love we will have the power to give life to the earth and participate in its mystery. From a Christian perspective the earth need not remain empty of power and sacredness; it can become dynamic and holy, a companion on the spiritual journey.

Mr. Wayne Simsic teaches Religion at Lake Catholic High School, Mentor, Ohio. His article "Spirituality of the Earth in Bonaventure's Itinerary" appeared in THE CORD, December, 1984.

Our interrelationship with the earth on a physical plane is well known but our interrelationship with it on a spiritual one is less familiar. Mircea Eliade writes that primordial cultures felt the very existence of the earth had an impact on their consciousness.⁴ The earth was considered a home for sacred forces and the origin of all forms of life. The early Greeks were aware that the earth had a power (physis) which encompassed land and sky. This power transcended space and time and was the ultimate ground of reality, unfolding like a flower giving birth to the world. The medieval person was more interested in the quality of the earth than its quantity. The earth was perceived more as an organism than a machine and was understood to be the intersection of cosmic purposes and forces. The medieval person participated in a world that was a microcosm with a macrocosm, an embryo in a womb.

This perception of a spiritual earth is strange to the modern mind which is more familiar with a scientific and objective outlook that excludes feelings for the planet. The earth is not so much a home as an island reeling in a vast and enigmatic universe.

However, in the last few decades there have been developments which have heightened our sensitivity to the earth even though we not have been fully aware of them.

One example is the ecological issue. We are more than ever before aware of the threat to the well being of the earth: pollution of land, water, air; malfunction of nuclear plants; destruction of rain forests; extinction of species. It has become more and more apparent that there is no temporary solution to these problems but that it will be necessary to deepen our spiritual relationship with the planet if we are to save it.

Another example is the increasing awareness of the feminine principle. In myth the Earth is a primordial mother who brings forth life and is the origin of all nurturing, physical, intellectual and spiritual. The modern experience of the earth has lost this mythical dimension. The planet has become one-dimensional. However, this image of Mother Earth which has lain dormant in our psyches for so long is now emerging in our sensitivity to feminine religious values. There is much work being done today in defining feminine values and it is becoming evident that the earth is strongly linked to this research. For example, in a book by Carol Christ, "Diving Deep and Surfacing," a woman's sensitivity to the influence of nature and its rhythms emerges as a significant theme.⁵

The archetypal image of Mother Earth puts us in relationship with a mystery that sustains and nourishes life. Within this womb of unity a

person discovers individual integration and harmony with all of life. Without a relationship with Mother Earth our souls may very well remain hidden from us and we may lose participation in the wholeness and holiness of being. Intimacy with the earth on the level of myth is in harmony with our spiritual destiny. Eloi Leclerc describes the spiritual journey of St. Francis as one that passes through Mother Earth and into communion with Christ.⁶

Our need to regain the spiritual dimension of the earth has become increasingly important today. We find ourselves yearning for a deeper relationship with the world, one that is not just physical but one that is relevant to the whole of human existence. We may be realizing, more than ever before, that the soul itself corresponds to the deepest meaning of the universe.

Christ the Center

Jesus Christ is the center of any relationship with the Earth. Christ's historical presence influenced the structure of the universe: it energized both creation and history. Through his death and resurrection Christ transformed the universe and directed history toward a final culmination. Just as the earth flows out of the Trinity through Christ, it returns to the Trinity through him. The spiritual journey of the earth is related to our own journey back to the Father.

*He is the image of the unseen God
and the first-born of all creation,
for in him were created
all things in heaven and on earth...*

Colossians 1:15,16

The Christ that St. Paul describes is the ground of all reality, the beginning and the end of creation. The Word holds the world together and in doing so gives it meaning. The presence of the "word" in each creature and thing gives all creation a fundamental harmony and interrelationship that unites it toward God's purpose. The Word actively binds creation and draws it back to God. St. Paul's message is that the earth is incomplete because we are incomplete, and both the earth and us yearn for home.

The deepest faith believes that the Word is present in all things of creation and is always speaking to us telling us of God's nearness and immanence. In our technological world it is not so much the transcendent Word who speaks to us but the God who is immanent. The colors, sounds and expressions of nature all have the potential to reveal the performance

Reconciliation with the earth takes place through Christ with whom all creation exists.

of the Word at the heart of things. The light that fills the eye, the molecules that make up matter, all overflow with divinity. When nature causes us to stand and wonder perhaps it is asking us to discover a new perspective, one that would lead us to its ontological core.

The Earth as Symbol

If we deeply believe that Christ is the center of all creation and is present to us in the world then we have an entrance into the spiritual depths of the earth. If the earth is truly an expression of the Word then it cannot be limited to its physical dimensions; it must possess a depth that opens into mystery.

This is an amazing insight because our outlook toward the earth has been conditioned by science and a factual interpretation of history. As a result, we tend to see the earth from a literal or one dimensional perspective. However, if the earth is ontologically grounded in Christ then it is primarily a symbol and only secondarily literal.

In his study of creation spirituality, "Original Blessings," Matthew Fox asks us to imagine that creation itself is a book, a scripture, "a source of truth and revelation."⁷ This metaphor of the book was used by spiritual writers and theologians to demonstrate that the world was an expression of God. According to St. Bonaventure, one of the Medieval theologians who developed the metaphor of the book, nature will reveal the Word, Jesus Christ, when it is properly read.⁸

The Word is expressed in a variety of ways because each creature and thing reflects the Word and can be considered a "word" in its own special way. In order to understand the meaning of "word," though, we need to recover the meaning of the Hebrew term "Dabhar" which refers not to our present limited meaning of word but to the creative energy of God which has the power to give birth to all creation.

Ultimately, there is one translation of the universe, Jesus Christ. Christ, in the Medieval view, is the ultimate Book of Life. Christ is the fullest expression of God in creation.

This metaphor of the book of nature may seem outmoded today. Most of us are like the scientist who takes a literal, factual reading of the earth and, as a result, has no experience of the inner unity and depth of physical reality. Yet, by using the metaphor we are able to see how myopic we have become in our vision of the earth and the immediate reality of Christ. Also, when we hear Teilhard de Chardin call us to participate in a Christocentric universe, a universe overflowing with divine creativity, are we not hearing a call to re-discover the earth as a sacred text which is intimately related to the soul's journey to the Father?

The Language of the Soul

When the earth is perceived as symbol it has the potential of weaving into the spiritual life by becoming the language of the soul. In one of his sermons Meister Eckhart calls creation a "language," a symbolic echoing of the inner life.⁹ The broad sky, lush foliage and fertile earth penetrate the psyche so deeply that they become part of our lives. The sun, moon, wind, water and earth are entrances into the forces that work in the human soul. Power to communicate is inherent in all creation. Eckhart proclaims that, "All created things are God's speech and manifest the same as does my mouth about God."¹⁰ The wind washing through the boughs, the rain splashing on the leaves, the stillness at the center of nature — all of these have the potential to communicate the heart's deepest desire.

An example of the power of natural images can be found in St. Francis' poem, "The Canticle to Brother Sun." When the images of earth, sun and moon which are found in the poem are experienced in a primordial way, that is without the usual reflexive awareness, they become symbols of the imagination and take on a language all their own. We are influenced by these primary images whether we are conscious of it or not. They are archetypes rooted in the history of human consciousness. "These great images," writes Eloi Leclerc, "have the power to draw consciousness out of its isolation and put it in contact with a transcendent fullness of life."¹¹ If we can learn to address the world as Francis did we will awaken in ourselves the unconscious depths of our being and greet creation as a source of love. In his biography of Francis St. Bonaventure explains:

When he considered the primordial source of all things, he was filled with even more abundant piety, calling creatures, no matter how small, by the

name of brother or sister, because he knew that they had the same source as himself.¹²

The power that the images of the earth can have is also evident in the parables of Jesus. Jesus calls on common everyday realities to add a dimension to his message. Images like field, treasure, seed, light and tree reveal a hidden dimension that somehow affects our spirituality. Jesus, explains C. H. Dodd, experienced a relationship between the natural order and the spiritual order so his images are not just embellishments to make a story more powerful: the natural order immediately illuminates the spiritual.¹³ The seed that falls on the ground is, at the same time, a natural event and a religious event. The experience of growth and decay is intimately related to the growth and decay of the human spirit. To use the language of the gospels, the openness to divinity on a natural level is, at the same time, an invitation to enter the kingdom of God.

Conversion

"The man who is filled with an impassioned love of Jesus hidden in the forces which bring increase to the earth, him the earth will lift up, like a mother, in the immensity of her arms, and will enable him to contemplate the face of God," writes Teilhard de Chardin in his poetic and powerful essay, "The Mass on the World."¹⁴

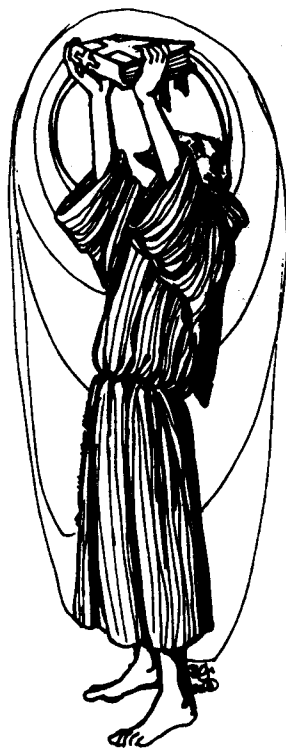
Can we really find Christ in the world if we have not already begun to find him in our hearts? Seeing Christ's presence in the earth, according to Teilhard, is only possible through our turning to him in his person and love as the central value in our lives. The indwelling Christ energizes our lives and allows us to witness the creative presence of love everywhere and in everything.

An extraordinary example of conversion which led to a realization of Christ's presence in all things can be found in the life of St. Francis of Assisi. G. K. Chesterton describes the time when the saint entered a dark place, a cave, and underwent a radical transformation.¹⁵ Chesterton says that Francis entered the cave with one view of the world and left with another: he went in seeing as an ordinary person would see and came out with the eye of a fool.

Francis' foolish perspective was due to his unique vision of the world as completely dependent on God. This was a perspective that he shared with few others, perhaps only the saints of the day. For most people the visible was the primary basis for seeing; for Francis the invisible was the funding reality. The focus of Francis' eye was a world immersed in and flowing from the mystery of God's presence.

Even at the time of conversion natural images did not disappear but took on a creative power and helped to rearrange the consciousness in ways that could not be imagined. Eloi Leclerc gives the following interpretation of St. Francis' conversion experience:

The remarkable thing about Francis is that his spiritual conversion does not require a break from the images and themes that have inspired until now, but rather a reinterpretation of these same images and themes and thus a continuation, in a new form, of their dynamic power over him. The new supernatural inspiration of his life purifies and renews these great images, but in turn it receives from them an astonishing vitality, youthfulness, and creative power.¹⁶



New Heaven, New Earth

The importance of the earth in the culmination of our spiritual journey can be seen when we take a close look at the journey of the people of Israel to the promised land. The journey from the beginning of time to the fulfillment of time is like the journey that the Israelites took to a land of rest and promise. The Israelites had a deep sense of connection with the land; it was intimately related to the journey. The land represented more than the geography of Canaan; it was the foundation upon which the Israelites could form a relationship with the entire world order. Ultimately, the land was a land of promise representing not only the completion of the human destiny but the destiny of all creation. W. Bruegemann summarizes the importance of the land for the people of Israel:

As Yaweh is Lord of events so he is also fructifier of the land. As he comes 'in that day,' so also he watched over the land. He not only intrudes to do saving deeds but he also governs in ways to assure abiding blessings... He is Lord of places as well as times.¹⁷

In the New Testament the terms "new heaven" and "new earth" refer to a state of completion where the entire cosmic reality is no longer bound by space and time and is fulfilled in divine life: "Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth..." (Revelation: 21:1). This is not an apocalyptic state: it is not the result of dissolution and catastrophe. Rather, it is a state in which God's act of creation is completed. According to Zachary Hayes, Christian eschatology "speaks of the fulfillment of what is initiated by God in creation."¹⁸

St. Paul explains how this fulfillment is realized in Christ:

He has let us know the mystery of his purpose, the hidden plan he so kindly made in Christ from the beginning to act upon when the times had run their course to the end: that he would bring everything together under Christ, as head, everything in the heavens and everything on earth.

(Ephesians 1:9.10)

Concluding Reflections

Reconciliation with the earth takes place through Christ with whom all creation exists. By reconciling ourselves with Christ we reconcile ourselves with the earth. Our spiritual journey should not be imagined separate from the earth.

Also, the entire universe, because it participates in this journey, can become a spiritual guide. This is a humbling but illuminating thought.

The purpose and hope of the earth is found, just as it is for all humanity, in the resurrection of Jesus Christ. In its fulfillment the earth will take on the radiance of Christ and ourselves in Christ. The form is the body of Christ transfigured by the resurrection. In this final culmination the earth will not disappear but will remain unique as earth and humanity as humanity: both earth and humanity will discover a true identity in Christ. This is a vision of the Promised Land in which we settle and rest in unity with all things in Christ.

¹Josef Pieper, *Leisure: The Basis of Culture* (New York: New American Library, 1963), p. 89.

²Ibid.

³John Shea, *Stories of God: An Unauthorized Biography* (Chicago: Thomas Moore Press, 1978), p. 16.

⁴Mircea Eliade, *The Sacred and the Profane* (New York: Harper and Row, 1961), p. 12.

⁵Carol Christ, *Diving Deep and Surfacing* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1980).

⁶Eloi Leclerc, O.F.M., *The Canticle of Creatures: Symbols of Union* (Chicago: Franciscan Herald Press, 1966), p. 155.

⁷Matthew Fox, *A Primer in Creation Spirituality* (Santa Fe, New Mexico: Bear and Company, 1983), p. 38.

⁸Ewert H. Cousins, *Bonaventure and the Coincidence of Opposites* (Chicago: Franciscan Herald Press, 1978), pp. 97-101.

⁹Meister Eckhart: *The Essential Sermons, Commentaries, Treatises, and Defense*, trans. Edmund Colledge, O.S.A. and Bernard McGinn (New York: Paulist Press, 1981), p. 205.

¹⁰Ibid.

¹¹*The Canticle of Creatures*, op. cit., p. 65.

¹²*Bonaventure: The Soul's Journey into God; The Tree of Life; The Life of St. Francis*, trans. Ewert Cousins (New York: Paulist Press, 1978), p. 254.

¹³C. H. Dodd, *The Parables of the Kingdom* (London: James Nisbet and Company, 1935), p. 21.

¹⁴Pierre Teilhard de Chardin, S.J., *Hymn of the Universe* (New York: Harper and Row, 1969), p. 30.

¹⁵G. K. Chesterton, *St. Francis of Assisi* (New York: Doubleday and Company, 1957), p. 70.

¹⁶*The Canticle of Creatures*, op. cit., p. 122.

¹⁷W. Bruegemann, *The Land: Place as Gift, Promise, and Challenge in Biblical Faith* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1977), p. 185.

Franciscan Journey

Shades of brown, earth tones, mark our passing
sandal shod, no cap, no staff
no purse for needs long forgotten
a wilderness ahead, we are led through
paths unknown, we are
companions on the journey, spirits pledged to
One Most High
we have handed over our hearts
for the victory that awaits us
in the Cross.

Sr. Edmund Marie Stets, CSB

Easter, 33 A.D.

As night shades fell on Juda's hills,
Fearful men their doors did lock;
To mourn, to hide, to weep their lot:
Their hopes all smashed on Calvary's rock.

The women babbled of seeing Him
And the tomb no longer held their Brother.
Their boggled minds now sought surcease
In locks and bolts and one another.

Into the gloom, a ray of light!
The Lord has come to heal their doubt;
His wounds aglow, His eyes alight;
Nor lock nor bolt could keep Him out.

"Peace," He breathed; their fears all fled.
"My Peace I give," The Master said;
And breathless in their ecstasy,
They watched Him eat their fish and bread.

Sr. Dorothy M. Kopetsky, O.S.C.

ST. FRANCIS ANTHONY FASANI, O.F.M. Conv.

A Biographical Reflection

FR. DONALD GRZYMSKI, O.F.M. Conv.

ON APRIL 13, 1986 Pope John Paul II canonized St. Francis Anthony Fasani, a Conventual Franciscan Friar who had lived his religious life and died in the eighteenth century. In his homily on that occasion Pope John Paul praised Fasani as a confessor of the faith and for his work in the ministry of reconciliation. However, Franciscans (and others) might profitably look to Fasani, to his life and work, for inspiration, for there are numerous parallels between his time and the present, between his ministry and the apostolates of today. This is especially true where there is a consciousness of and option for the poor and outcasts in modern society.

Francis Anthony was born in the town of Lucera, in southeastern Italy, on August 6, 1681, and it was in this town that he lived most of his life, served in his ministry as a Franciscan priest, departed from this life, and was buried. He remained a sincere friend of the people of the town, even while becoming their teacher. The townspeople called him "Padre Maestro," the term "Padre" being used for a religious order priest, and "maestro" because of his doctorate in theology. He is known by that title even today. Francis Anthony becomes a fine example of how the routine of life can be channeled to give moments of growth, and how love of God will be so intimately linked with love of neighbor. As he helped his town of Lucera grow in holiness, Francis Anthony showed how those who are close to us can be the most influential in our lives. It was in this town that he also came to know the Friars who became his teachers and led him to the religious life, and where he began a devotion to the Blessed Mother, for the townspeople credited her intercession for driving out the Moors in the year 1300.

Fr. Donald Grzymiski served on the Conventuals' National Committee to prepare for Fasani's canonization. Currently he is the Assistant Principal at Archbishop Curley High School in Baltimore. The original design of Fasani was done by Sister Marian Charlene Honors, L.S.J. of the Albany Province of The Sisters of St. Joseph of Carondelet.



St. Francis Anthony Fasani, OFM Conv.

The names of Francis Anthony's parents were Joseph Fasani and Isabella Della Monaca, and he was baptized John. As his father died when he was about ten years old, he and his mother knew the struggles of a poor and single parent household. Eventually, with the help of a caring step-father, he was entrusted to the Conventual Friars of the city for an education. Tradition tells that Francis Anthony was never ashamed of his poor origins nor his poor family. Even among aristocrats he introduced himself as the peasant son of "poor Isabella." When he would meet his poorly dressed mother or sister in town he would always greet them and praise them, no matter who was in his company. One senses that Fasani knew that gifts of life and love, of faith and intelligence, come first from one's family, and these are the most important gifts a family can share.

The Friars' example nurtured Fasani's vocation, and in a few years he entered the Franciscan novitiate. On August 23, 1696 Francis Anthony professed his vows, and continued his studies for the priesthood in Assisi. He was fortunate during these years of formation to come into contact with a number of saintly Friars whose lives and example encouraged him. After hesitancy at his unworthiness, but with the encouragement of his spiritual director, Francis Anthony was ordained a priest in Assisi on September 19, 1705, and celebrated his first Mass the next day at the tomb of St. Francis. For two more years he remained in Assisi, nourishing himself on the spirit of the Poverello, and, more formally, obtaining a doctorate in sacred theology.

Twelve years after leaving Lucera Fasani returned, and there he would spend his remaining 35 years of life. His duties included preaching, hearing confessions, giving spiritual direction, and teaching philosophy to the professed seminarians. Eventually he would serve as regent of the school of philosophy at Lucera, guardian of the friary, Master of Novices, and Minister Provincial of his province.

In a task where many grow tepid, or lose zeal and let monotony take over, Francis Anthony persevered with diligence and enthusiasm. He used the routine to grow spiritually, and found value in the discipline of daily life. The mundane, the tedious, the trivial and the trying remained unique opportunities to serve God. Where one might be likely to make allowances in discipline as years pass by rationalizing "that's for formation," he increased his ascetic practices, as Francis had done, in order to grow in likeness to the Crucified.

As St. Francis had discovered in the vicinity of Assisi, Francis Anthony found the church building in Lucera in poor condition. He received permission and worked at the restoration and beautification of the structure. He also insisted upon its cleanliness, and of the cleanliness of all

things associated with worship, and the saint often swept and did the other cleaning himself. Biographers have referred to him as a "watchdog of the temple", but it was because Francis Anthony believed that a church was the house of God and a place of encounter between God and His people. Furthermore, he was strict in seeing that proper respect, devotion and decorum were present in God's temple. He corrected those who talked in church, especially during services, for disturbing the silence which made it easier for God to be heard. He feared a casualness which would detract from the sacred, and preferred to use the aids available to him to point to the beyond.

Francis Anthony was concerned with the decorum of sacred functions, the devout praying of the Divine Office, the instruction of the people and the frequent preaching of the Word of God. He was faithful to the daily schedule as an assured way to praise God, and spent frequent hours in adoration before the Blessed Sacrament. Friars came to remark, "It seems as though Father Francis measured our spirit with his own — he wants us all to become saints like himself."¹

Since St. Francis had dedicated a chapter of the Rule to preaching, Francis Anthony believed it to be an important duty of a priest and Friar, and he preached extensively. He devoted countless hours to preparation, and then delivered plain and simple sermons, replete with Scriptural references and his own personal insights. He wanted to make sure he was understood by all, and that his hearers were moved to a change of heart.

Linked to his preaching was service in the confessional. Exercising what he saw as Christ's mercy, Francis Anthony was charitable, sympathetic and patient. He was criticized on occasion for being too merciful, but believed it was better to fail on the side of mercy than to risk harsh treatment of a penitent. He was also brief in his confessional advice, believing that a few words, virtually maxims, would better sink into the heart of the hearer. His penitents found that as his words moved them to contrition, so his demeanor in administering the sacraments fostered a peaceful encounter with Christ. He encouraged a healthy devotion and frequent reception of the Eucharist so that Christ could be ever more present as a nourishing force in life. In Mary he found a woman who deserved special praise as God's Mother. The devotion he encouraged was genuine for it captured Mary's role in salvation history and as an intercessor for all in their Christian lives.

Francis Anthony countered both Jansenism and a complacent attitude toward religious life with explanations and a solid spirituality. This could only come from a conviction nurtured by prayer and reflection. It was

the complement to his very active apostolic life, giving a balance, meaning and perspective to all he did.

Francis Anthony lived a life of great discipline and devotion. It was said that he never missed daily Mass, and that all his other activities had to be scheduled around the Liturgy. In the Franciscan tradition his devotional life centered around the crib of Christ, Calvary and the Tabernacle. As a Friar he also had a devotion to the Immaculate Conception, even in these years prior to the definition of the dogma, and he gave the utmost to preparations for this novena.

Francis Anthony followed a very rigorous discipline of eating little food, and of making that virtually tasteless. He gave his body little rest, and continued his tasks even when ill. He serves as a model for the importance of discipline even if not performed to the same extent. He knew that this testing would help his body to perform when he needed it to, to worship as he was able, and to resist temptation when he faced it. It would set a pattern for his Christian existence. It was a discipline of body which would flow over into a discipline of every thought, word, or action.

At the bishop's request, the already busy Francis Anthony became chaplain to the prisoners of the city's jails. He not only visited those incarcerated, but he sought to console them and to encourage them to repentance. He willingly accepted their anger and animosity when it was directed toward him. So frequently did he accompany prisoners to their execution that he was called the "Friar of the Gallows," and it became his practice to invite the onlookers, after the execution, to pray for the prisoner's soul. Those who were the social outcasts and feared by many could still be loved. Like St. Francis' lepers, Francis Anthony found that those who first tried his will power and tested his love were really special brothers to him. He also showed faith in God's grace to bring even the most hardened sinner to conversion.

Knowing his origins, and the background of Christ himself, Francis Anthony not only loved the poor and sought to help them in general ways, but he also got directly involved in personal contacts with the brothers and sisters of little social status. He talked with them, saw that their physical needs were met whenever he could, and thus enhanced their dignity as God's children and truly his brothers and sisters. He never forgot the healthiness of good, honest labor, and the need for gifts to be shared, whether a gift of time or a gift of material things. He also made sure food was available from the church every day, and that it was properly distributed to the poor of the city. He also found it possible to thus assist his poor mother until her death in 1729. As Christians become so aware today of the problem of hunger on local, national and international levels, Francis Anthony becomes a model of Christian involvement.

During an illness that approached rather quickly, Francis Anthony's condition worsened and he received the sacraments for the last time. His confreres said he approached "Sister Death" with great joy, and his happiness increased as death drew nearer. His last statement to the Friars was: "Fathers and Brothers, love one another in fraternal charity. Keep the Rule and the Commandments of God. Obey your superiors and become saints."² He died November 29, 1742, the day on which the novena of the Immaculate Conception would begin, the date on which the Rule had been approved in 1223, and the feast of All Saints of the Franciscan Order.

The information process for his cause for sainthood began a few years later in 1746, but was then delayed by the Napoleonic Wars and the departure of the Conventual Friars from Lucera (they only returned in 1932). On June 21, 1891 Pope Leo XIII declared Francis Anthony to be Venerable. In the 1940s two miracles were credited to his intercession, the instantaneous cure of a boy wounded in World War II and of an elderly laborer with a blood disease. On April 15, 1951 Pope Pius XII beatified Francis Anthony Fasani in ceremonies at St. Peter's Basilica. On April 13, 1986 Pope John Paul II canonized him.

Many saints have been founders of religious communities or major movements in the Church. They have been famous missionaries, or martyrs for the Faith. One might conclude that only the dramatic leads to sanctity, or that saints always accomplish the spectacular. Francis Anthony can be a real model for the "normal" religious life. He was normal in faithfulness to the Rule, Constitutions and customs of his Order. He was normal in what his apostolate asked of him, with duties added to an already heavy schedule. His was a life where he could have done much less personally, communally, and apostolically and he would have still been a good religious. But he was not satisfied with that. His way was a true blending of the contemplative and active life as Francis of Assisi had planned it.

Francis Anthony used the everyday opportunity of meeting the sick, the confused, the poor, the celebrating, the joyful, in order to imitate Christ's everyday dealings in the Gospel. He used the Rule of St. Francis with the precepts of the Order's Constitutions as a liberating guide to the evangelical life he had professed. He found a way to enhance the moments of living so they could be daily opportunities for growth. He did what all religious are called and challenged to do, but he kept his enthusiasm alive from youth through old age. Tasks routine for him were encounters unique for the one he met, and so extremely important and calling for patience

and sensitivity. He taught not so much by word as by example, for he valued his vocation and cooperated with God's grace.

St. Francis Anthony Fasani is a model of the apostolic life lived in such a way that the ministry is served and personal growth takes place. Perhaps the Church's ministers need a model and patron as their lives seem work-dominated and their ministry fatiguing. In a busy pastoral schedule he found time for the prayer which made his efforts fruitful. Francis Anthony is a model for the perfectly normal religious routine, lived in an exemplary way.

¹Stano, P. Gaetano M., O.F.M. Conv. *Blessed Francis Anthony Fasani, O.F.M. Conv.* (translated by Fr. Raphael M. Huber, O.F.M. Conv.) Kenosha, WI: Marytown Press, 1951, p. 28.

²*Ibid.* p. 53.



The Cosmopolitan Christ

Galilee is north
of Samaria,
and Samaritans
are Samaritans,
you know.
Roman garrison
in Capernaum;
horses, not donkeys,
there.
Jerusalem builds
the World Trade
Center
next to the
temple.
Caesarea Philippi;
named after Caesar
and Philip.
No wonder
John The Baptist
seeks the trickle
of the Jordan,
and eats bugs.
Herod argues
over Caesar's
picture on
the nickel,
and Christ
says His
Kingdom is
nowhere around
here.

Fr. Patrick Leary, O.F.M.

An African Hymn of Praise: Lord of The Universe

Hear, yes, hear! O hear people of Africa. The Lord, the Lord, our God, Maker of the Universe with gardens and trees; with animals and people are for His glory and honour and praise. Yes, the drums beat it out, and men and women sing about it. They dance with holy joy that You are the Lord, the Lord of the Universe.

You have moulded this glorious, sun-drenched Africa with Zambia as its navel, and our brothers and sisters into many families and tribes. You have pulled the other Continents out of the sea too for the primacy of man and "created him a little less than the angels."

What a wonderful family you have formed out of red clay, and what beautiful African children in Your "image" amid all the other races and clans. Leaping gazelles they are with "Brother Sun" and "Sister Moon" ever watching day and night.

The sky above is a mauve flowing chitenge cloth, and Your many spiritual sons and daughters its weavers and painters. We drink in Your works with spacious cups, and Your gracious symphonies enchant us so. You envelop us with sensuous "mother earth's" perfumes, while that which is touches and caresses us.

In doing this we forget the evil we have done. Lord, we cry out to You. We grieve. Tear us away from our wrongs, fights, selfishness, tribalism and wars, all sins of brother against brother and sister against sister. We do not realize that these silver and gold idols will melt away, as one day unto dust our eyes will close forever.

We are slaves to these hand-carved images, highly polished demons, fetters, even, if we are not redeemed and loved by You. In chains we are. Unliberated. Yes, Mammon's sons and daughters. Help us, we pray.



Teach us true wisdom and faith that we may love the designs of Your hands and as You do all our brothers and sisters.

Hear, yes, hear! O hear people of Africa. The Lord, the Lord, our God, maker of the Universe with gardens and trees; with animals and people are for His glory and honour and praise. Yes, the drums beat it out, and men and women sing about it. They dance with holy joy that You are the Lord, the Lord of the Universe.

Fr. Jude M. Rochford, O.F.M. Conv.

The Response

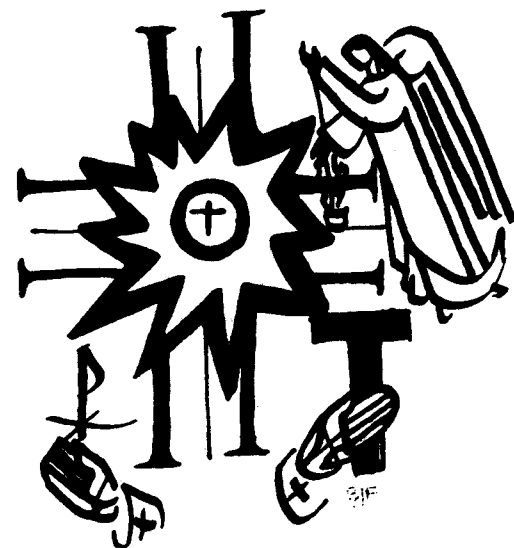
There was silence—a stillness in the vast deep.
And God said: Let there be light!

And the Heavens burst open—
The sun exploded
sending forth prisms of light
radiating outward—

Fragments of the spectrum
circling over the mass of muted clay
Swirling breezes of life filled the vastness
and the hushed silence
began to pulse with the light of life.

In that second CREATION BEHELD THE GLORY OF GOD
Light shining forth—
WISDOM, BEAUTY, TRUTH, POWER, GENTLENESS—
mirroring the likeness of Divinity
on fragments of crushed clay.

Clay rising and building
springs pouring forth the waters of life.
trees and plants bending and twisting.
flowers blossoming
birds circling
All caught in the magnetism of Light.



Sisters and brothers standing in awe,
Hands stretching up,
grasping for the touch of life.
Hearts beginning to beat with His life—
Lips quivering
stammering for a response...
struggling for the sound, the syllable—
Stuttering until the word burst forth in joy:
AL - LE - LU - IA
Alleluia! Glory and Praise Be Yours!
The sound echoes, builds, magnifies
until all creation is touched—
responds in unison—
Mind, Body, and Heart singing and praying
Alleluia! Praise and Thanksgiving!
Blessing and Glory be to Him most High
Giver of Love,
Giver of Life,
Giver of gifts.

Sr. Christa Marie Thompson, O.S.F.

Book Reviews

The Woman Who Couldn't Be Stopped. By Sister Delphine Wedmore, SCC. Wilmette, IL: Sisters of Christian Charity, 1985. Pp. 400. Paper, \$10.50.

Reviewed by Elsa Hurschler, S.F.O., Switzerland.

This is a love story, the love story of a baby born in 1817 at Minden, Germany, to a Lutheran father and Catholic mother.

It is not easy for a Lutheran in a Government position in the Germany of the early 19th Century to promise his wife that children born of their marriage would be brought up Catholic, and keep true to his word, but the father of Pauline von Mallinckrodt did just that. He left to his wife the religious instruction of all their children and the results were good.

The book tells how a little girl loved and wished to help the poor, while still at school; how she sensed tensions that could arise between parents of different religions. But she was fortunate in having a sensible teacher to turn to, and excellent instruction from priests, one a Franciscan from a noble Prussian family — a Father Gossler from the friary at Paderborn. He was known for his love of prayer and penance:

"Pray, Pauline," he urged. "Take the leap and throw yourself... on God... Pray stubbornly, day by day, at least for nine days before Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament...". He brought her to her Lover, Christ in the Blessed Eucharist.

Pauline carried out her family duties

caring for her younger brothers and sisters when their mother died, but managed even when acting as hostess for her father, despite her many activities, to attend daily mass at 5 a.m. She even obtained permission to receive Communion each day, during that period an unusual occurrence. She was making her way, eventually to use up her not inconsiderable fortune, towards founding an Order of the Sisters of Christian Charity to care for and educate the poor and blind, particularly children.

Mother Pauline undertook two enormous journeys to the Americas which would deter the bravest among us, but when she died in 1881 she had the satisfaction of knowing there were 27 houses established in the United States, eleven in Chile, and nine in Europe, served by Sisters of Christian Charity.

Excitingly readable, although the book is naturally a history of the Order, it is also a wonderful illustration of how by sheer grit and determination and a sense of humor, a brave woman turned down marriage and the easy life, and gave every difficulty and every debt to the Lord in faith. He would find the solution. It is the story of the woman with a great loving heart who can even now by her example bring about a renewal of one's own faith; who achieved everything through prayer and trust in God.

In April 1985 Pope John Paul II declared Mother Pauline von Mallinckrodt and Mother Catherine Troliani Blessed. But read for yourselves about the woman who never gave up,

could not be stopped, and whose spirituality and love lives on in the hearts of the Sisters who follow her.

Soul of My Soul: Reflections From A Life of Prayer. By Catherine de Hueck Doherty. Notre Dame, IN. Ave Maria Press, 1985. Pp. 128. Paper, \$4.95.

Availability: The Problem and The Gift. By Robert J. Wicks. New York: Paulist Press, 1986. Pp. 112. Paper, \$5.95.

Reviewed by Father Thomas Burque, T.O.R., Chairperson of the Philosophical and religious Studies Department of Saint Francis College of Pennsylvania.

PRAYER: I PRAYED

I prayed to God for songs and laughter. He gave me tears instead. I prayed for life in valley green, full of harvest rich. He led me through deserts arid and heights where snow alone could feel at home.

I prayed for sun, lots of dancing and sparkling rivers to sail upon. He gave me night, quite dark, starless, and thirst to guide me through its wastes.

But I know that I was foolish, for I have more than I prayed for.

I have the Son for bridegroom. The music of his voice is a valley green, and river sparkling on which I sail. My soul is dancing with endless joy in the dark night he shares with me.

— Catherine de Hueck Doherty

Catherine de Hueck Doherty shares her insights and thoughts on prayer within this small reflective book on her

prayer journey with God. Any follower or admirer of Doherty's will truly appreciate her openness and honesty on the topic of prayer.

Soul Of My Soul allows one to enter into the world we live in with new insights and perspectives. Today, we live in a society which expects instant answers and instant results. Just look at the emphasis we place upon instant food, technology, communication, information and travel. Our demand for results and action says a great deal about us as a people.

Though I myself enjoy this modern technology and the instant results it produces, there does seem to be something missing. The void centers around encounter. In reflection, I wonder if the personal aspect of our lives is being done away with and replaced by recordings and results. We may receive instant service, answers or results, but do we receive personal fulfillment and satisfaction?

Do we not bring this same attitude into religion and faith as well? We too often want to receive the instant knowledge and answers about our faith and relationship with Jesus. The knowledge we find will be impersonal, cold and meaningless if our entire relationship with Jesus depends upon instant answers and results.

Catherine de Hueck Doherty wrestles with this problem and tells us that prayer is to be lived out. It is in the living out of our prayer that we become prayer ourselves. When asked by others how to pray, Doherty usually says, "It is difficult to answer — we must hunger for prayer and become prayer ourselves."

Prayer is living in the presence of

God and yearning to continue to live in that presence. *Soul Of My Soul* is a testimony to the prayer which Doherty became in her own life. Her insights challenge the reader to not just read about prayer, but to become prayer. She writes:

Thousands of books have been written on prayer. I don't suppose that God minds the books, but I think he wants you and me to be the book... It is as simple as that. How do we do it? We pray!

Doherty does challenge her readers to pray and this is the fruit of *Soul Of My Soul*. She invites us into many different meditations and reflections on the ordinary events of life. In reflecting upon the ordinary events we find God's presence in the simplicity of our own lives.

Prayer is a simple gift to respond to, we are the ones that make it so difficult to understand. Too often we expect too much and too many instant results. It is only through total surrender to God that we become one with Him and open ourselves up to become prayer.

Soul of My Soul is a fine book for individuals searching for insights and examples of becoming prayer. However, if the individual is not familiar with Doherty's other books and her distinctive spirituality, I would advise them to read her other works first. Two of her other books one might find helpful are: *Poustinia* and *Fragments of My Life*. Otherwise, this book will be just another book on prayer rather than a challenge to become prayer! For admirers of Doherty, this book will only deepen your love and admiration for a great woman of prayer.

If one aspect of Francis' life has been highlighted over the centuries, it is certainly that of poverty. The discussions and debates over the issue of poverty are numerous. Over the past twenty years the followers of Jesus and Francis have begun to look at and approach the issue of poverty in a new manner. Poverty not only involves one's material goods or possessions, but also involves one's attitudes, dispositions and relationships with others.

Francis dealt with poverty throughout his conversion experience. His understanding of this virtue encompassed all things, feelings, attitudes and dispositions. In his striving to conform himself to Jesus, Francis rid himself of self-control, jealousy, envy, pride, ambition and appropriation. He goes as far as emphasizing the importance of this virtue within his admonitions. In admonition number four, Francis reminds his followers, "Let no one appropriate to himself the role of being over others. 'I did not come to be served but to serve,' says the Lord." As followers of Jesus and Francis we are challenged to do the same. The vices mentioned above truly hinder our relationship with God, others and ourselves.

Availability: The Problem and the Gift, by Dr. Robert J. Wicks, although not a book written on the vow of a life of poverty, is a book which clarifies and challenges the reader in the understanding of the virtue of poverty. This book is an excellent source for questioning and reflecting upon one's view of poverty and one's attempt to respond to the Gospel.

Wicks studies the availability of individuals to themselves, others and God. His book highlights a person's role within relationships and challenges the individual to the gift of the relationship

itself. *Availability: The Problem and the Gift* confronts the problems of relationships one enters into as well. The need to control one's life and one's relationships with others and God is a violation of inner poverty. Wicks aids the individual in overcoming these violations and problems.

As one finds him/herself reading *Availability: The Problem and the Gift*, one begins to enter into a reflective process which calls the individual to a deeper awareness of self, others and God. This process allows the reader to focus in upon some of the themes which Wicks develops throughout his book. These themes include: uniqueness, failure and forgiveness, self-awareness, relationships, pain, fears and anxieties.

Dr. Wicks catches the attention of the reader in a personal and dynamic manner. He openly shares his own journey with the Lord as well as his struggles with being available to himself, others and God. The problem and the gift of availability has been lived out by Dr. Wicks and he shares his life as pastoral counselor, husband, father and follower of Jesus. Wicks embraces the gift of availability in the true sense.

This book is excellent for all individuals who are called to live out the virtue of availability. Although all Christians are called to live out this virtue, each will respond to it differently. What is important is that everyone cultivates the virtue of availability to the best of his/her ability. *Availability: The Problem and the Gift* is much more than a "helping skills" book. It is truly a spiritual exercise which will challenge all individuals to respond more fully to God, others and themselves.

After reading and reviewing this book, I believe all will be empowered

to embrace the words of Saint Paul: "Do not conform yourselves to this age but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, so that you may judge what is God's will, what is good, pleasing and perfect." (Romans 12:2).

The Word and the Spirit. By Yves Congar. Trans. David Smith. London: Geoffrey Chapman. San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1986. Pp. xii - 133. Cloth, \$15.95.

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

"If I were to draw one conclusion from the whole of my work on the Holy Spirit, I would express it in these words: no Christology without pneumatology and no pneumatology without Christology." (Introduction) The first consequence Fr. Congar draws from this foundational point has to do with the place and function in theological method of analogy, symbol and metaphor. To wit, that an article of faith is a glimpse of divine truth tending towards that truth. This view, to be found in St. Thomas, sets itself against any narrow or conceptualist definition of the theological project undertaken in this book. It seems that the place of the Spirit appears in the intelligent activities of 'glimpsing' and 'tending towards.' For while the Biblical theology retains its spiritual, intellectual and incarnational dimensions, it is the Spirit who offers faith in that word, who receives that Word as true. Indeed, Fr. Congar details the numerous Biblical examples of the intimate link between the Word and the Spirit. This activity

of glimpsing and tending towards, linked with the Word, is next associated by Fr. Congar with the Church as the principle of her unity with Christ and of her mission of prayer, listening, teaching and witnessing before the world. For the Spirit is the seal of the truth of Christ glimpsed and tended toward.

In a lengthy middle chapter, Fr. Congar develops the implications of the Spirit for the author's assessment of historical reform movements (as instances of Prophetism), the founding of Religious Orders, the relationship of charism and institution and present Pastoral challenges. His guiding image is the 'two hands of God' which he borrows from St. Irenaeus and with which he suggests the working relationship between the Son and the Spirit as one of unity and distinction but not of hostility or at cross-purposes.

He devotes chapter six to a fine, thoughtful reflection on the relevance of the theology of the Holy Spirit to Christology. The temperamental differences between ontological and biblical forms of Christology are related in the observation that Jesus is Son in different ways — Son by eternal begetting; Son by virtue of baptism; Son by virtue of resurrection and exaltation. The Spirit is also at work in these events. "These are all moments when Jesus was not simply proclaimed the 'Son of God', but when he in fact became that Son in a new way. He became the Son of God not from the point of view of his hypostatic quality or from that of his ontology as the incarnate Word, but from that of God's offer of grace and the successive moments in the history of salvation." (p. 92). In a discussion perhaps too condensed Fr. Congar applies this insight to an understanding of pre-existence

and to the significance of Mary. "The eternal begetting of the Word, the Son, has, as its end, the Word, the Son, assuming the humanity of Jesus, which, in our own time or history, was brought about in the Annunciation. Mary... is therefore also eternally chosen and destined together with the Word." (p. 95).

Throughout the book, Fr. Congar exhibits a precise and familiar grasp of historical data with its implications for ecumenical theology. He confers dextrously with the Cappadocians, Thomas Aquinas, Luther and Calvin. But surely his attention to Orthodox theology and the *Filioque* in Chapter seven is the book's tour de force. His subtle, perspicuous assessment of the *filioque*, the correspondence of Pope John Paul II and the Oecumenical Patriarch Dimitrios I, and the Orthodox reproach that Western theology is too much Christomonism make this chapter the most intriguing and challenging of them all. And Fr. Congar's survey of the relevant literature and his exposition of the issues offer the reader a view of considerable historical and doctrinal acumen.

Translated texts can be rough on the ear. David Smith has let Fr. Congar's elegance of thought and simple style find fine expression in our tongue. The book is a sturdy contribution to the re-birth Trinitarian theology currently enjoys.

Builders of Catholic America. By Albert J. Nevins. Huntington, IN: Our Sunday Visitor Publishing, 1985. Pp. 285. Paper, \$7.95

Reviewed by Thomas O. Kelly, II, Professor of History and of American Studies, Siena College, Loudonville, N.Y. 12211.

This is a book designed to edify; to provide the reader with pious examples of lives devoted to Christ and the Roman Catholic Church within the boundaries of the United States.

Sixteen lives are presented; men and women, sacred and secular, native born and immigrant, famous and anonymous. They range chronologically from the mid-17th to the mid-20th century; geographically from Maryland and New York to Montana and New Mexico and philosophically from New York's Archbishop "Dagger John" Hughes to Dorothy Day. Each life is a chapter, designed to stand independently. The author has attempted to offset the necessarily episodic effect of such a presentation by preserving a rough chronological order and by grouping the subjects into five categories; Blackrobes, Pioneers, Emigrees, The Irish Brigade and Women.

The strongest chapters, marked by a high degree of enthusiasm, are the selections dealing with Junipero Serra, Bishop John England, James Cardinal Gibbons and Dorothy Day. In these, Nevins' somewhat florid style seems more effective than elsewhere. In general, the work is probably most appropriate for the young and for those with a limited knowledge of the role of Catholics and Catholicism in the United States. Some selections will certainly be informative at some level for most readers whose knowledge of Father Joseph Machebeuf and Mother Rose Phippine Duchesne is likely to be limited at best.

There are, regretably, a significant number of errors of historical facts which tend to jar the reader. The old "Birth of a Nation" school of Reconstruction interpretation is particularly jarring in the light of the last two or

three decades of research and interpretation. While these errors do not detract from the purpose of the book, which is to edify, they tend to weaken the reader's faith in the author and thereby render the work less edifying than he would wish. A more sophisticated editing of the manuscript would have had substantial benefit.

The People of the Faith: The Story Behind the Church of the Middle Ages. By Anthony E. Gilles. Cincinnati: St. Anthony's Messenger Press, 1986. Pp. xiii-177. Paper, \$6.95.

Reviewed by Edward Charles Metzger, O.F.M., Ph.D., lecturer at Canisius College, Buffalo, New York.

The People of the Faith, part of series *People of God*, is an attempt to present a broad history of Judeo-Christian thought "from Abraham to us." The author endeavors, as he tells us, to steer a middle course between what he terms the extremes in Protestant and Catholic interpretations of the Middle Ages (600 - 1450), between degeneration and idealization resulting in a "caricature of the truth." Adjudging people and events as the externals of the Age, the author holds that what was of true and real significance for the Church of the Middle Ages was "the evolution of the meaning of the word Faith." This was for the Church a continual process of searching for knowledge not simply *about* God but *of* God — the quest of an intimate relationship *with* God.

The author compares this period of the Church's life to the state of human adolescence — a period of conflict both internal and external, of searching for identity. A time when the Church tried to bring her behavior, intellect, emo-

tions and faith into the ideal wholeness of an integrated personality. Admirably related in this scholarly yet readable volume are the triumphs and failures of the Church. Noteworthy is the spiritual growth (contemplative, monastic, mystical traditions) as well as the failures (Crusades, Avignon Papacy, Great Western Schism) when the Church refused to recognize the evils of greed and misused power very much at work in her midst. Thus the Church failed to achieve a state of wholeness on the eve of the Reformation and appeared in chaos. But the Church survived its adolescence.

This work is intended for the average reader, but it is not simply a popular history of the Middle Ages. It is also an invitation to further reading and study — as the author states in his preface. Although the work is a brief and comprehensive survey with a rather limited bibliography (the author admits he is not a professional scholar), it is valuable reading for anyone who truly desires to understand and appreciate and not just know about the Church of the Middle Ages.

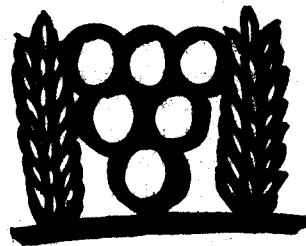
The work is published in paperback with a good index, readable type, maps, and a time table. The chapters are arranged in chronological order and within each chapter the structural focus is upon the three elements of event, thought and faith, which, the author tells us, constitute the life of the Church in its grandest epoch when the Faith came near to winning the minds and hearts of the entire Medieval Civilization.

Shorter Notices

St. Paul: The Apostle and His Letters.

By Norman Madsen. Huntington, IN: Our Sunday Visitor Press, 1986. Pp. 198, including Index. Paper, \$6.95.

The paperback is a valuable book. It begins by describing the life and personality of Paul, and then proceeds to highlight, letter by letter, the historical context and the contents of each of his epistles (Hebrews excluded). After the background and contents, selections from each epistle are given, and also reflections of the author. A subject index adds to the value of this book. Clergy, religious, and laity can profit from this work which is designed not only for information, but for inspiration.



The Spiritual Journey of the Blessed Angela of Foligno according to the Memorial of Frater A.

By Paul Lachance, O.F.M., reviewed in the February 1987 issue of *The Cord*, is obtainable from: St. Francis Retreat House, 1717 31st Street, Oak Brook, Ill. 60521. Cost: \$10.00 - plus \$2.00 mailing.

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