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MARCH, 1989

CORD

A FRANCISCAN SPIRITUAL REVIEW



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The CORD

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Standard Abbreviations used in The CORD

I. Writings of Saint Francis

Adm: Admonitions

BenLeo: Bleesing for Brother Leo
CantSol: Canticle of Brother Sun
BrAnt: Letter to St. Anthony

BrCler: Letter to Clerics

BrCust: Letter to All the Faithful

Episo: Letter to All the Faithful

Episo: Letter to the Brother Leo

Episio: Letter to the Entire Order

BrCord: Letter to the Entire Order

Epscrit Letter to the Entere of People

Exhle: Exhortation to the Praise of God

Expres: Expesition er the Our Father

Form Viv: 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
OrGruc: Prayer before the Crucifix
RegB: Rule of 1223
RegNB: Rule of 1221
RegBr: Rule for Hermits
SaiBMV: Salutation to our Lady
SalVirt: Salutation to the Virtues
Test: Testament of St. Francis
UltVol: Last Will Written for Clare
VPLset: Treatise on True and Perfect Joy

11, II refer to First and Second Editions.

🖟 😂 🖬 : Other Early Franciscan Sources

1Cel: Celano, First Life of Francis
2Cel: Celano, Second Life of Francis
2Cel: Celano, Treathe on Miracles
2Cel: Legand of Saint Clare
2Cels Philippes of Saint Clare
2Cels Philippes of Saint Clare

LM: Bonaventure, Major Life of Francis
LM: Bonaventure, Minor Life of Francis
LP: Legend of Perugia
LSS: Legend of the Three Companions
SC: Secrum Commercium
SP: Mirror of Perfection

Julianto Statistica Mexico A. Habig, ed.; St. Francis of Assici: Writings and Early Biographics. English Omcommon subusion the Sources for the Life of St. Francis (Chicago: Franciscan Herald Press, 1973).

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REFLECTION:

Good Grief: A Vowed Perspective MICHAEL DUFFY, O.F.M. CONV.

If one is grieving as a necessary process during one's lifetime why does the 'grief experience' affect one's life so intensely? I truly believe that the grief experience can be a 'rite of passage' if dealt with appropriately. The difficulties of grieving as I see it are experienced by individuals who do not anticipate certain losses, by those who do not allow sufficient time to grieve (or hurry the process). It is my conviction that individuals who embrace Religious Life must anticipate certain life losses, come to grieve these losses and move on in their journey of faith. Individuals, who either deny these losses or never really resolve these losses, are doomed to years

of unhappiness.

Most Religious profess vows of poverty, chastity and obedience. If the above suggested coping paradigm is applied then said individuals who accept this call, and pronounce these vows should anticipate certain losses, namely: loss of free use of money, loss of intimate and sexual contacts, and loss of the final say with submission of one's will as to that of the superior. Then one asks the question: are these necessary losses? Are these losses truly a rite of passage? If one accepts the general assumption that these are methods of dying to one's self so as to dispose oneself to the will of the Lord and therefore place one's self at the service of the faithful, yes!

Unfortunately we have all met, and possibly even lived with the Religious who appears basically discontent and obviously lamenting their life's losses (evidence of grieving). Their vocation poster says, "come and be happy;" their way of life says, "come and grieve what you're giving up with us" or better yet, "come and be depressed with us." And again one asks, why?

Brother Michael holds a graduate degree in gerontological nursing and for the past several years has been involved in the health care of senior friars.

The grief experience necessary to be at peace with the loss has never been allowed to happen or unfortunately become more important than life itself. Yes, one could grieve the loss of a good income, but every Religious knows that every one of their needs will be met and on the first of the month the treasurer will distribute the monthly personal money. It would be nice to have a deep and intimate relationship with another person, but this is not the case. This allows the vowed person to be more available to everyone they meet in their ministry. And it might be added, that without detracting from 'chastity' one can develop a few significant and close relationships. However, some will say "I am a celibate and I can not get close." ...not true! You're simply afraid to get close. And lastly, one can accept the call to be obedient in the context of dialogue. the days of blind obedience are long and hopefully gone forever.

In conclusion I support and reaffirm my conviction that grieving can be a growth process, a necessary process and can help to bring an individual to a more peaceful existence. Religious Life can be an experience of 'good grief!'

Et Valde Mane

Early in the morning, she brought good news to men, and they rejoiced in their good fortune.

That night,
it was to a womanly circle
that she returned,
with tales of the One she loved
and men who
gently believed
what others might disdain.

Mary of Magdala, bearer of the odor of life, trails the perfume of His presence wherever she walks.

Christine Diensberg, OSF

Franciscan "Re-Founding"

ROLAND J. FALEY, T.O.R.

"Refounding" is the catch-word of the day. Recapturing the spirit of the founder has become central to our post-conciliar endeavor in religious life. This article will modestly look at certain features of the Franciscan Tertiary or Penitential tradition and examine the ways in which it might be actualized. It may sound presumptuous to "refound" the Franciscan order. Francis was unique in Catholic history; his imprint on the Order is irrevocable and hardly repeatable. But having said that, we are still called to bring that spirit to life in our time.

Francis was a founder, even if this was not part of his original intent, and he was founder not of one Order, but, with certain modifications, the founder of three. There are certain underlying spiritual principles that characterized Francis as founder. The first and fundamental feature is a belief in a transcendent God. This may sound like laboring the obvious, but it is particularly important to bear in mind today. This means to say that God is not identified with the historical process, even though he is present to it. Prayer for Francis is not exhausted in contemplating the social and historical reality, as important as that is. God remains "other" for Francis, he was contemplated in the market-place but also in the silence of LaVerna. It was God's "otherness" that made the three central mysteries for Francis — the Incarnation, the Passion and the Eucharist — so vital in his approach to God. These mysteries were visible expressions of God's otherness.

Conversion is the central charism of the Third Order tradition. But, beyond that, it was also central to Francis' spirituality. As the Testament states, shortly after the experience of Christ at San Damiano, Francis began to do penance. This is his conversion, ongoing and progressive, which only culminated at the transforming experience of LaVerna toward the end of his life. The earliest designation he gave his followers was

Fr. Roland J. Faley, T.O.R., is Executive Director of the Conference of Major Superiors of Men. He delivered this paper at the awards convocation of the Franciscan Institute, St. Bonaventure University, in July of 1988.

"Penitents of the City of Assisi." (Leg. of Three Companions). He was in a real sense the "refounder" of the already existing order of penance in his day.

This notion of on-going conversion has become so much a part of contemporary spirituality that its relevance for Franciscan "refounding" is inescapable. This continual growth in the dead and risen Lord, as one leaving behind the old person of the flesh, is to be lived with a particular intensity by the members of the Third Order Regular tradition. Eventually with Paul, "it is no longer I that lives but Christ lives in me." In terms of outreach and mission, it is the unconverted in whatever form that may take who should be at the center of the Tertiary vision. We are called to be people on the fringe with those who really do not see themselves as part of God's family. This may well mean pronounced institutional alterations, but so be it. This is but another aspect of our belief that we have here no lasting home.

"The Lord gave me brothers." This Francis says in his Testament to underscore founding as gift. It was not he who was the founder or initiator. There is serious question as to whether or not he originally intended to found a religious Order. Drawing on an already existing religious movement, he informed his first followers to be identified simply as "Penitents." Re-foundation must almost certainly be an inspiration, a "creating something new." It does not grow out of simple discontent or future planning. It is pure gift, the design of God and the re-founding person must be totally submissive to the Lord's voice. The spiritual posture must be one of continual discernment.

In the Franciscan tradition, the re-founding is not determined by ministry. There is no specific Franciscan apostolate. Francis clearly stated that he simply wanted to live literally the Gospel call; ministry was to emerge in different ways according to the needs of the time and place. What is particularly true of the Franciscan call is that it appears in what we are, not what we do. For the Third Order Regular tradition, this means living the spirit of ongoing conversion of life in a variety of ministerial expressions.

Levels of Response

How is a re-founding spirit brought to a religious institute or Province? The answer to this question must be tempered by a healthy dose of realism. Some members may desire a deep and radical reform. Others, perhaps the majority, will see their lives as totally valid, a life of generous service, which does not require any profound change.

Those who feel called to a deeper living of the Gospel life may be

moved by an authentic Franciscan spirit. If after a process of discernment, the superior is inclined to see the re-founding spirit as authentic, it should be allowed to happen. If it succeeds, it can do nothing but bring blessings to the institute; if it fails, "it is better to have loved and lost than never to have loved at all."

However, when a "re-founding" community is allowed to be launched, the rule of the superior is vital. It is she or he who must serve as a bridge between the new community and the institute or province. The superior is the bridge, maintaining close ties with the "re-founding" community and interpreting the experience to the larger body. The task of the superior is as vital as it is difficult. One wonders which is more important to the life of the institute — the new community or the interpreting superior.

But what about the larger membership which is not about to make a new departure? Even then small steps forward can be taken. One thinks of the story of the man who sought counsel from his priest after being beaten up repeatedly for cheating at cards and then being thrown out of the window. Since there was little likelihood that he would stop cheating, the priest counseled him to play cards only on the first floor. Every community can be encouraged to take measured steps forward. One cannot over-estimate the importance of creative local leadership. Community can always be strengthened; a simpler, even if not austere, lifestyle can be implemented; greater openness in terms of welcoming outsiders can be encouraged. New ministries of service to the emarginated can be provided.

Ministries today offer interesting ways to bring charism to life. Tertiaries Regular were originally known as members of the Order of Penitents. Today this Order known also as the Order of Penitents, has been revived in modern times in parish ministry. It is a program and ritual for the reinsertion of people separated from the Church for a long period of time. It parallels the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults and centers around a spiritual and psychological re-entry into the Church. The parish community accompanies the penitent on his/her journey in a catechesis that is well adapted to penance and communal needs. This is a program currently in use in well over one hundred U.S. parishes and is ideally suited to Franciscans, especially in the Tertiary tradition.

Finally, the Third Order Regular can never lose sight of its lay origins. The Order of Penance was basically a lay movement, pre-dating Francis, to which he brought a "re-founding" spirit. It was only by ecclesiastical decision and historical circumstances that secular and regular Penitents (Tertiaries) went distinct ways.

Today bonding with the laity has become a very distinctive feature of religious life. The spirituality of the religious institute is shared; cooper-

ation in ministry is accented; the life itself is shared. Tertiary Franciscans, both religious and secular, should find this a moment to recapture a century old unity of spirit and charism. Ways can be explored to join together much more effectively; outdated structures will have to give way to new creative models. This is bound to bring new vitality to religious life.

"Re-founding" is much to the fore today. But if it is to be more than a slogan, there must be concrete steps to bring the concept to life. A few are suggested here. There are certainly others as well. Even modest steps are important; they move us away from a "business as usual" mentality. Leadership in religious life is called to be innovative and challenging. The opportunities to do so are certainly present today. Ω

The Last Supper as Art

Three tables, sir? Together or separate? You're rushed, you say? Yes, I expected you Friday night. Most of them celebrate Passover the night before. Too bad Passover falls on the Sabbath this year. Bad for business, but good for assasinations. Excuse me. I didn't mean to ramble. Lamb for dinner? Of course. Will the house wine do? My God, why have you forsaken me. Head waiter! Is there an artist here who can paint this scene? Do you have souvenir menus? What will tomorrow bring? It might even be tonight. Judas is anxious. John is anxious. The others are drinking.

Let's remember the good times. What's the worst that could happen. The cross. They won't even be there. Waiter! Do you have souvenir menus? Alright, remember this bread and wine. This is my body and blood. Tonight is tomorrow. I'll just change the clocks. Yes, but is it art? It could be worse. I could drag them all down with me. I remember the Eight Beatitudes. Now, that sermon was art. Excuse me for rambling. I must make the first move. There are things to be done tonight.

Fr. Patrick Leary, O.F.M.

Joy in Fullness: A Lectio with St. Bonaventure

GREGORY SHANAHAN, O.F.M.

The Sermons of St. Bonaventure are ideally companionable with various forms of biblical meditation; (see The Cord 1987, Nov. 302-312; Dec. 334-342). This is particularly true for those sermons which the Saint later selected for revision and which contain many of his favorite themes. When he was halfway through his generalate, Bonaventure seized an opportunity to collect and revise a certain number of his Sunday sermons and, evidently, perfect them as models for other preachers. Did he perhaps imagine that, while homiletic styles and tastes would change over the centuries, he was also in fact laying out deep biblical reflections for those who at a later time would not only seek through the Word to improve the quality of their lives but come to contemplation? Going on what he had said about the dispositions required of preacher, teacher and listener (in e.g., Luke Commentary prologue and Breviloquium prologue; see The Cord Jan. 1987, 5-13), we might well believe that such was his purpose, at least implicitly. Given also his mystical turn of mind, he is never content to preach to us merely on the overhauling of conduct; he leads us to penetrate the Word so as to enter somehow the hidden mystery of Christ and experience the working of the Spirit in our souls.

Be that as it may, if with the Seraphic Doctor we re-read the gospel text in this collection of his sermons we shall have the "essential" Bonaventure for guide, if only because these discourses are suffused with his theology and in line with the doctrine contained in his other works. And all the great features appear: by his use of triads he will remind us of the all-pervading Trinity; and by his emphasizing the saving mediation of Jesus he will confront us with the centrality of Christ. This article simply

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looks at five out of this collection of fifty sermons. The five cover the Sundays after Easter (or, as we would say, of Easter) and each takes its theme-text from St. John's gospel; together they form a crescendo leading to Pentecost. It is as though we were in the company of the Risen One, with time to ponder the gospel promises, to view with new eyes all he said while he was with the disciples (and, as Bonaventure says expressly, "in them, with us also") in bodily presence. Rather than select one of these sermons and translate it in toto, we shall comment on all five, paraphrase their key sections and translate certain paragraphs.

Low Sunday LIFE

Theme-text

The disciples were glad when they saw the Lord John 20:20

The joy with which the risen Lord filled the Apostles has the quality of permanence. They had left all to follow him; they sorely missed him, even if his absence was short enough. Now he is their living God, with them once again. Spiritual joy, however, is not achieved by humans without filial reverence first being practiced. In other words, as contemplation is reached through the degrees of prayers, so has gladness to be prepared for in stages.

For this reason let us arrange in right order the words that are written. First comes subjection in reverent humility; it is contained in the word, disciples — not masters, not controllers, not partners. Next comes contemplation of the divine majesty, implied by, when they saw the Lord. Thirdly, the solace of interior joy is conveyed by, were glad.²

Bonaventure's treatment of the short pithy phrase and single words can be truly helpful for prayerful reflections on certain passages of Scripture. Often we need "anchor" words during the process of centering in otherwise "wordless prayer sessions. Multiple meaning and image suggestion is probably of more value to lectio divina where elements of study (broadly speaking) and prayer often coalesce or at least succeed each other. Thus in the text lest we pass over the word disciples (see The Cord Nov. 1987, 304, for the alternate meanings, pupil, follower, herald), our attention is drawn to the implications of discipleship. A disciple is obediently willing to undertake poverty and renunciation (a prerequisite of discipleship in Luke 14:33). A disciple is a person with generous neighbour-love (a "covenanted" charity in John 13:34-35, mandatory as disciples' creden-

tials). A disciple perseveres in good already begun; "continuing in" Christ's word, something which leads to truth and liberation, being a mark of authentic discipleship in John 8:31-32.

The first way the disciples saw the Lord was as shining forth in the attributes of the created universe. The Scriptures (e.g. Wisdom 13:1-9; Romans 1:20) testify to the Creator being somehow knowable through his creatures. This is in line with Bonaventure's philosophy of the Analogy of Being and the doctrine of Exemplarism which so much permeates his thought. The next manner in which they saw the Lord was when he appeared bearing his wounds. This, Bonaventure says, was to prove the identity of the wounded Redeemer and the risen Redeemer. The wounds are referred to as scars (cicatrices) and their retention by the resurrected Lord is meant to strengthen faith. St. Gregory is quoted as saying that Thomas, who hesitated before believing, in actual fact helped him more than Mary Magdalen did, who believed at once; because Thomas, by touching the scars, amputated the wounds of doubt in our hearts. The implication in this part about the glorified Savior still bearing the scars is that marks of defeat and cruelty can be transformed by God into things which are no longer hideous but beautiful. We may believe that our trials are changed into everlasting records of triumph. And all of it means that the Master has pity and feeling for his shaken disciples. Lastly, the disciples saw the Lord in their own conscience, saw him in his role as universal king (= ruler, unifier, benefactor) and remunerator from heaven. But conscience must be purified for this vision, since it is the pure of heart who shall see God. Is purgation of conscience alone sufficient for the vision of God? No. There must also be withdrawal from worldly attachments; there must be a "taking time out", such as is enjoined by Psalm 45:11 - Be still, and know that I am God. This may even demand a withdrawal from (the heretofore helpful) imagination and from reasoning of a philosophical nature.

The third element of this sermon's text is, were glad, and this denotes the solace which disciples derive from an interior, spiritual pleasure. It is a "sapiential" joy nobody can experience without being illumined by the Son's wisdom, being adopted as son by the Father's power, and, finally, being filled with the pleasures the Holy Spirit gives. Apostles, and those who imitate them, derive inner joy first from the knowledge and love of truth which faith affords. Joy also comes from knowing that "our names are written in heaven," that life hereafter is guaranteed and permanent. Ultimately, interior joy comes with actually tasting the divine consolations when all yearning shall have been satisfied. Here is a glimpse of the prince of Mystics at his best. Is it not remarkable that he should

wish to share such rare experiences in a sermon?

They were glad superessentially when desiring reached its goal and their tasting was the sweet taste of the divine, Isaiah speaks of it: Rejoice with Jerusalem in joy, all you who mourn over her, that you may suck and be satisfied with her consoling breasts; that you may drink deeply with delight (66:10-11). Those who wish to reach the height of contemplation must first experience the weeping of penance while still in the active state. For when this is done, the contemplative soul will suck from the consoling breasts of the Holy Spirit such sweetness of grace that it will be so utterly and completely drenched as to be lifted above what is human and into the heavenly world. And at such a height it will even hover over itself and be something other than its own self (!), and dance a dance of the heart with such happiness and delight that it will appear to be drunk rather than sober. Indeed, Sacred Scripture sometimes uses the word "taste" for this sweet experience and sometimes calls it "inebriation."

O God, if a tiny drop,³ falling from this great torrent of pleasure, upon a human soul, inebriates it so perfectly, what shall we say of the soul when it is absorbed and inebriated by the very ocean of infinite happiness! If therefore the soul is so completely melted, edulcorated and rendered happy by just one drop, in a way that is beyond expression or description, how very much less can the deep in its entirety be known! And so, as Chrysostom says: "Let us rejoice over the gifts we obtain, the greatness of them, those we receive here and those we still wait for.⁴

Second Sunday After Easter GOOD

Theme-text:

I am the good shepherd.

The good shepherd lays down
his life for his sheep John 10:11

The goodness of their Lord is manifold in the experience of the Apostles. He is the Good Shepherd who teaches them, nourishes them with living bread, and guards them. The paschal mystery it is that affords them full realization of all this. There is a lovely introduction on the shepherding aspect of the Incarnation. One sheep, or portion of his flock, the human portion, has strayed. The Son of God puts on the "shepherd's coat" of human flesh and goes to search for it. Meanwhile, the angelic portion of his flock is secure in the happiness of the Father's home. It is the Shepherd's intention to rescue the stray and bring it back safely. In all this, Christ is the model for all who are in the pastoral ministry, especially prelates.

Our Lord Jesus Christ, Shepherd both of the Church triumphant and the Church in earthly struggle, like any good pastor, having lost the human portion of his flock, settles the angelic flock in the wilderness where they have the joys of heaven. Then he puts on the garment of human flesh and purposely goes in search of the lost sheep until such time as he finds it, in a cleft where demons dwell. To free it from their biting attacks he runs the risk of bodily death; for he wishes to take the sheep he has found and rescued, and bring it back home to the heavenly fold and set it down among the flock of the angels where, there in glory, all is peaceful.

A good pastor must first keep watchful guard over his flock. Then he must put a generous heart into the way he provides it with warmth or feeding. After that, since the sheep are his own, he should be discreet and prudent with the expenditure involved in caring for them. In the text above, Christ is presented as one to be admired and praised for the practice of all three: the vigilant concern he brought to his pastoral duties, the breadth of benevolence in leaving himself open to bodily harm, a shepherd's greatest sign of love in the defence and rescue of his flock when he lays down his life for it and risks bodily death; the prudent discernment shown in defending and setting free the flock that is his own, not a stranger's — for his sheep, that is, those that have become his, resembled him through imitation, unlike those of a stranger that have followed the unfaithful path of error.²

Bonaventure, never straying far from philosophy, categorizes the works of pastoral care. A good shepherd is one that instructs by means of preaching, thus enlightening the understanding; nourishes sacramentally, thus satisfactorily feeding our affectivity; and invigorates us through personal presence and effective attentions. Pastorally (in a theological sense), preaching must be backed up with life example. Both the teaching and life of Christ are to be imprinted on the hearts of prelates (and preachers) like the impression of a seal on wax, so that by word and example together, these can be transferred to their charges. There is a distinction to be made between teaching (docere) and instruction (erudire) and between knowledge (scientia) and learning (doctrina): broadly speaking, teaching and knowledge pertain to the verbal transmission of content; whereas instruction and learning are the practical results of a teaching supported by example. Yet, preaching by itself is not complete shepherding. Humankind also needs to be nourished sacramentally, since the sacraments are the privileged means by which the Word incarnate restores us through grace. Moreover, the shepherd has not finished his work until he has personally visited all his sheep and attended to the wounded among them. This is his pastoral visitation of mercy and its immediate purpose may be the healing of the broken and injured; but its long-term purpose is the consolidation of the entire flock in the unity of faith.

One of the paragraphs of this sermon is reminiscent of Bonaventure's mysticism of the Sacred Wounds and the Heart of Christ (Cf. The Tree

of Life. 8th Fruit, 30). Its inspiration is the second element of the text, he lays down his life, which marks, according to the seraphic doctor, the breadth of Christ's generous love in the giving up of his bodily life 1) to ransom captive humans, 2) to inflame the tepid by means of love, and 3) to animate the timid by inviting them to imitate him.

He laid down his life to prove his extraordinary love and thereby rekindle the tepid. And by this we know the charity of God, that he laid down his life for us (1 John 3:16). In John's Gospel, too, this is stated: No one can show greater love than by laying down his life for his friends (15:13). The powerful love of God's Son is symbolized by the behavior of certain aquatic creatures which Ambrose writes about in his Hexaemeron: "There are certain sea-beasts which, when they sense the coming of an attack upon their young, immediately open their insides and take their offspring safely in. They carry them like that until they bring them to a safe place, or else they protect them with their own bodies" (PL 14,209 A) Thus did Christ, as proof of his powerful love, will to have his hands and feet opened and to have an aperture made in his side; thus would he take us into the tender core of his charity and guard and defend us from the evil foe.

And for this reason, dearly beloved, when the wiles of the devil arise, enter into the rock (Is 2:10), that is, Christ, and lay out your meditations, thought and affections; for the devil can never be better vanquished than by a remembrance of the passion of Christ. "None of the demons," as Bernard says, "can endure seeing the sword that was his downfall." So, when you are tormented by temptation, especially temptation of the flesh, hide in the dug out earth, 6 that is, the body of Christ which so many wounds have dug into — not as though he were physically there with you, but through continuous meditation. Whatever you lack, take from the inner heart of Christ. For like a cluster of grapes put through the winepress, there is no lack of streams of grace flowing from his bodily wounds. Let these stimulate you and make you strong, and you will easily triumph over the devil's wiles, the harassments of the world and the enticements of the flesh."

Third Sunday After Easter JOY

Theme-text

The world will rejoice; you will be sorrowful, but your sorrow will turn into joy John 16:20

Before departing, Christ warns his disciples against the false joys of the world. He promises that their sadness, like his own at the end of his earthly life, will be converted into a permanent joy. The religious spirit of the Apostles is contrasted with the perilous ways of the world. According

to Scripture (1 John 2:16) certain human delights are unlawful and perilous, such as fall under the headings, sensuality, lust and greed. Steering clear of these, the Apostles are still faced with tribulations and sadness, admittedly of a temporary nature. The sadness will stem from, 1) a contrite recalling of their own sins, 2) thinking about the passion of their Lord, and 3) loss of his bodily presence among them. Each of these sorrows, however is earmarked for conversion into a consolation. Thus contrition for sins will mean escape from eternal death; memory of the passion will be rewarded by meeting with the Lord in heaven; and meanwhile, sorrow at the removal of his presence is obliterated by the happy vision of "resurrected wisdom."

Meditation on the Passion is an extremely frequent subject in the Bonaventurian writings; yet there is a variety of treatment. In this sermon, the *lectio* of John 16:20 sends us off to other parts of the Bible, so that we are given a view of the wholeness of God's word. Paragraph 8 becomes a commentary on Psalm 41, certain verses of which are given a repeated *lectio*..

They experienced the sadness of sore compassion as they meditated on the Lord's passion. It was as in Psalm 41:3.5.7. — I have no food but tears, day and night; and all day long they say to me, "Where is your God?" Why so downcast, my soul, why do you sigh within me? The reply comes a little further down: Deep is calling on deep as your cataracts roar. Every true Christian, when told by the preacher that your God was cruelly lacerated on the cross, shamefully mocked and vilely debased, should redouble sorrowful utterances and pour out wider torrents of tears, so as to be able to say with loval David: I have no food but tears, day and night; and all day long they say to me. 'Where is your God?' But then, out of a very great sense of wonder at such kindness shown, one should examine oneself and ask, Why so downcast, my soul, why do you sigh within me? Then one ought to make this reply to oneself: Deep, that is, the depth of Christ's passion, is calling on deep, that is, the depth of Christian compassion. For the reality of what a Christian professes depends on Christ, and one ought to express oneself accordingly and not otherwise. Cataracts roar, like a sea of troubles; all your waves, your breakers, that is to say, reproaches, pains and torments, which through inexpressible compassion now turn back on my own person, so that I experience them in Christ Jesus, flooding over me. Paul had this kind of sadness constantly; he said: I bear on my body the marks of the Lord Jesus (Galatians 6:17) - just as all the Apostles did. Through unmitigated sadness in sorrowful compassion with the Lord's passion, they were transformed into an image of the Crucified by a process of "conformation."8

Fourth Sunday After Easter TRUTH

Theme-text

When the spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth John 16:13

The Holy Spirit of Truth, while also supplying for Christ's physical absence, will fill disciples with love, vigor and light. He is described as most kindly (*benignissimus*) because unlike other masters, he is willing to come among his disciples (= pupils). He is most noble, because of his personal dignity as the Holy Spirit. He is most generous, with his overflowing supply of doctrine.

When the Spirit of truth comes... In Latin the first element of the text is in fact When comes (Cum venerit). This affords the preacher an opportunity to point out the various ways in which the Spirit comes to us. He comes in three capacities: medicus (physician for the sick), magister (teacher of the ignorant) and rex (king to enrich the poor with gifts).

In the first place (the spirit) comes as the medical doctor with all possible experience in conferring life both spiritual and corporal. O how skilled this doctor is, one who gives both spiritual and bodily life to the dead and cures every ailment — with no searing-iron, no burning, not a word of incantation, but solely with his will and good pleasure! Hence, Ezekiel says (37:P9): Come, Spirit, and breathe upon these slain that they may live, live, that is, after the death of sin, through the conferring of grace. For as the body is a dead thing without the soul, so is the soul without the Holy Spirit.

Secondly, he comes as teacher of the whole of wisdom, to impart beneficial doctrine. He himself is the fontal principle of all Christian knowledge and spiritual doctrine, whether it be prophetic or apostolic, pertaining to the New or the Old Law. And so, says the Book of Wisdom (7:7), I prayed, and understanding was given me; I entreated, and the Spirit of Wisdom came to me. I esteemed her more than sceptres and thrones; compared with her, I held riches as nothing. The Holy Spirit, even though liberal and bountiful in giving, is still cautious and discreet in distributing. So, if anyone asks some great favor of him, certain suitable dispositions are required. That is why I prayed is there — a strong loving desire. And, I entreated — with devotion in prayer. Then, understanding was given me — that is, a sense of discretion and prudence. And the Spirit came to me, the illuminating Spirit of Wisdom. And I esteemed her more than all temporal things, since they are nothing, compared with her.

And even if Scripture said nothing about this, experience would teach us that a world of "things" brings no satisfaction to the longings of a rational soul; people when they have got everything, only become more ardently

acquisitive. Nothing is clearer than that all this gaining and possessing has more hollowness and want about it than substance and sufficiency. The craving never stops, because it never finds anything to hold on to. The Spirit of Wisdom, however, lends completion to the entire soul and keeps it in control as well; the Spirit inebriates the soul in such wise that, in all its activities, its conduct is sober.

The third mode of the Spirit's coming is as king with unlimited wealth to remove all want. In the Acts of the Apostles (2:2.4): A sound came from heaven like the rush of a mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And this is followed by, they were all filled with the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit filled and enriched the Apolstles with powers, gifts, endowments, so that they lacked nothing as he established them as heirs and kings of the kingdom of heaven and princes of the Christian faith. He it is who lifts up from the ground of avarice both the greedy and the needy, and raises from the dungheap of uncleanness the sinner as well as the pauper; so that made splendid with the real riches of grace, they might sit with the apostolic princess and occupy a glorious throne in the heavenly fatherland.

Fifth Sunday After Easter FULLNESS

Theme-text

Ask, and you will receive, that your joy may be full John 16:24

The text chosen is taken to mean that suitable preparations must be made by the recipients-to-be of divine goodness. What we (in them) must prepare for is to be at the receiving end of God's affluent generosity which will, in its own time, certainly take effect. As usual the text is divided into three elements. (While this division determines the structure of the sermon itself, it also happens to supply a plan for meditation).

Ask: preparation for the reception of grace must be done a) sincerely (a right conscience declining evil), b) prudently (with discernment in choosing good, and c) confidently (with a sure hope in the future).

You will receive: Three gifts, corresponding to the three grades of preparation, are received: a) a clear guide from wisdom directing the soul toward the *rational*, b) precious grace enriching the soul and thus fitting it for what is *desirable*, and c) solid constancy corroberating the soul in regard to the *irascible*. ¹⁰ By means of these three the soul is configured in all its powers to the blessed Trinity.

That your joy may be full: The perfection of all gladness consists in the triple joy of glory: rejoicing at the unfolding of original truth, rejoicing

in the peaceful enjoyment of supernal deliciousness; rejoicing perpetually in the firm tenure of divine immobility.

The first thing the saints will rejoice over is the open vision of First Truth. You will fill me with gladness and joy in your presence (Psalm 15:11). The soul will be filled with a great gladness, a great joy when it sees God face to face; this being a mode of vision which no error can blur, unlike the way we see a confused reflection in a mirror. As Augustine says in De Trinitate: "Without any difficulty we shall see Truth and enjoy it thoroughly in all its clarity and certainty; nor shall we seek to know anything by mental reasoning, for we shall perceive by contemplating." And likewise in Isaiah it is said: At the sight your heart will rejoice (66:14).

These sermons within Eastertide bring us to the threshold of Pentecost. The Pentecost sermon in this collection (Bougerol, Sermo 27) takes its text from Job; in a sense therefore, it stands on its own. Likewise, the sermon for Easter Sunday, taking a verse of Psalm 3 for text, stands on its own. In between come five sermons based on texts from the Johannine gospel. They somehow constitute a little *corpus* in themselves, a rich mine of Paschaltide reflection on Christ as vivifier and donor, who in his resurrection exercises a centripetal force upon the temporarily dispersed and shattered disciples. These sermons trace a path through the gospels, sifting the cohesive promises of Christ. They thus can have the effect of reinforcing our faith, as we read and pray, and of preparing us for the reception of the Spirit of all truth and for the happiness of eternal live.

Footnotes

¹Jacques Guy Bougerol, O.F.M. in 1977 published a critical edition of 50 Sunday Sermons [Sancti Bonaventurae Sermones Dominicales. (Bibliotheca Franciscana Scholastica Medii Aevi, XXVII), Grottaferrata]. (Reference: Bougerol). The edition used 21 MSS, or 15 more than were used for Tome IX of the Quaracchio Opera Omnia, (reference: IX). The 50 were found to be a collection in their own right, (differing at times importantly, though not extensively, from the text of IX); a selection made by Bonaventure and Mark of Montefeltro, his secretary, in 1267 - 1268. In the 5 sermons treated in this article the variants are few.

²Bougerol, 289, lines 9-16. (IX, 289).

³The Bougerol edition has scintilla (= spark) which makes no sense in the context; IX, 291 has stilla (= drop). A copyist, writing from dictation, could easily take Ideo, si Deus modica stilla (IX) to be O Deus, si modica scintilla (Bougerol).

⁴John Chrysostom, sermon Gaude Sion. PL Suppl. IV, 771-772.

⁵Bougerol, 296-297, lines 1-19. (IX, 293-294).

⁶The reference to St. Bernard should be rather to the Pseudo-Chrysostom

(Opus imperfectum), PG 56, 896. Modern translations of Is 2:10 have "hide in the dust" for abscondere in fossa humo (Vulgate).

⁷Bougerol, 300-301, lines 132-157. (IX, 295).

⁸Bougerol, 306-307, lines 101-124. (IX, 307). In this passage there is a play on the words *gemere* (to sigh, lament) and *geminare* (to double, repeat) — but only in IX.

⁹Bougerol, 310-311, lines 36-37. (IX, 309-310). At the beginning of this paragraph, the physician (i.e. the Spirit) is said to come with "not a word of incantation"; whereas the Quaracchi edition has, sed solo curationis verbo ("but solely with a word of cure").

¹⁰When the "irascible" is dealt with in psychology it is not, strictly speaking, connected with the emotion of anger from the moral viewpoint. It means the faculty of "unyielding sturdiness" or "sturdy pugnacity." In the sermon, Bonaventure uses the philosophical term but applies it theologically to represent the power of spiritual resistance, as in Eph 6:13 — Take the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day.

¹¹PL 42, 1092.



Easter Vigil

A wooden match is struck and sputters softly while its sulphur burns off, the only light in brisk April's pre-dawn darkness.

By its flame a fuel-drenchd cluster of crumpled papers and twigs is ignited and instantly blazes.

The new fire alternately displays the assembled mass of faces, among them that of an ancient man with downcast eyes and unconscious scowl.

It reveals in his furrowed visage despair, deep, widespread, and malignant despair, despair antithetical to the hope of the occasion.

He will know only Passiontide, unrelieved, until, his exhausted body and despondent soul finally surrendering,

his flame of temporal existence at long last extinguished, he is, to his utter astonishment, rekindled in eternity.

Joseph Molleur, S.S.J.E.

St. Francis and Evangelization FR. JOHN HARDING, O.F.M.

St. Francis lived in a time of great upheaval. A long period of dormancy had come to an end and, in both society and church, great changes were afoot. In society there was an injection of new life as people moved from an agrarian to a city and town based life. The economies of Europe were experiencing a general recovery and this was coupled with the growth in trade and mobility. In virtually every aspect of life there was something new. Within the church there was a general awakening to a wider and less settled world. Social change brings much good but also many new problems. The church had to adapt or be left behind.

It was into such a fluid situation that St. Francis was born. He had the new spirit in this blood! His "conversion experience" must be understood against this turbulent background. God raises new apostles for every age to assist his church to carry out more effectively its ageless mission: to proclaim the gospel. St. Francis was God's gift to the church of his day and, since God does not repent of his gifts, St. Francis can rightly be seen as God's gift to his church for all the ages which came afterwards.

What did St. Francis do that was so powerful a force in his day and has remained so ever since?

The answer to this question is perfectly simple: He set out to live the Gospel. It is because it is so simple that we find it so hard to grasp! We are not used to such simplicity and are totally disarmed by it. This is the genius of God's grace in St. Francis. But unless we do seek to lay a hold on this, we as Friars Minor will never be able to fulfill our own mission effectively.

Fr. John Harding has given retreats and conferences for religious and laity throughout the United Kingdom, in Africa, and in continental Europe. He has published in various theological and spiritual reviews, including The CORD. He hopes to return to Zambia, Africa in 1989 to resume teaching Franciscan studies in Livingstone.

How did St. Francis live the Gospel?

St. Francis was a man of his time. He was filled with the "spirit of the age" he lived in. Because this was so, he could readily understand that to live and proclaim the Gospel it must be done in a manner which accords with the realities of people's lives. Thus he became convinced that the eternal Gospel of Jesus Christ must be incarnated in the here-and-now. He became a new "Apostle of Christ" (I Cel 101); a new "Minister of the Gospel" (I Cel 7); a new "Preacher of the Kingdom of God and penance" (I Cel 22-23); and a new "Proclaimer of peace" (Test).

It was not long before he attracted followers. These he saw as given by God to be cooperators in the single mission which was to live and proclaim the Gospel. St. Francis saw that to do this effectively demanded that his whole way of life had to change. He saw that he must attend not only to the teachings of Jesus but also to the life of Jesus with his Apostles. Jesus lived his life "on the road." He had no fixed dwelling and was himself a "stranger and pilgrim" in the world. Jesus had but one purpose: to do the will of his Father even if it should cost him his very life. St. Francis determined that he and those whom God had sent to him would do just this. They would have no fixed place and they would be as "strangers and pilgrims" in the world.

St. Francis' way of life, then, marked a radical shift from the long established patterns of religious life. Up to now the monastery was the centre of religious life and was recognized as such by both church and society. The monastery was the sign of stability and order. It spoke of the whole spirituality of being 'set apart from the world.' St. Francis came to see that this form of religious life could not of itself meet the new demands of evangelization in a world which was far from stable and ordered. The monastery functioned well in an agrarian world but not in a world where people were constantly on the move, lived in towns and cities and lived off trade and commerce. He thus discerned that a new form of religious life was called for. This would be based not on a place but on the experience of fraternity. In other words, what was needed was not more monasteries but more brotherhood. The idea of fraternity is all important. But what sort of fraternity?

The fraternity he established was based squarely on the model of Jesus and his Apostles. Their life together forms the rock on which St. Francis and his companions built their own life.

Jesus and his Apostles were mendicants — they had no place to call their own. The whole world was both their home and their mission field. So too, for St. Francis and his companions, there would be no fixed place. The only home they would have is within their own brotherhood (see the mystical text: Sacrum Commercium).

Living the Gospel is what matters. This applies to every friar no matter what form of work he is doing. It is not the work itself that is important but the manner in which it is done. The Order of Friars Minor is not defined by any particular work. It is defined by living the Gospel. Never before, since the Apostles, had anyone thought of this as a realistic form of life! Was it possible to actually live the Gospel? This was the question put more than once to St. Francis. He was often advised to choose another path or the Rule of an already established Order. His answer was firmly NO. The fundamental charism of our life is exactly this: to live the Gospel. This is also our basic apostolate.

Both the Rule of 1221 and the Rule of 1223 resolutely hold to this. Never before had a Religious Founder taken the Gospel itself as the form of life. St. Francis was not just concerned to preach the Gospel as one of his daily activities. He was more concerned that people everywhere should see that it is possible to live the Gospel — that the Gospel of Jesus Christ is not just a set of propositions which can be taken or left aside at will. It is a way of life that is totally demanding. Those who hear his Word must take it to heart and live by it. This is evangelization.

To be evangelizers we have first to be evangelized. The apostolate is not simply a series of activities from which we retire to pray and recreate. There is no distinction between living the Gospel and proclaiming the Gospel. The one depends wholly on the other. Life itself is the apostolate. As the Apostles lived in close union with Christ, as his family, his intimate brothers, so St. Francis saw that it was his task to live in the same close union and it is this which he sought to impart to his companions and to the whole world. This life sees no fundamental distinction between prayer and work and fraternity. It is fatal to divide the life into isolated compartments. When St. Francis read the Gospels, he read of a unified life as actually lived by Jesus and his Apostles. This is the life he wanted and the life he actually lived. It is this which made him so new and so attractive for his own time and ever since.

St. Francis saw clearly that Jesus Christ is not only the "man for others" but is firstly "the man for the Other." This means that, for Jesus, the will of the Father comes first and that it was upon this intimate relationship with the Father that Jesus depended for the effectiveness of his mission in the world. St. Francis saw that to walk in the footprints of Jesus Christ after the example of the Apostles involved having this intimate union with the Father before all else since only this could guarantee the effectiveness of his own mission which was to live and proclaim the Gospel. This explains his love for solitary places. The point here being that we learn in our prayer what we later proclaim by our example and preaching. Jesus frequently retired to pray in the desert. Sometimes he went alone, sometimes

with his companions. Always it is prayer which conditions action for prayer makes the action fruitful.

What does it mean to "follow in the footprints"?

We have seen already that, in the first place, it means to have the same desire for intimate communion with the Father, as did Jesus. It means to have the same intimate communion with Jesus, as did the Apostles. It means also to participate in the mission of Jesus — the same mission that he received from the Father. To do this requires that we take up our own cross. It requires that we follow the path of self-emptying that Jesus has mapped out for his disciples. We have to leave all for the sake of the Kingdom: family, friends, houses, wealth, security, and especially our own wills. In other words, we have to take a radical risk on Jesus Christ. This is to live dangerously — we, like Jesus must be prepared to be rejected and despised, disappointed and maybe persecuted. What applies to the master applies also to the disciple. None of these comes easily but the choice has to be made. We must consciously opt for Christ and his Gospel.

Now the important thing here is that all this is done not apart from but within our society. For St. Francis saw that Jesus chose to live and work with and among people even though he knew that the very people he came to serve and save would be the ones who would reject and kill him. This is the cost of living and proclaiming the Gospel. The only way a disciple can endure all this is by living in union with Christ. Thus, for St. Francis prayer, the Sacraments, the Eucharist and the poor are all crucial. We have to learn to live with Christ. We have to learn to go the whole way with him, even to Calvary, if we are to share in his final victory. Not only do we have to learn to live with and follow Christ, we have also to do as he does: proclaim the Gospel of God's Kingdom. We must make the intention of Jesus our own. "I must proclaim the Good News of the Kingdom of God" (Lk 4:43), just as the Apostles made it theirs (cf. Acts).

To "follow in the footprints of Christ" (cf. 1 Peter 2) is to do today what Jesus Christ did while on earth. It is to live anew the whole of the Paschal Mystery. It is to accept the truth of Jesus' words "I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life. No one comes to the Father but through me" (Jn, 4:6). Jesus also told his Apostles "love one another as I have loved you" (cf. Jn. 13: 34-35). It is by taking the life and the teachings of Jesus so seriously that St. Francis was able to penetrate into the true meaning of the Gospel and was able to reveal this to others. He lived the Gospel because he made the Gospel literally his Rule of life. This same Gospel was to be the Rule and life of all who joined his fraternity.

What is our responsibility today as Friars Minor?

Our first task is quite unambiguously to live the life of the Gospel of Jesus Christ after the example of the Apostles. This we must do, not in the narrow ascetical sense, but in the far broader sense of the evangelical mission. By this I mean we are not called simply to live our own private lives of penance and mortification; we are not called to be crypto-monks whose life is dedicated to the liturgy within the confines of the cloister: we are not called to be social do-gooders. Our first calling is to know Christ Jesus and his Father in the Holy Spirit. We are called to pattern our lives (and our fraternities) on the model of Jesus with his Apostles. To do this is not to live the so-called "mixed life" but to live an integratd life of prayer and apostolic activity. We are called to be contemplative apostolic without driving an artificial wedge between contemplation and action. Our life is a unity in diversity. In all the manner of works we undertake we are called to communicate to others the enduring love of God which we have first experienced in Christ and by his Spirit living within and among us as fraternity. We are called to bear witness among people to the truth that it is possible to live the Gospel life and become more human thereby! St. Francis was not made less human because he lived the life of the Gospel. In fact, it is precisely because he did live the Gospel that he became more human, more perfectly a man. This is what is meant by saying he lived a graced existence. His whole life was centered on the truth of God and truth, as we are told, sets us free.

We are called to the life of brotherhood. This tells us that our life is at once unity in diversity and diversity in unity. What do we mean by this? We mean that we do not live our lives as a random sample of individuals who all happen to be doing much the same thing. This is not the fraternal life. Our brotherhood speaks of many dimensions. First, it speaks to us of the community of God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit. The Trinity is perfect unity in diversity and perfect diversity in unity. Each person of the Trinity is unique in relationship with the other and yet each is perfectly at one with the other. This is effected by mutual love in self-giving and receiving. This mystery lies at the very heart of franciscan brotherhood. We are called to the life of fraternity. We are called to relationship. This mystery is disclosed to us by Jesus Christ and is exemplified in the life that Jesus freely chose to share and live with his Apostles. Jesus with his Apostles shows that it is possible to live in union with others without destroying each person's uniqueness. In fact, we only discover our uniqueness in relation to others. We cannot know ourselves apart from knowing others. We are mutually inter-dependent (cf. Jn. 15). Now the Trinitarian

life of God is always out-going. The life of Jesus with his Apostles was always out-going. To say this is to say that true fraternity is always missionary. The more we discover the riches and the depths of this life the more we are moved to share it with others. Our first mission therefore is to live the life of the Gospel and to draw others to do the same. St. Francis constantly sought to do this. He saw the need for universal brother-hood: among his friars, among his sisters, among those who came seeking his guidance whom we call today the Secular Franciscans. But his grasp of the centrality of brotherhood took him beyond these to all those among whom he lived and laboured.

Our first mission therefore is to live the life of the Gospel and to draw others to do the same.

St. Francis saw that such brotherhood could only be genuine christian brotherhood if it is ecclesial in character. The Church is the pilgrim people of God and so he saw that the pattern of the church is itself to be found in the union of Jesus with his Apostles. The fact that the church was in disarray did not deter him from loving it and placing himself and his friars firmly within it. Without the church his conception of brotherhood would simply degenerate into a facile form of humanism and be evacuated of all Gospel character. It could not function except as a mutual benefit society. If you are not for the Church you stand against it. This is the fate of so many other "apostolic movements." The Divine inspiration given to St. Francis was that to renew the Church it was necessary to live the life of the Gospel ("Repair my House") and to communicate this Gospel life to others. We as friars are not called to live simply the poor life, or the chaste life, or the obedient life. The vows we profess are but the means to the all important end which is to live the Gospel life. For too long our order has been torn apart by the futile obsession with how to live the vows. Is it any surprise that the order which is meant to witness to evangelical brotherhood is itself divided into numerous so-called families? If you think about it, it is the worse possible witness we could give to an already divided church and world! The only solution seems to be to take seriously the call to live the gospel. The church and the world have need of such a witness and we are given the task to provide it. What are we doing about it?

St. Francis never criticized the church for he saw that the church is the bride of Christ and his fraternity. Also, he saw that it is the church alone which is entrusted with the task of proclaiming the Good News. Only within the church is it possible to be united with Christ and to fulfil his mandate. The church does not exist for itself but for the whole of humanity. As members of the church, the friars are called to go to the nations to bring the Gospel of Christ to those who hunger for life. This we do by the witness of our fraternity and in the manifold works which the fraternity undertakes. We are called to create the possibility for real brotherhood/sisterhood among all peoples and between all peoples (read St. Francis' Letters!). We do this first by being seen to be brothers and then by inviting others to share this experience of brotherhood. Our brotherhood is our public witness to Jesus Christ and to the Father whom he revealed in the Holy Spirit. No limits can be placed on the field of our witness. We must witness before Christians, those of other Religions, and those of no religion. This is what St. Francis did and it is what Jesus Christ and his Apostles did. The world is our cloister!

As Friars Minor we must be convinced of the value of Gospel Life and live this life joyfully. To live joyfully is to live with unbounded hope. People are instinctively attracted by a life which offers hope, they rejoice in it and thrive on it. We should not deprive them. We are called to proclaim peace by our living in genuine peace with each other and not simply as polite gentlemen who co-exist. Peace is Christ's gift to us for the whole of humanity and indeed creation. Sometimes this is communi-

cated in the witness of presence. This is especially true in those parts of the world where the Gospel cannot be proclaimed verbally. At other times it is proclaimed by preaching and by our apostolic labours. Always

it is proclaimed by our example.

It is a tragedy that so many friars see their life and work in isolation from that of their brothers. Individualism is fatal to the life of Gospel brotherhood. We must learn to overcome this tendency. Our life and our work are inseparable and only make sense within the context of fraternity and within the wider context of the life and work of the whole church, (cf. LM II, 1; 1 Cel 89). Our whole way of life is our primary sermon (cf. Fior 30).

This life of brotherhood, lived within our fraternities, lived within the church, lived within society, flows over to embrace the whole of creation. Every creature becomes our brother and sister for all reveal the grandeur of God and show forth God's abundant generosity and love (cf. CantSol).

Here we have the totality of Gospel brotherhood. To live the life of the Gospel of Jesus Christ after the example of the Apostles is to embrace, and be radically involved in, the fulness of God and God's holy creation. This is our vocation as Friars Minor and nothing should prevent us from living and proclaiming this.

Final Word

St. Francis was clearly a man of his time and place. We too must be men of our time and our place. Yet, like St. Francis we are invited to live and share a form of life which knows no bounds. It is for every age and every person. The more we see this the more effective will our lives and witness become. Our purpose is to live the life of the Gospel of Jesus Christ after the manner of the Apostles. We must therefore have one eye on St. Francis but also one eye on our present. We cannot attempt to re-create the past for this would be anachronistic and counter-productive. We must be wholly centered on God and wholly involved in discerning the "signs of the times" in which today we live. To live the life of the Gospel of Jesus Christ is to please God in all things. This above all else is our vocation.



Book Reviews

St. Francis of Assisi. By Raoul Manselli.
Translated by Paul Duggan.
Chicago: Franciscan Herald Press,
1988. vii-363 pp. \$24.95.

Reviewed by Paul Lachance, O.F.M., St. Francis Retreat House, Oak Brook, Ill.

"Why does all the world seem to be running after you, and everyone want to see you, hear you, and obey you?" This is the question that Brother Masseo asked St. Francis in a well known episode related in the Little Flowers of St. Francis. One can transpose the question and ask: Why are there so many biographies of St. Francis, and why another one?

Each age must invent the present in the light of tradition. Francis of Assisi is the greatest light, after Christ, to illumine the Western Christian tradition. It follows by an inner necessity that repeated and multiple attempts have been and are being made to refract some of the light that "shone on Mt. Subasio" so as to more creatively respond to each passing historical moment. Like cameras zooming in from different angles, and with ever more sophisticated instruments, biographers from the earliest times (Celano, Bonaventure etc.) to the present have tried to capture the essential Francis. Major efforts in this century have not been lacking: Joergensen, Chesterton, Engelbert, Fortini, to mention a few. And in the flurry of publications that surrounded the commemoration of the eighth century of St. Francis' birth (1982), likely, the one that will have the most enduring significance is Raoul Manselli's St. Francis of Assist.

Availing himself of the best of contemporary Franciscan research which in many ways, he spawned, Manselli's intent is to set Francis against the concrete background of his time and grasp the central and inspiring motive of his life and work. The material which he uses to sketch his portrait are Francis' own writings, with particular emphasis on his Testament, the documentation made available by those closest to him, especially as compiled in the Legend of the Three companions, and his own vast knowledge of the religious, social and political reality of the time. So as to remain as historically accurate as possible, Manselli stays clear of Bonaventure and his attempt to place the saint into the framework of a theology of history; departs from Celano whenever the latter twists the facts to fit Francis into his preconceived hagiographical model; eliminates any information which distorts the Poverello's image due to a view of him resulting from the internal contrasts of the order, such as found in the Little Flowers, or, finally, from the progressive embelishment that accompanied the formation of his image and raised it to the level of myth.

What Manselli does best — and he is superb at it — is to weave his sources into and in contrast with the tapestry of the period in which Francis lived. He begins his study by establishing the general historical and geographical

coordinates in which Francis' story was embedded, then he sets its beginnigs within the framework of Assisian society. After tracing the maturation process which led to his conversion, Manselli dissects and highlights its decisive and culminating point: the encounter with the leper. Basing himself on Francis' memory of this experience as synthesized in the Testament Manselli sees in this moment the wellspring from which to construct his main argument: It was not so much the concern for poverty that was pivotal to Francis' conversion but rather the comprehension of human suffering as exemplified by the leper and as illumined by the sufferings of Christ. With this newly found understanding and transformation, Francis chose to pass from one human condition and social class to another. Henceforth. he was to belong with those whom society had abandoned, a reject among rejects. His central intuition was that true joy could be found by following in the footsteps of Christ and sharing the condition of those at the bottom of the so-

Francis' change "from one social condition to another" is the leitmotif around which Manselli constructs his biography. He proceeds to demonstrate how this vision grew and found its concretization in the formation of a brotherhood; its initial approval by Innocent III; the arrival and the deep bond established with Clare; the collision between the ideal and the real as the brotherhood expanded beyond Italy to France, England, Germany, and Hungary; the dialogue with and the role of Cardinal Hugolino and the Roman curia, which according to Manselli, was "a modest one" thus lending a perhaps decisive blow to the Sabatier thesis that Francis' vision had been coopted by ecclesiastical authority; the voyage to the Holy Land and the problems which Francis encountered upon his return; and, finally, the illness of the last years of Francis' life, the stigmata and the composition of the Canticle of Brother Sun. Very helpful reflexions are added on the development of the Rules and the relationship between Francis and his writings.

What Manselli underscores as one of the most characteristic personality traits of Francis is his insistence on the power of example. In the Italian scholar's view, Francis' success in this domain was to provide the ongoing dilemma of his life and give to it its tragic dimensions: How to maintain his chosen status as a humble man at the margins of society and yet be at the head and the source of inspiration for an ever growing and powerful order. That Francis' ideal triumphed Manselli attributes to his "incomparable holiness," the tenaciousness with which he held to his vision, his exceptional organizational ability which knew how to maintain essential values and yet be flexible to adapt to circumstances. These essential values are very precise: "Passage over to the side of the unfortunate, adherence to Christ, and the religious meaning of existence with trust in God." They constitute "the perennial force" of the legacy left by Francis and its challenge to his followers of every age.

The present summary of the Manselli biography does not exhaust the complexity and richness in historical detail with which it is organized. One criticism that can be raised, and which Manselli himself later acknowledged, is the weakness of the development of Francis as mystic, as the poor man filled with awe and wonder at the mystery of the Triune God. This rather serious lacuna does

not, however, take away from the value of his effort. What transpires on every page is the author's great love of Francis. Manselli died in 1984. His St. Francis can be said to be his scholarly testament. Every further study of the Poverello will need to turn to it as obligatory reference.

Paul Duggan is to be commended for his remarkable and faithful translation. The cover design, however, is unfortunate. It is juvenile and belittles the magnitude of the work. It is also hoped that a future edition will contain the scientific aparatus which was promised by Manselli in his introduction to the Italian edition.

Why Bother With Church: A Fresh Approach for Single Catholics. By Greg Friedman, O.F.M. Cincinnati, Ohio: St. Anthony Messenger Press, 1988. Pp. 87, Paper, \$4.95,

Reviewed by Father Michael A. Taylor, OFM Conv., M.Div. Seton Catholic Central High School, Binghamton. New York.

This book deals with the relationship of the young Catholic adult to the Church, on both the local and the unversal levels. Father Friedman writes in a colloquial style, which makes the text very easy to read.

Among the specific issues Father Friedman deals with are the individual's notion of God, friendship with God and friendship with other Christians, the Church as "family," the mission of the Church and why some Catholics, specifically the young adults, might feel alienated from the Church.

Father Friedman is to be commended for his honest and forthright style

of writing since he shares with his readers his own triumphs and struggles as a member of the Church and most personally from his viewpoint as a priest. Ironically, then, the only "negative" aspect of this book stems from the fact that his own experiences as a Christian and a priest are so interesting and personal that the reader sometimes has to remind him/herself of the specific topic that Father Friedman is addressing.

This book is, nonetheless, a very fine little book which does accomplish its goal of helping the young Cahtolic adult come to grips with contemporary issues. With the discussion starters and "personal inventories" at the end of each chapter, this book would be a real asset to those involved in RCIA programs.

The Story of a Life: St. Therese of Lisieux. By Guy Gaucher, translated by Sister Anne Marie Brennan, O.D.C. San Francisco: Harper and Row, 1987. Pp. viii - 228. Cloth, \$13.95.

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

This is a definitive biogrpahy of St. Thérèse, the first major work in decades, and by the foremost authority on her life. It is based on all the Theresian writings which have taken eighty-four years to be published in France, and not all of which have been translated into English. It, therefore, contains many aspects and details of her life not found in previous works. It also contains important photographs, a chapter of the amazing story of her life after her death,

a selection of testimonies, a geneology, and a short bibliography.

This work anticipates the centennial of Thérèse's death, and in it, the author discusses Thérèse as a herald of the twentieth century and how the Second Vatican Council owes much to her prophetic intuitions. She is a teacher and "one day in the near future, might be proclaimed Doctor of the church" (p. 215). "Despite my littleness, I would wish to enlighten souls like the doctors" (p. 215).

Through her notebooks, letters, poems, playlets, and praylets, we see Thérèse living, suffering, joking, loving. Even the security of Carmel's 'desert' did not prevent her struggle with inner trials, vocational doubts, self-concern, and a sea of aridity. She laid low, assured that the sleeping, hidden Jesus was in the boat. The willpower, courage and decisiveness she showed was like a 'piece of steel,' said the late John Paul I (p. 224).

Even as she lay dying she felt the lack of sensitivity from some sisters: "Why are they speaking so much about Sister Thérèse of the Child Jesus; she is not doing anything exceptional. One does not see her practicing virtue, you cannot even say that she is a good nun" (p. 194).

It was Father Alexis Prou, a Franciscan priest, and a replacement retreat master who gave Thérèse peace and hope in 1891. Later, though, when she was next to him in the sacristy. she dared not speak to him more than the one permitted conference. It was this passing priest who "launched me full sail on the waves of confidence and love which held such an attraction for me, but upon which I had not dared to venture" (p. 118). Father Prou had pointed

out a little way that was very direct, very short and totally new. (Another spiritual adviser responded only once to her dozen letters sent over a year period, and her fifty letters sent to him over eight years were never kept).

What happiness to suffer for him who loves us even to FOLLY, and to pass for FOOLS in the eyes of the world. ... Our beloved was MAD to come down on earth looking for sinners to make them his friend... What happiness that he became man so that we might love him, if he had not done so we would not have dared. (pp. 145-46)

In 1907, eighteen years before her canonization, Pius X privately called her 'the greatest saint of modern times.' By 1929 seven volumes comprising some 3,200 pages of an anthology of Thérèse's interventions were published, and now some 1,700 churches are named in her honor.

"My way is all confidence and love, I don't understand souls who are afraid of so loving a Friend" (p. 190). Her little way of full confidence and love in the ordinary, little virtues of everyday life has universal appeal. Her 'loving boldness' and 'brilliant fearlessness' has overwhelmed millions, and from the 'desert' of Carmel her Story of a Soul has become the cloister of millions.

Pius XI saw in her a 'Word of God' addressed to our century. She is also described as 'a shooting star in the sky of holiness' who brought about one of the greatest spiritual revolutions that the Holy Spirit has set in motion in the evolution of mankind.

In this work Therse emerges as a woman of great spiritual strength and creativity. Her short life was a 'giant's journey.'

Turning Points in Religious Life. By Carol Quigley, IHM, Editor, Wilmington, Delaware: Michael Glazier, 1987, 258 pages.

Reviewed by Father Daniel A. Hurley, O.F.M., National Chaplain of the St. Bonaventure University Alumni Association, Instructor in English and Campus Minister at the University.

Here is a "how to" book on Corporate Renewal that can be of interest to members of religious orders and congregations who chafe at some actions of the "official" Church. The Sisters, Servants of the Immaculate Heart of Mary of Monroe, Michigan responded along with the other religious groups of the Catholic Church to the document of the Second Vatican council. Perfectae Caritatis, to renew themselves, to look into their roots, to experiment" (page 7). The members of the congregation took to heart the words of the Council document: "Effective renewal and right adaptation cannot be achieved save with the cooperation of all the members." The personal renewal of the members of the congregation needed to be complemented by a corporate renewal of the Monroe IHM community. The Congregation Chapter of 1982 mandated that corporate renewal. Turning Points in Religious Life contains some of that renewal process, namely talks that were presented to the Sisters during the year 1984. The book is divided into two parts: Part One contains the presentations made and Part Two includes a reflection by each of the four living General Superiors of the congregation.

The four subjects dealt with in parts One of the book are: "Reflections on the History of Religious Life and Contemporary Development" by Sandra Marie Schneiders, IHM: "Toward a Theology of Vows" by Juliana Casey, IHM; "Authority in the Church" by Anthony Kosnik; and "Canonical Status" by Emily George, RSH. The last subject is followed by a response from four sisters, a canon lawyer, an associate pastor, a social scientist and a theologian.

The first presentation includes three lectures by Sister Sandra Marie Schneiders. This part of the book is extremely interesting since a knowledge of the history of religious life is vital for an understanding of religious life today. Sister Schneiders emphasizes that a knowledge of history allows for progress in thought. Without such knowledge, a person cannot understand the present or even imagine the future. A grasp of the changes in religious life that the study of history presents, she states, "helps us to realize that God alone is absolute" (page 38). Sister Schneiders' lectures lead one to the awareness of the profound change the Second Vatican Council has had on our understanding of the meaning of religous life.

As a complement to a history of the religious life, Juliana Casey's presentation, "Toward a Theology of the Vows," clarifies the radical change that the Council has had on the appreciation of the subject of religious life. "Previous to the Council, religious life's emphasis was upon perfection, sanctification of the members" (page 87). Since the Council, "religious have begun to understand themselves and their mission in terms of relationship to a world deeply in need of transformation" (page 87 - 88).

Anthony Krosnik, a priest of the Detroit Archdiocese, deals with "Authority in the Church." Citing biblical sources, Father Kosnik declares that "the au-

thority, that the church has and experiences, must always be seen and understood in relation to its source — Iesus Christ" (pages 137 - 138). As he traces the history of the exercise of authority in the church. Kosnik shows how that exercise became more and more centralized. He claims that "the type of leadership expressed in the early church is best designated by a term which has become common in post-Vatican II terminology 'collegiality' ' (page 137). Kosnik feels that "more recent developments give the impression that there is once again a serious attempt, at the highest administrative levels, to reinforce the hierarchical, secular, legalistic understanding of church authority" (page 161).

Emily George's article on "Canonical Status" gives an historical survey of the relationship of church law to the religious life. Her conclusions are that the church has adapted its laws concerning religious to historical situations; it has recognized the charism of religious institutes; and the church has a tendency to regulate (take control). "This process (of taking control) often was correlative with the socio-historical status of the hierarchical church itself' (page 184). One theme that runs throughout history, says Sister George, "is the bias against women in terms of jurisdiction" (page 185). A final, conciliatory, statement of Sister Emily is as follows: "given the tensions which may arise between one's congregations and church hierarchy, it is imperative that we work to identify obstacles to communication and that we use opportunities for collaboration" (page 187). The four responses

to Sister Emily George's presentation seem to prefer a direction of consultation and collaboration with the church authorities to the course of a break from the church by the seeking of a non-canonical status. Sharon Holland, IHM, the canon lawyer responder, concludes: "(We wonder) whether today's religious are to become a distinct new reality; or perhaps are to foster and encourage new developments within the church, without changing our own identity radically" (pages 193 - 194).

In the Second Part of the book, the four living General Superiors of the Monroe IHM Community express their evaluation of the process of Corporate Renewal. All four women are extremely optimistic about the future of their community. The latest General Superior, Carol Quigley, IHM, the editor of this volume, summarizes this optimism. "Our future will grow out of the present as we read the signs of the times in light of our charism and the gospel, and become leaders in reconciling and peacemaking" (page 250).

Turning Points in Religious Life is a book about one women's religious congregation. It is a serious, detailed account of its examination of "corporate renewal." The contents of this book must be a source of pride and encouragement for the Monroe Immaculate Heart Sisters. This reviewer believes the this book is a resource that other congregations of religious, both men and women, can use with great profit in understanding their role in the post-Vatican II Church as we approach the Twenty-first Century.

Franciscan Studies M.A. Program Summer 1989 Offerings

THE FRANCISCAN STUDIES PROGRAM offers a full schedule of courses in Franciscan theology, history, and spirituality, allowing fulfillment of student interests.

All courses meet in Plassmann Hall, except for those marked with an asterisk next to the days on which they meet. Those so marked meet in Friedsam Memorial Library. Three credit courses meet Monday through Friday. Two credit courses meet Monday through Thursday.

| urse | Title | Cr | . Days | Time | Instructor |
|------|--|--|--|---|---|
| 502 | Sources for the Life of St. Francis | 3 | M-F | 8:30-9:45 | Michael Blastic, OFM Conv., D.Th. |
| 504 | Life of St. Francis | 3 | M-F* | 9:55-11:10 | Maurice Sheehan, OFM Cap., D. Phil. |
| 506 | Survey of Franciscan History | 3 | M-F | 9:55-11:10 | Dominic Monti, OFM, Ph.D. |
| 508 | History of Franciscan Thought | 3 | M-F | 8:30-9:45 | Romuald Green, OFM, Ph.D. |
| 520 | Writings of St. Francis & St. Clare | 2 | M-Th | 11:20-12:25 | Michael Hart, OFM Cap., S.T.L. |
| 552 | The Franciscan Contribution to | | | | |
| | Justice and Peace | 2 | M-Th | 11:20-12:25 | Kevin Mullen, OFM Cap., Ph.D. Cand. |
| 518 | Script. Foundations of Franciscanism | 2 | M-Th | 1:00-2:05 | Jude Winkler, OFM Conv. S.S.L. |
| 561 | Development of Franciscan Person | 2 | M-Th | 1:00-2:05 | Edward Coughlin, OFM,Ph.D. |
| 500 | Method and Bibliography | 2 | M-Th* | 2:25-3:20 | Paul Spaeth, M.L.S. |
| 517 | Introduction to Palaeography | 2 | M-Th | 2:25-3:20 | Girard Etzkorn, Ph.D. |
| 539 | | 2 | M-Th | 2:25-3:20 | David Couturier, OFM Cap., Ph.D. |
| 560 | Advanced Graduate Seminar: | | | | |
| | Understanding Francisc, Art: An In- | | | | |
| | troduction to Francisc. Iconography | 2 | M-Th | 7:00-8:00 (evening) | Servus Gieben, OFM Cap Ph.D. |
| | 504 506 508 520 552 518 561 500 517 539 | Sources for the Life of St. Francis Life of St. Francis Survey of Franciscan History History of Franciscan Thought Writings of St. Francis & St. Clare The Franciscan Contribution to Justice and Peace Script. Foundations of Franciscanism Development of Franciscan Person Method and Bibliography Introduction to Palaeography Spirit. Direct. & the Franc. Tradition Advanced Graduate Seminar: Understanding Francisc. Art: An In- | 502 Sources for the Life of St. Francis 3 504 Life of St. Francis 3 506 Survey of Franciscan History 3 508 History of Franciscan Thought 3 520 Writings of St. Francis & St. Clare 2 552 The Franciscan Contribution to Justice and Peace 2 518 Script. Foundations of Franciscanism 2 501 Development of Franciscan Person 2 502 Method and Bibliography 2 517 Introduction to Palaeography 2 518 Spirit. Direct. & the Franc. Tradition 2 519 Advanced Graduate Seminar: Understanding Francisc. Art: An In- | 502 Sources for the Life of St. Francis 3 M-F 504 Life of St. Francis 3 M-F 506 Survey of Franciscan History 3 M-F 508 History of Franciscan Thought 3 M-F 520 Writings of St. Francis & St. Clare 2 M-Th 552 The Franciscan Contribution to Justice and Peace 2 M-Th 518 Script. Foundations of Franciscanism 2 M-Th 561 Development of Franciscan Person 2 M-Th 500 Method and Bibliography 2 M-Th* 517 Introduction to Palaeography 2 M-Th 539 Spirit, Direct. & the Franc. Tradition 2 M-Th Advanced Graduate Seminar: Understanding Francisc, Art: An In- | 502 Sources for the Life of St. Francis 3 M-F 8:30-9:45 504 Life of St. Francis 3 M-F* 9:55-11:10 506 Survey of Franciscan History 3 M-F 9:55-11:10 508 History of Franciscan Thought 3 M-F 9:55-11:10 509 Writings of St. Francis & St. Clare 2 M-Th 11:20-12:25 512 The Franciscan Contribution to Justice and Peace 2 M-Th 11:20-12:25 518 Script. Foundations of Franciscanism 2 M-Th 1:00-2:05 561 Development of Franciscan Person 2 M-Th 1:00-2:05 500 Method and Bibliography 2 M-Th* 2:25-3:20 517 Introduction to Palaeography 2 M-Th 2:25-3:20 539 Spirit. Direct. & the Franc. Tradition 2 M-Th 2:25-3:20 560 Advanced Graduate Seminar: Understanding Francisc. Art: An Introduction to Francisc. Iconography 2 M-Th 7:00-8:00 |

WITH APPROVAL OF THE FACULTY ADVISOR AND DIRECTOR, STUDENTS MAY FULFILL A MAXIMUM OF SIX CREDITS IN ELECTIVES FROM COURSES OFFERED IN THE DEPARTMENT OF GRADUATE THEOLOGY

CALENDAR

| Registration | Monday, June 26 |
|-------------------------|------------------|
| Classes Begin | Monday, June 26 |
| Language Requir, Exam . | Friday, July 7 |
| Written Compr. Exam | Friday, July 14 |
| Final Exams | Friday, August 4 |

FEES

| Tuition per Graduate Hour | \$220 \$690 |
|--|----------------|
| Fees are subject to change without notice. Individual courses are subject to | prior |
| notice. Individual courses are subject to | can- |
| cellation because of insufficient enrollm | ent. |

PRE-REGISTRATION

Pre-registration forms are available from the Office of Graduate Studies, St. Bonaventure University, St. Bonaventure, New York 14778. Students who pre-register need not report for registration on the assigned date.

ACADEMIC YEAR OFFERINGS

THE FRANCISCAN STUDIES M.A. Program may be pursued during the Summer, Autumn, and Spring Semesters. The required number of course credits can be obtained in two Summer sessions and the intervening academic year, or in six Summer sessions.