

properly and exclusively in the act of the ordaining bishop of a candidate to present himself for ordination. . . . [or] analogically [that] a divine vocation to religious state [would] consist totally and solely in the act of a superior approving or admitting an aspirant to the profession or a candidate to the novitiate."¹⁵

The decree, therefore, simply dealt the deathblow to the ordination theory—that and nothing more. It did not exclude analogically a divine vocation, an invitation of the Holy Spirit. This would be in accordance with the tradition of the Church. Moreover, it is untenable against the tradition of the Church. Moreover, it is untenable in the light of the recent documents of the Papacy on the priesthood and vocations. At most, Lahitton's position may be accepted from a judicial viewpoint, but it is not acceptable theologically.¹⁶

To be Continued

¹⁵E. Farrell, *op. cit.*, p. 20.

¹⁶Thus Fr. Pacificus Perantoni: "Where the previous divine vocation spiritus nature and grace is absent, the mere canonical vocation to the Order, cannot be one's acceptance by the superior upon merely external points of suitability does not bestow a true vocation." (Encyclical, "Franciscan Spirituality," p. 25.)

Fr. Ignatius Brady

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PSALM 129

Out of a bottomless lake of sorrow,
I have cried to Thee
With the voices of all lost children,
With the aching displacement of the world,
I have groaned in Thy glory.

Until Thou hear me,
I shall bruise Thy bliss with the fists of my anguish
And tumble Thy listening down about my cries!

For, if Thou weigh me on Thy justice,
My soul melts under memory's lava
And my heart cracks
Out of the five windows of my senses.

Mercy that rules the business of the Trinity
Condemns me to be saved to wretchedness:
I ask it, O God, by Thy Self-fettering law.

For, when the morning discovers my futility,
Until the night ensnarls me with promises,
I have been stricken with hope.

Who shall deceive me? Kindness scars Thy Being
Beyond all recognition, till Thou art Man,
With pity flowing, crimson, from Thy Heart.
Thy Love, I know, is fecund with redemption.

Hear me, O God! I will pull the Face of Thy coming
Down to the dark waters that deny Thee.
Behold in what depths Thine Israel! and save.

Sr. Mary Francis

OUR MONTHLY CONFERENCE

In view of the great importance which spiritual writers attach to silence and which our own daily experience confirms, it should be a notable, in this conference, to draw out some reflections on the practice of silence. The rule of silence which is prescribed in all religious institutes has not been created merely as a contrivance to escape idleness and torment. Rather, it derives from the admonition of the Scriptures, from true spiritual instinct, and it has always been justified by its fruits. Saint Ignatius uses the practice of silence as a criterion of fervor: "If you wish to know whether piety and the solid virtues reign in a religious community, you need only to examine whether silence is observed there." It has been said that to reform a religious house which has become lukewarm, nothing more is needed than that the rule of silence be observed perfectly. What is true of a community will be true also of the individual.

Silence is extremely important toward the acquisition of perfection. To be silent is to be recollected. The practice of silence will keep our thoughts from scattering to the four quarters of the earth, and it is apt to keep our mind on an even keel. Silence gives us peace, dignity, self-command. The words of him who has long practiced the silence here described are usually seasoned, impressive, and trustworthy. What he says is well measured, it is matured, it is almost invulnerable because his judgment is not disturbed by haste or levity, nor prejudiced by passion of any kind. He will not utter the first impulse that might invade his mind; neither will he be led by the dictates of mere human prudence. Thus the advice of the saints was practically always correct because "silence guards the heart, and makes the soul more clear-sighted and intelligent" (Saint Francis de Sales).

However, for the acquisition of such balance it is not sufficient to practice mere external silence, that is, the avoidance of unnecessary words, or heedless talking at forbidden times. This is the mere rudiment of religious silence. In this sense, one might be as silent as a stone yet gain no spiritual profit. The silence we are speaking of is something mechanical such as merely keeping one's mouth shut,

though this is a condition for what is very important for spiritual progress, that is, interior silence.

Of itself, mere external silence is not productive of much. One can be as silent as a tomb on the outside, yet noisy and tumultuous as a storm within. How noisy our soul is when we permit it to be crowded by those many impertinent thoughts; when we let our fancy dwell on useless things, and our memory be busy with unprofitable recollections. What a tempestuous storm is within us when our passions are let loose: the frenzied anger, the rumbling discontent, those dark clouds of melancholy and pessimism, the swirling turmoil, seething and raging behind sealed lips. This is not silence; rather, it is loud like thunder in the soul, and the noise drowns out the voice of God and the pleadings of his grace.

We have never heard of a saint who did not love solitude. We know that when God calls one to a more abundant grace, one of the first attractions he gives to the soul is a longing for solitude, for exterior and interior solitude. The reason is, because then we can speak to the soul, and the soul is more receptive and there is no danger that the grace will be squandered. In the ordinary practice of grace, this sort of solitude is a prerequisite condition for abundant grace. But alas, our misery is that we are so externally extrovert; we live so much on the surface of our souls. We do not dig down deep into the depths to find God, for he is found in the depths of the soul, not on its surface. He is to be found there because he wants peace and quietude, and because he is exceedingly holy to be on the surface of things. By silence, we dig down into the recesses, and the treasure we shall find will be there. There we shall find intimacy, there God manifests himself, there in the hidden depths, not on the bustling highways and byways of the world.

If we do not practice silence we shall waste much time and energy. What thousands of thoughts have flitted through our minds, but how relatively few for God. What endless affections have we poured out, and how few for God. All so earthly, transitory, egoistic and puerile, whereas they should have been glorified with the glory of the divine. Enormous trifles have absorbed so much of our time and energy.

It was remarked above that if anyone controls the tongue he controls the passions. That is true. He controls at least their external

manifestation. He will not give expression to angry words, he will make no unkind remarks, there will be no vain self-expression, no criticisms, no murmurings, no infractions of charity in speech. And though this is only external control, still it is something; and in the long run, if there is sincerity, the evil root itself will dry up.

The advantages of interior silence, of course, are far greater. It makes it possible for us to control the various movements in our soul; they are not so apt to catch us unawares as they otherwise would. If we practice this interior silence, we know what is going on in our soul; we will not be strangers to ourselves. We will be conscious, for example, of the movement to impatience the moment it stirs itself; we will detect the vanity in our motives immediately, and therefore, we will be in a position to master them on the spot. We will not have to admit so often that we became impatient *before we realized it*. This interior silence attunes the ear to the voice of grace which is ever so tenuous. That voice is not heard in the storm, even in that silent sort of storm we spoke of before; but in the midst of true, interior silence it sounds indeed like the very voice of God. How many graces we have missed because of the clamor within our souls! How often God tried to say to us, *Friend, go up higher*, and we failed to hear the invitation; his voice was drowned out because there was no silence in our soul.

However, by the practice of interior silence we are not to make of our mind a vacuum. Rather, we are simply to disencumber it of those many futile thoughts which would otherwise swarm in it, in order that we might be free to fill it with the thought of God; we abandon useless, temporal interests that we might be free to keep tryst with the God within us, for he is there: *We will come to him and make our abode with him* (Jn. 14, 23); *In that day you will know that I am in my Father, and you in me, and I in you* (Jn. 14, 20). The Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost, the *Dulcis Hospes animae*, and the soul is his sanctuary, redolent of the fragrance of God. Here, kneeling on this sanctuary stair, we can offer him the worship of attentiveness and of love. Here we should surrender ourselves to him in confidence, for he first surrendered himself, for our sake, with unquestioning abandon into the arms of a young Girl as his Mother, and to us individually with divine gladness, for God

first loved us (I Jn. 4, 19). He pours forth his Love into our in gushing streams by his Holy Spirit who is given to us (1 Jn. 5, 5) that we might be enabled to love him in return, for *love... and love is from God* (I Jn. 4, 16. 7). Here too he lives in the fullness of his own divine life. He does not disdain to say to each of us "thou art my son," and he is eager to hear our loving response to the filial cry, "Abba, Father!" Here in our soul is the Father who called us, the Son who redeemed us in his blood, the Holy Spirit who sanctifies us. Should we not make it the very sum and substance of our life to offer praise, wonderment, love to God in his temple in which we are?

Gloria Patri et Filio et Spiritui Sancto!... O beata Trinitas! Thus may you walk worthily of God and please him in all things (Col. 1, 10), singing and making melody in your hearts to the Lord (Eph. 5, 19). That we might be free to do this we must practice exterior and interior silence.

We must not conclude from the foregoing that we must always speak. No; this silence can be practiced all the long day though you might oblige us to speak all the day. You might have to teach, preach, or nurse, you might be a missionary almost always instructing and catechising, but this is not incompatible with interior silence. The simple question is: what is it that absorbs you? Is it God alone? Things of God? God for his own sake and your neighbor for the sake of God? Then, indeed, you can still practice interior silence. Our Lord labored, how he journeyed up and down Palestine, how zealously he preached throughout the day, how he was jostled and importuned by the crowds! Still, who could have been so absorbed in God as he who from the first enjoyed the beatific vision? What serenity, what peace in his soul! How deeply he was immersed in the thought of his Father! The glory of his Father was always before him and last consideration, and very naturally, for he is the "Well-beloved Son," and he and the Father are one. But we too are well-beloved sons, although by adoption only; yet, we are sons and we too must walk in love before the face of the Father. Therefore we should cultivate this extremely important and fruitful exercise. It will purify our motives, it will transfigure all we do, it will lead us into intimacy with God, for we cannot love God but that he will respond.

In conclusion, let us sum it up in a parallel. Think of a wonderful old-world cathedral. It has large dimensions, the vault of the cathedral towers high, the sunlight filters dimly through the heavy stained glass windows, and massive doors shut out the noise of the outside world. Here, the drop of a pin would startle you. Besides yourself, there is no living presence but our Lord in the Blessed Sacrament, and he is as silent as the heavens at midnight, and in a ruby lamp a little fire flickers noiselessly. The rumor of the outside world is hushed, there is not a murmur within. Here there is nothing but God and yourself. The universe, which seems to be such a sentient and vibrant thing, is poised with bated breath; time has quietly slid to a stop. What peace! You can pray now! Yet all this can be accomplished within your soul. You can enjoy this whenever you will to your own immense spiritual profit. The means thereto is interior silence. A distracted soul, on the contrary, is like the Jewish temple which our Lord cleansed when he cast out those who were buying and selling there, and said to them in indignation: *My house is a house of prayer, but you have made it a den of thieves* (Luke 19, 46).

Fr. Silvano Matulich, O.F.M.

BLESSED MARIA ASSUNTA

On November seventh, the Venerable Servant of God, Sister Maria Assunta, Franciscan Missionary of Mary, will be declared among the blessed—the only Franciscan so to be honored during the Marian Year. The paradox of sanctity is evident in the life of Maria Assunta to an extraordinary degree. She spent but twenty-six years hidden in this world as one of God's choicest unknown souls, that she might become in heaven one of his elect.

Assunta was a peasant girl, born in the little Italian village of Force in 1878. Her name honored the great feast of the Mother of God which had preceded her birth by five days.

From her most tender years, Assunta learned to love God. As a tiny helper to the village

the day's work murmuring her Rosary, and she would not w
way home until she had first visited Jesus in the Blessed Sa
in the village church. Her love for the Sacrament of the a
profound and her biographers indicate that her childhood w
in untold hours before the Eucharist where she knelt moti
held in love. Her parish priest remarked that her heart w
defiled by the world, pure as a lily, and ever responsive to t
of divine grace," a testimony which was often repeated to ec
cal authorities by her childhood friends in the proposal of h

That this pure flower of holiness yearned to blossom
cloister as a Bride of Christ surprised none. Yet the obst
such a life were many—her family desperately needed her
home, and the opportunity for introduction to a community
gious was remote in her village. When every way seemed c
Assunta's intention, the visit of a distinguished and inf
prelate to Force became the key by which Providence open
cloister of the Franciscan Missionaries of Mary to her. Assu
brought to him, and so impressed was he with her evident a
that almost immediately upon his return to Rome word was r
that the Franciscan Missionaries would welcome Assunta.

The Monsignor's estimation and recommendation was
was needed. For the rest, Assunta proved herself. Her holin
so well founded, that the new life involved little change for A
From all accounts it merely paralleled the change in her name
estingly enough Assunta, the joy and consolation of the hid
lage of Force, became Sister Maria Assunta, the joy and cons
of the large community in Rome. Religious life became the
for Assunta to practice the virtues which she had loved since
hood, in the hidden and sacred recesses of the cloister. She
upon the new life without stint, so much so that her Novice M
remarked of her days in Rome: "I can conscientiously say that
the whole course of her Novitiate she never deserved the s
rebuke in regard to her conduct or the observance of her dut
of the Rule."

Her work, her prayer, her recreation, all were occasio
Sister Maria Assunta to grow and increase in holiness. Wh
work was assigned to her she executed with relish. Hers w

ility to accomplish the most menial of tasks with dignity—dignity
orn of the realization that to serve others, in any capacity, is to
honor God. She seldom spoke of herself in hours of recreation, and
seemed most to enjoy herself there when the conversation centered
God. Sister Maria Assunta was not a woman of letters, but she
carried the distinguishing trait of the truly learned, the ability to
listen and inquire and observe. She thought nothing of herself, but
she loved her sisters in religion and regarded only their virtues. She
appeared unable to criticize others, reserving whatever dissatisfactions
she experienced as sources for her own improvement. The chronicles
tell us that Sister Maria Assunta was best remembered for her prayer.
When she died, her body, severely self-disciplined from youth, emit
ed a mysterious fragrance, reminiscent of the beautiful odor of prayer
which she exhaled in life. The long hours required by her Institute's
constitutions in adoration before the Blessed Sacrament were the
soul of Maria Assunta's prayer. She went before the Eucharistic
Lord to seek love, she learned love there, and she communicated
this love freely. She died with only two words on her lips—two words
of love: *Eucharist! Eucharist!*

After pronouncing her perpetual vows in Rome, early in 1904,
Sister Maria Assunta left Naples on the Feast of Saint Joseph for the
Mission of Shansi, China. Four years previously, seven of her Insti
tute had shed their blood as martyrs in the Boxer Rebellion in the
mission to which she sailed.

Nine months after her arrival in China, Sister Maria Assunta
was dead, a victim of the typhus scourge. She went quickly, not
having suffered long. She accomplished little in China, judged by any
material standards. About all the language that she had mastered in
her few months there were a few simple prayers, but she delighted
in teaching and praying these to the little Chinese who flocked about
her.

Briefly, but essentially, this is the story of Sister Maria Assunta.
It contains little of the glamorous, nothing of the spectacular. Yet
it is the story of one whom the Church will approve in a few days
reigning with the virgins in heaven.

Blessed Maria Assunta left this earth at a time when every
human estimation a long life of fruitful work lay

Yet in her few wayfaring years she fulfilled her divine destiny and accomplished her part in the harvest of souls. She had *mind the eternal years* and thus she was ready, and answered the midnight call of her Bridegroom.

Maria Assunta's life was well summarized in the succulent comment of her Superior on the missions, who wrote to Rome on her death: "As a Religious she had been a model for all." He has preserved the secret of her sanctity—she was a model religious! Her holiness in the most obvious yet often most unrecognized of her vows and the rule of her Institute. She faithfully followed joyfully embraced the way of Saint Francis, and lost herself in it. The beatification of Maria Assunta echoes familiar words: *is the least among you, he is the greatest*; for in innocent simplicity, and willingness Sister Maria Assunta entered the Kingdom of God as a little child.

William

MARY'S MEDIATION IN FRANCISCAN TRADITION

Part Three: Mediatrix of All Graces

Our *Florilegium*, or compilation of texts from Franciscan writers, comes to its closing—and most important—chapter this month. What has been established previously, our Lady's predestination and royal office of co-redemption, logically leads into a discussion of her mediation.

A. Manner of Meriting

Francisco Guerra, a seventeenth century writer, summarizes a common doctrine of the Franciscan school: "In all things that men or angels from the divine bounty which Christ merits *de condigno*, there was a notable influence of Mary *de congruo*." Carolus del Moral qualifies this more precisely: "The Mother of God not only transport grace to someone in so far as, by reason of her intercession, God is moved to confer the grace. But this is a moral

at least *de congruo*. Bernardin de Bustis held it to be probable that Mary merited all graces not only *de congruo*, but also by merit of her dignity. He quotes St. Bonaventure to support his opinion: "Through the abundance of grace at the conception, she was found not only suitable but worthy."

Now merit *de congruo* is wholly gratuitous on the part of God. That which is required is that God find a certain fitness or appropriateness; however, the fitness does not demand that God reward it. On the other hand, merit *de condigno* demands a reward in justice. Only Jesus Christ (because He is God) could merit in such a way.

What the Franciscan theologians seem to introduce here is a direct and mediate condition proper to Mary because of her dignity as Mother of God. Others outside of the school in recent times seem to favor this position, too. Carolus del Moral formulates the opinion succinctly: "Mary cooperated with her Son by meritorious acts of piety (*de congruo*) and also by the special value of the grace of her maternity, in the salvation of men and the grace and glory of the angels."

B. All Grace Through Mary

As a mother lives to give of her love to others, so it was for our Lady. As our Francis, our Franciscan writers emphasize, that Mary was given so much grace and merited so much. "The eyes of the Church and the eyes of all," Conrad of Saxony exclaims, "should always look to the hands of Mary . . . For through the hands of this Lady we have whatever we possess. . . . Through her hands we should offer to God whatever we do." Ubertino de Casale similarly affirms: "All things the most generous Son placed in the hands of His Mother as the dispenser of all graces; . . . in her is every grace of the way and the truth, all hope of life and virtue." And that no one may misunderstand, he adds this glowing tribute: "(The Holy Spirit made her) the Queen and Mistress of the angels, the Mother of all the elect, and thus the entire treasury of the gifts of the most Blessed Trinity, so that not a drop of even the smallest grace is to be granted except it pass through the dispensation of Mary."

"The Blessed Mary was made by God and constituted the ladder (or stair case), the portal, the gate of heaven," Bernard of Lomew

of Pisa tells us. "Wherefore, to whom she wills she opens, and to whom she wills, so that as through her the salvation of men, so also through her we come not only to grace but also to the joy of Jesus Christ, who is the joy and the happiness and the enjoyment of the Blessed."

The stream of Franciscan thought is strong and clear here. John Capistran says: "Whatever good we receive from God we receive from the hand and the grace of the Blessed Virgin." Blessed de Bustis: "All good comes to us from Christ through Mary." Blessed Bernardin of Feltre: "Whatever grace descends from the throne of God must first pass through her."

C. Process of Dispensation

St. Bernardin has been honored with the title of another because of his devotion to Mary. As a zealous lover of his, he went further than any other person in tracing the descent of grace from God to man. Perhaps he received his inspiration from Bonaventure's statement that the Blessed Virgin is said to be a fountain because of the origin of good in her; this origin is primarily in God the Father, then through Christ, and thirdly it flows through the Blessed Virgin. . . . At any rate, Bernardin sums up his conviction in the famous passage: "Every grace that is communicated to the world has a threefold process: for it is dispensed in right order from God unto Christ, by Christ unto the Virgin, and from the Virgin unto ourselves. . . . For from the time that she conceived God in her womb she had what I might call a certain jurisdiction or power over the temporal procession of the Holy Spirit, so that no creature receives any grace or power from God except according to the dispensation of the Virgin Mother. For since Christ is our Head from whom the influence of divine grace flows upon the Mystical Body, the Blessed Virgin is the neck through which this flow passed to the members of the Body."

One by one, Franciscan theologians have read this, meditated on it and unanimously proclaimed that Mary is absolutely necessary for our salvation.

D. Habitual and Actual Intercession

Subject to much controversy is the question of the nature of Mary's intervention. In solving this problem, our writers have

themselves be guided by the Scotistic principle that "it is more excellent to attribute to Mary whatever is not contrary to the authority of the Church and of Scripture." Hence Franciscan scholars, their enthusiasm girded by solid reasoning, champion the opinion which gives the most honor and glory to Mary.

The question is this: is it simply and solely *in view of Mary's merits* that we receive grace through Mary; is her intervention therefore simply habitual? Or is her intervention actual; *does she actually intercede for each grace?*

Our School answers that it is both! First of all, her intervention implies her almost infinite merits, the merits in view of which the faithful angels stood firm, our first parents were restored to the friendship of God, the Patriarchs were saved. But it also implies her prayers. St. Bonaventure tells us that we receive grace "by reason of her merit and her example and by reason of the aid of her intercession." Scotus clothed this doctrine in precise theological language, and his eighteenth century counterpart, Carolus del Moral, added the finishing touches.

Scotus tells us that Mary's prayer in heaven on our behalf is both habitual and actual. This prayer he describes as mental, "which is the desire offered to God with the desire of obtaining her wish from God." Her habitual prayer is "constant and general for all the elect;" but her actual prayer is offered whenever she is invoked.

Later theologians, going even further, maintain that by *every* prayer and *meritorious act* we invoke Mary—because all go to Christ through her. For just as the neck enters into active cooperation with the head, del Moral reasons, so Mary actively cooperates with God in the transmission of grace. This moral influence, as he calls it, Mary exerts over angels and men, over all men from Adam to the present, over the faithful and the infidels.

E. Conclusion

It would be incorrect to say that Franciscan theologians have attributed privileges to our Queen. They have not. Searching Scripture and tradition they have but discovered them. That is why the doctrines of Mary's absolute predestination, co-redemption and mediation are not exclusively Franciscan in origin.

We have, however, received into our ke-

not Mary the Queen of our Order? Happily the present generation of Franciscans is alive to its vocation and heritage. But there is still much to be done. If the universal mediation of Mary is almost universally accepted in the Church, there still remains the task of explaining the full nature of this mediation as well as the promotion of the dogmatic definition of this privilege. Besides this, there is the doctrine of Mary's Queenship, which needs study, development and promotion.

Let us conclude this *Florilegium* with the prayer of our Father Francis to his Queen, a prayer that belongs to every Franciscan heart:

Holy Virgin Mary, there was never anyone like you born in the world among women! Daughter and handmaiden of the most high King, our Father in Heaven. Mother of our most holy Lord Jesus Christ. Spouse of the Holy Ghost! With the archangel Saint Michael, and all the Virtues of Heaven, and all the saints, pray for us at the throne of your beloved most holy Son, our Lord and Master.

Fr. Geoffrey Bridger

THE HOLINESS OF JOHN DUNS SCOTUS

The Marian Year should be of special interest for us as followers of Saint Francis. To spread glory and love to Mary has ever been one of our most noble tasks. The beginnings of this noble task can certainly be found in our Father Francis. Where could one find a more beautiful summary of Mary's glory and prerogatives than in his Salutation to the Blessed Virgin?

Among the sons of Francis certainly John Duns Scotus stands high among the promoters of Mary's glory and prerogatives, especially by his teaching on the Immaculate Conception. What is more,

we hope to see this defender of Mary enrolled in the list of the Saints. But really, this is of secondary importance. John Duns Scotus achieved his holiness by following Francis. This, too, is our life's work. A brief sketch of some of the more outstanding incidents in his life will show how perfectly John Duns Scotus followed Francis, and thus give us an example to follow.

Early Life

Quot capita, tot sententiae could easily be said of the chronological and, to a certain extent, the biographical data concerning Duns Scotus. Many of his biographies, especially in their chronology, are incorrect in view of recent scientific research.

John Duns Scotus, according to this research, was born in 1265-6 in or very near the town of Duns, Scotland. He was probably the son of one Ninian Duns and the nephew of Elias Duns, Vicar General of the Franciscans in Scotland. His parents were middle class landholders and farmers. Of his childhood we have few details.

An important event in his early life took place in the year 1278. In that year the Franciscan Province of Scotland was established and Elias Duns became its first Provincial. After the Chapter Duns Scotus' uncle took the young boy with him to the Franciscan Friary at Dumfries. Here he continued his education which had been started at Haddington. Scotus, being only twelve years old, was not old enough to enter the Order. These years prior to his entry into the Order he spent in study at Dumfries.

When old enough, Duns Scotus received the Franciscan habit, probably in 1281. He realized what it meant to be a Franciscan, for before he entered the Order he used to visit different monasteries around his native land. Here he observed the life of the monks of his time. But it was the humility, the poverty and literal observance of the Gospel which finally attracted him to the Friars. Duns Scotus was ordained March 17, 1291, in the church of Saint Andrew at Northampton by Oliver Sutton, Bishop of Lincoln. The rest of his life he spent as a teacher in England, France and Germany.

Several incidents in the life of John Duns Scotus show his extraordinary holiness and point out how this intellectual giant could also be a faithful follower of St. Francis.

Prayer Life

Although John Duns Scotus was of great intellectual ability, still he had difficulties in his studies. For this reason he sought help from God and this was how his prayer was answered. One day, when he had fallen asleep under a tree in the garden, the Mother of God appeared to him in a dream. She encouraged him to continue his studies and promised him that he would eventually master the sacred sciences. In return she asked him to make use of his knowledge to promote her glory and to defend her privileges. Duns Scotus' entire life shows how well he carried this out.

The life of this great doctor was raised to such a degree of contemplation that even his studies were a constant prayer. Prayer was the source of his knowledge. To prove this, we need only consider some of the sublime prayers which he composed throughout his philosophical and theological treatises. A further example of his extraordinary prayer could be seen during his defence of the Immaculate Conception at Paris. On the day fixed for the controversy, Duns Scotus, Mary's dauntless champion, putting all his trust in God and in His glorious Mother, knelt before a statue of the Queen of Heaven and addressed her: *Dignare me laudare te, sacrata*. Tradition has it that the statue leaned forward to show that his prayer had been answered.

All of this should show us how Duns Scotus kept the exhortation of his blessed Father Francis that the Friars "strive above all to have the spirit of the Lord and His holy operation, to pray continually to Him with a pure heart."

Poverty

John Duns Scotus' whole life was one of the highest poverty. When he travelled he took nothing with him. On his journey from Cologne to Paris he did not ride, but begged his way and fully avoided making himself known to those who gave him hospitality. His biographers make special mention of the point that Duns Scotus had the correct notion behind the Franciscan vow of poverty, namely, that it is not something merely negative, but is a positive act of conformity to Christ.

Apostolic Zeal

We have few records about Duns Scotus' preaching. But the following is an incident which should show that he must have been quite popular. One day, when he was preaching, there was such a crowd that all could not see him. God showed how pleasing Duns Scotus was to Him by raising him off the ground. And in this manner he preached to the people.

Another incident shows how he was able to bring the word of God even to the unlettered. Scotus was walking one day through a field in England, when he met a peasant who was blaspheming while sowing seed. The saintly friar asked him why he did not sow for eternity by offering his toil and trouble to God instead of losing his soul by his blasphemy. The peasant replied that he did not bother about his salvation, since God had foreseen whether he would go to heaven or not, and therefore there was nothing he could do about it. Duns Scotus then showed him how illogical his reasoning was by asking him why he went to the trouble of sowing seed, since God had foreseen whether it would be a good or a bad crop. The man then realized his mistake and promised to live a better life.

Saint Francis was ever obedient and reverent toward the Chair of Peter. John Duns Scotus is well known for his teaching on the supremacy of the Holy See and the infallibility of the Pope. During the English Reformation his works were destroyed because of his teaching on this point. It was during this period that he received the title "Hercules of the Papists." It is true that believing in something and writing great dissertations on it are no proof of holiness. It is the practical consequences which are all important. Duns Scotus carried his belief into action. He was exiled from France because he favored the Pope instead of Philip the Fair.

In reference to prelates within the Order St. Francis tells us: "The Friars, who are subject, must remember that, for God's sake, they have renounced their own will. Wherefore I firmly command them to obey their Ministers in all things which they have promised the Lord to observe." Duns Scotus' departure for Cologne gives us a good example of his perfect obedience. In 1307 the Minister General sent an obedience to Duns Scotus, telling him to go to Cologne. Scotus was walking near the friary at Paris when the Minister General

the letter from the Minister General. He read the letter and immediately started to leave for Cologne as the letter commanded. Friars begged him to go back to the friary to bid farewell to his brothers. Duns Scotus replied that the letter told him to go to Cologne and that it did not tell him to return to the friary to bid farewell. Without further ado, Scotus started for Cologne.

Death

Duns Scotus died at Cologne. The traditional date given for his death is Nov. 8, 1308. Many and varied are the legends concerning his death. The most outstanding among these is that he was buried while in ecstasy. But this legend is based on accounts which appeared about a century later and hence are hardly reliable. Other than the fact that his death was probably sudden, we know nothing about it. Perhaps research will clear up this point for us.

It is very evident that Scotus had impressed his contemporaries by his extraordinary holiness as well as by his learning. This is easily seen from the place where he was buried. Scotus was not buried in the cemetery of the Friars, but in the choir of the Franciscan Church at Cologne. There is no apparent reason for this extraordinary holiness. Thus we see that he who was followed by a leader and master by countless students, began to be venerated as a saint as soon as he died. May the day soon dawn on which John Duns Scotus will be raised to the honors of the altar!

Fr. Valentine Young, O.F.M.

SAINT ANTHONY AND THE QUEENSHIP OF MARY

In the Basilica of Santa Maria Maggiore there is a beautiful mosaic of the coronation of Our Lady. The artist, Jacopo di Torosopio, places Saint Anthony of Padua in the foreground as the official herald of the Assumption. And very rightly so, for Saint Anthony was among the first outstanding exponents of this prerogative of our Blessed Lady.

In the discussions preceding the declaration of the dogma of the Assumption in 1950, citations from our Saint, who had been raised to the rank of Doctor of the Universal Church in 1946, were frequently used by theologians as proofs. So outstanding was Saint Anthony's defense of the Assumption that in *Munificentissimus Deus*, the Papal Bull declaring the Assumption a dogma, His Holiness Pope Pius XII states: "Among the holy writers who at that time employed statements and various images and analogies of Sacred Scripture to illustrate and to confirm the doctrine of the Assumption, which they piously believed, the Evangelical Doctor Saint Anthony of Padua holds a special place."¹ The Holy Father then continues with a quotation from Saint Anthony in defense of the Assumption.

How did Saint Anthony, styled by a biographer as the second "Marian Doctor," merit to be quoted in the Papal Definition of the Assumption? Why was he such a staunch defender of the Assumption? The answer can be found in his love of the Blessed Virgin, for it was from this love that he derived the unction of his Mariology. So strong was this love, so much did his life center completely around the Virgin that his life has been called a *vita Mariana*, a "Marian life."

For the origin of his devotion to Our Lady we must go back to Saint Anthony's birth, which tradition places on the Feast of the Assumption, August 15, 1195. He was baptized in the Church of Saint Mary in Lisbon and placed under the protection of the Immaculate Heart. As a youth St. Anthony dedicated his virginity to his Lady Queen.

On August 14, 1225, while he was staying at the Franciscan Friary in Toulouse, France, Saint Anthony was faced with a dilemma because of his strong belief in the Assumption. If he attended the community recitation of Prime, he would have to listen to the reading of the Martyrology, which at the time described the Assumption as an apocryphal legend. This, he felt, would be giving tacit approval to something which he could not in conscience accept. If he did not attend, he would be disobeying the Rule. His problem was solved when our Blessed Lady appeared to him clothed in the radiance of

¹Pius XII, *Munificentissimus Deus*, as quoted by Marion Habig, O.F.M., in *Everyman's Saint*.

heavenly splendour and with a voice of ineffable sweetness. "Be assured, my son, that this body of mine, which has been the Ark of the Word Incarnate, has been preserved from the corruption of the grave. Be equally assured that three days after my death I was carried upon the wings of Angels to the right hand of the Father of God where I reign as Queen."²

Of special interest is the last phrase, the last word which the Lady spoke to Saint Anthony in this vision: "I reign as Queen." We shall examine parts of Saint Anthony's masterful sermon on the Assumption, in which the Queenship of Mary is emphasized. For Saint Anthony, as to all Franciscans, the Queenship of Mary is a logical sequel to her Assumption. To us these two great prerogatives form an inseparable idea, for in the seventh joy of the Franciscan Crown we meditate on Mary's Assumption and Coronation as Queen of Heaven and earth.

Mary's Queenship

Saint Anthony reasoned thus concerning Mary's prerogatives. They followed each other logically. The Immaculate Conception was a preparation for, a prelude to Mary's Divine Maternity. The Divine Maternity was the *ratio theologica*, the theological reason for the Assumption. The glory for which Christ prepared Mary in the Assumption was her coronation as Queen of Heaven. The Coronation was the culmination of the Assumption, and the certain extent of all her prerogatives. In a few words, his line of reasoning is this: because of her Divine Maternity, Mary was assumed into Heaven and crowned as Queen.³

The first medium which Saint Anthony, surnamed the "Preceptor of the Scriptures" and the "Ark of the Testament" Pope Gregory IX, uses to portray Mary's Queenship is Sacred Scripture.

²Marion Habig, O.F.M., *op. cit.*

³"Truly the grace of Blessed Mary, which produced the Son through God the Father, was superior to every grace, and therefore on this day she merited to be crowned in Heaven." Antonius Maria Locatelli, *S. Antonii Pat. Sermones Dominicales in Solemnitatibus* (Patavii: 1895). Vol. II, p. 732.

Note: The translations of all quotations from Locatelli with a few minor changes can be found in Raphael M. Huber, O.F.M. Conv., "The Mariology of St. Anthony of Padua." Unless otherwise noted, all references to Locatelli are to the "Sermo Assumptione."

ture. Citing the words of Isaias (60, 13), *I will glorify the place of my feet*, the Evangelical Doctor explains: "The place of the feet of the Lord was the Blessed Virgin Mary, from whom He derived His humanity; this place He glorified today because He exalted her above the choirs of Angels."⁴

Adapting the description of the coronation of King Solomon as related in the Canticle of Canticles (3, 11), Saint Anthony bids us come and see the diadem of heavenly glory with which Christ crowned His Mother on Assumption Day. Christ, Who was crowned by Mary with a diadem of flesh, has in turn crowned her with a diadem of celestial glory. Like the cypress, she now rises above all the Angels as Queen of Heaven. To help us visualize the heights of Mary's glory, our Saint compares her to the throne described by Ezechiel (1, 26). The living creatures are the saints. Over their heads is the firmament, or the angels. Over the angels is the throne, the Blessed Virgin; and sitting on the throne is her Son, Christ.⁵ Next to Christ the King, Mary the Queen reigns over the angels and saints. Could the mystical theologian, Saint Anthony, have drawn an analogy more poetic, yet as concise?

A further reason for Mary's Queenship, according to Saint Anthony, whose writings contain explanations of every phase of Mariology, is her profound humility. He writes that "in the word of humility, *Behold the handmaid of the Lord*, she became the Queen of Heaven."⁶

Saint Anthony's second way of illustrating Mary's royalty is the use of several feminine characters of the Old Testament as types of Mary. He especially sees the Blessed Virgin prefigured as Queen in Esther and Sara.

Just as Esther was led to the throne room of King Assuerus, crowned Queen, and placed on a throne, so also Mary, the second Esther, after her Assumption into Heaven, was crowned Queen of Heaven by Christ, the new Assuerus, and placed on a starry throne.⁷

⁴Antonius M. Locatelli, *op. cit.*, p. 730.

⁵*Ibid.*, p. 732-33.

⁶*Ibid.*, p. 732.

⁷*Ibid.*, pp. 731-732.

Interpreting the name Sara as "sovereign" and "burning" Saint Anthony calls Mary "our glorious Virgin, our Sovereign Queen, who was enkindled like a coal by the fire of the Spirit."⁸

The third manner in which the Biblical Doctor professes Lady's sovereignty is the use of various names. Naturally the name Saint Anthony uses is Mary. Among the interpretations of the name he lists Lady, or Queen, its literal meaning in Syriac.

He also styles her Princess and Queen, Princess because she was of royal descent, Queen because in the Assumption she was elevated above the choirs of Angels, patriarchs, prophets, and saints in the Kingdom of Heaven, crowned with a royal diadem, and placed on a throne of Eternal Light. The word Queen (*Domina*) occurs frequently in Saint Anthony's sermons.

In his sermon on the Assumption our Doctor also calls Mary the "Ark of Noah." The Saint explains that just as Noah's ark was to rest on top of Mount Ararat, "so likewise Mary, at the end of her life, was taken up into Heaven to rest and to reign for all eternity over the choirs of Angels."⁹

Lastly Saint Anthony designates his Queen as "Star of the Sea." Contrasting angels and men, he states that the angels, safe on the shores of eternity, salute their Queen: *Ave, gratia plena*. We humans, however, floundering in the bitter sea of life, use the invocation *Ave Maris Stella*, for Mary is to illuminate our course as the "Morning Star" and guide us until we reach the safe harbor of eternity where she will be our Queen. In exultation Saint Anthony exclaims: "What is Mary but a star of the Sea?"¹⁰

The Saint composed this beautiful prayer to the Star of the Sea as the conclusion of one of his sermons:

"We pray thee, therefore, O Queen, our hope, that like a Star of the Sea thou radiate thy light to us, tossed about here below in the tempest of the sea; guide us to the haven; strengthen us in the hour of death with the protection of thy presence, so that through the grace of Him, Whom thou didst have the honor to bear and nurse,

⁸"Sermo In Nativitate Domini," *ibid.*, p. 744.

⁹*Ibid.*, p. 730.

¹⁰"Sermo In Annuntiatione Sanctae Mariae," *ibid.*, p. 836.

we may merit to pass from this prison on earth to an ineffable joy in Heaven above. Amen."¹¹

Conclusion

Someone has said of Saint Anthony that "on his lips dogma became devotion." This is especially true of his Mariology. So ardent was our Saint in proclaiming the praises of the Virgin that his sermons are literally saturated with references to his Queen, with "clearcut and positive declarations on the mysteries and prerogatives of the Queen of Heaven."¹² Because of the pre-eminence of his Marian doctrine Saint Anthony ranks next to Saint Bernard as Mary's champion. Yet this humble Friar's Mariology was not confined to his doctrine alone—"On his lips dogma became devotion." His Marian doctrine was the basis of his intense devotion to his Mother and Queen, a devotion which permeated his entire life and death. For he not only lived a "Marian life," he also died a "Marian death."

On Friday, June 13, 1231, the Wonder-Worker lay dying in the convent of the Poor Clares at Arcella, outside Padua. After confessing and receiving Holy Viaticum, Saint Anthony began with great devotion to sing his favorite hymn to the Blessed Virgin, "O Gloriosa Domina." Thus invoking the assistance of the Queen who is exalted above the stars, that she who is the resplendent gate of Heaven, would herself give him entrance there, the glorious Saint went forth to meet his Queen. He was buried in the Church of Saint Mary in Padua.

The hymn which Saint Anthony sang at his death is better known to us in its revised form, "O Gloriosa Virginum." In the revision of the Breviary made by Pope Saint Pius V in 1568, the idea of Mary's Queenship was completely left out of this hymn. The Dominican Breviary, however, still retains the original version, which Fr. Marion Habig, O. F. M., has beautifully rendered into English:

O glorious Lady, fairest Queen,
Exalted high in Heav'n above,

¹¹"Sermo In Dominica II In Quadragesima," *ibid.*, p. 91.

¹²Thomas Plassmann, O.F.M., "St. Anthony the Theologian," an address delivered at the Commemorative Ceremonies of St. Anthony of Padua, Dominican Church, Catholic University, Washington, D.C., 1946.

The great Creator, mighty Lord
 By thee was nursed with mother's love.
 What sinful Eve had lost for us,
 By thy dear Son thou didst restore;
 The Gate of Heaven thou hast been made,
 That we may entrance find and weep no more.
 Through thee the Savior came to us,
 To be our guiding Light and King.
 To Christ, our Life, of Virgin born,
 Ye ransomed peoples praises sing.¹³

A most fitting conclusion to this consideration of Saint Anthony Mariology is the Prayer to the Queen of Heaven with which he concluded his sermon on the Assumption, and to which the Holy Father has attached for a limited time an indulgence of 500 days, and a plenary indulgence once a month under the usual conditions if it is recited daily. With the glorious Saint Anthony, who so ardently sings the praises of his Lady Queen in life and in death, let us pray:

"We beseech you, Queen, glorious Mother of God, exalted above the choirs of angels, to fill the vessel of our heart with the grace of Heaven. Make it resplendent with the gold of wisdom, fortify it with your mighty strength, adorn it with the precious stones of your virtues. Shower down on us, O blest Olive Tree, the oil of mercy and with it cover up our many sins, so that we may merit to be elevated to the heights of heavenly glory, there to be in bliss with the blessed, through the mercy of Jesus Christ, your Son, Who exalted you (this day) above the choirs of angels, crowned you with the diadem of royalty, and placed you on the throne of light eternal, to Whom be honor and glory for all eternity. Let the whole Church respond, Amen. Alleluia."¹⁴

Frater Antonellus Ostdiek, O.F.M.

ELEMENTS AND SIGNS OF A VOCATION

Part II. Positive Signs Of A Vocation

By assigning to the Ministers Provincial the ultimate choice of candidates, St. Francis thereby implies and requires prudence on their part. Or to use the phrase of St. Bonaventure, they must be expert fishermen, knowing which are good fish in the catch of Christ, and which are poor and to be rejected.¹ Hence the importance of studying the positive and negative signs of vocation, to know the mind of the Church.

The positive signs are the totality of gifts bestowed by Divine Providence. Thus Father Pacificus Perantoni: "Divine vocation is the invitation our Lord gives to that state which is more suited to each soul. Vocation is a gift of God. Divine providence disposes the souls for it not only with the supernatural gifts of grace but also with the gifts and endowments of nature, because in everything it does Providence always wisely accomplishes its ultimate plan, arranging its gifts, whether of nature or of grace so that the plan will be achieved."²

On the basis of ecclesiastical documents, however, we make a distinction between the positive signs of a priestly vocation and those demanded for religious life.

1. Signs for the Priesthood

Pope Pius XI sums these up in his encyclical on the priesthood when he writes: "This (a true priestly vocation) is not established so much by some inner feeling or devout attraction, which may sometimes be absent or hardly perceptible; but rather by a right intention in the aspirant, together with a combination of physical, intellectual and moral qualities which make him fitted for such a state of life. He must look to the priesthood solely from the noble motive of consecrating himself to the service of God and the salvation of souls; he must likewise have, or at least strive earnestly to acquire, solid piety, perfect purity of life and sufficient knowledge such as We have explained on a previous page. Thus he shows that he is called by God to

¹Expositio Super Regulam c. II, n. 3.

²Our Vocation, ed. cit., p. 23.

¹³Op. cit.

¹⁴Antonius M. Locatelli, op. cit. p. 733.

For the indulgence see: *Franciscan Herald and Forum* (February, 1950), p. 63.

the priestly state."³ All of this constitutes the "*canonica idoneitas*" of which the Bishop must have positive proofs before Sacred Order (can. 974, 3).

The following, therefore, are the positive signs of a priestly vocation:

(a) *Right intention*: for the service of God and the salvation of souls. Not, as Pius XI goes on to point out, for temporal and earthly gains, as a mere career, etc.

(b) *Physical qualities* making one fit for the priestly work. The candidate need not be a perfect physical specimen, but his general physical health must be such that he can stay on the job, so to speak. Authors especially warn authorities concerning diseases of the eyes and ears, since these organs are so important for studies and priestly work; likewise heart or lung trouble. And, of course, canon law specifies the norm regarding defects of body (canon. 984, 2°). In this regard, also, one must consider the family background, carefully watch for history of mental affliction, hysteria, etc.⁴

(c) *Intellectual fitness*. There should be positive evidence of sufficient talent, common sense and good judgment, a spirit of study. These may be hard to judge in adolescents, but seminary work in the classroom and examinations, etc., will reveal much. Here too the I.Q. is not the only test, for the stress ought to be on common sense and good judgment. A man possessed of careful judgment will make a good priest, even though he is not top man in his class in intellectual accomplishments. A spirit of study is a requisite too, since laziness is definitely a negative sign of a vocation.

(d) *Moral fitness*. Virtue, natural and supernatural, is absolutely required in the candidate for the priesthood. Under this, we embrace general character traits: normalcy of character (reasonable, cheerful, open, manly, able to get along well with others) . . . a steady, practical desire to acquire the perfection demanded by the priesthood. . . a spirit of genuine prayerfulness (not following the schedule only) . . . basic charity toward others, for a man who is selfish can hardly be a zealous priest. . . true spirit of obedience and faith, etc. .

³Encyclical, NCWC, ed., p. 46-47.

⁴Cf. esp. G. Vromant, "De Signis Negativis Vocationis Sacerdotalis," *Periodica*, XXII (1922), 190.

a genuine habit of holy purity. . . In short, of all the virtues that make a real man of God.⁵

In this, we do not demand that the seraphic youth be a saint from the first year of high school onwards; but we must demand that he show basic virtues and strive to acquire the others as they are taught to him by word and example. In fine, generosity and earnestness are important in the young, to lead them to the heights.

2. Signs or Requirements for Religious Life

The positive signs for religious life are stated in canon 538:

(a) *The Catholic faith*. Under this, one might discuss the question of admission of converts: how soon after their conversion should they be allowed to enter a seminary or an Order?

(b) *Lack of any impediments*. The Rule, Constitution and Canon Law list the impediments, some invalidating reception, others rendering it illicit.

(c) *Right intention*. The candidate should have the desire to obtain the end of the Institute: the pursuit of perfection through the Rule, vows, way of life of the Order. He may also have some particular and secondary end in view, though I think he should be cautioned that he may not be assigned later to the work he had in mind: e.g., missions, preaching, teaching, etc. On the other hand, if he enters religion chiefly as a means to the priesthood, it were well that he had his concepts set right.

(d) *Fitness to bear the onera of the Institute*. In general, this is the same as the fitness for the priesthood, but should also include fitness to bear the burdens and strain of religious life. Thus, a man may make a good diocesan priest, but be poor material for religious life because he is a poor community mixer, etc.

Fr. Ignatius Brady, O.F.M.

⁵J. A. Laubacher, S.S., "Helps Toward Determining Vocations in the Major Seminaries," NCEA Bulletin, vol. 44 (1947), pp. 94 ff. Cf. also Archbishop R. Cushing, "The American Priest," *Eccl. Rev.*, 116 (1947), 161-170.

NATIONAL CONFERENCE OF FRANCISCAN TEACHING SISTERS

The Third Annual Meeting of the National Conference of Franciscan Teaching Sisterhoods is to be held at Sacred Heart Academy, Main St., Buffalo 21, N.Y., November 26-27 (the Friday and Saturday after Thanksgiving). Under the auspices of the Franciscan Educational Conference and at the invitation of Mother M. Gonzaga, O.S.F., Provincial Superior of the Holy Name Province of the Sisters of Saint Francis of Penance and Christian Charity, the meeting will be devoted to the topic "Mary in the Seraphic Order." This provided the theme for the Friars' division of the F.E.C. at Watkins Glen, N.Y., August 16-17.

After the solemn celebration of the Holy Sacrifice each day at 9:00 (St. Benedict's Church, Main St. and Eggert Road), the Sisters delegates will gather in the auditorium of the Academy to hear and discuss both theological and popular papers touching on Our Lady, particularly as she has been loved and honored and her prerogatives explained and defended in the Franciscan Order. Afternoon meetings will be devoted to sectional topics in Mariology for the elementary, secondary and college levels, plus a division on nursing education.

In summary the program will be as follows: Friday, at 10:00 A.M. a general assembly on the Position of Mary in the Franciscan Theology, Synthesis, and Marian Doctrine of Franciscan Saints. During the luncheon hour two showings will be available of a vocational film on the Franciscan Teaching Brothers. In the afternoon (1:30), the sectional meetings. In elementary education: "Our Lady in the History of our Country." Secondary education: "Marian Education in Franciscan Schools," and "Mary in Franciscan Literature." The College division will be devoted to a discussion on Mariology in theological texts for colleges, while the section of Nursing Education will consider "Marian Joy in Nursing." A general assembly will follow at 4:00, to consider Mary as the Queen of the Seraphic Order and to hear reports of the International Marian Congress held at Rome in late October.

All of Saturday morning's general assembly will be given over to a Symposium on the Franciscan Crown of the Seven Joys. The speakers will consider the history of the devotion, the indulgences attached to it for Religious and laypeople, the spiritual value of the Crown in our daily life, and problems and questions that may arise concerning its use. In the last general session (1:30) one paper will delineate the devotion

of Saint Francis to Our Lady, and the final paper will consider "The Role of Mary in the Spiritual Formation of the Franciscan Religious."

After a summary and a report on resolutions, the delegates will adjourn once more to the church, to assist at Benediction of the Most Blessed Sacrament and to hear a few words from Bishop Joseph A. Burke, D.D., of Buffalo.

Information on the Conference has been sent to the different Franciscan Sisterhoods of the United States and Canada. Further information may be obtained by writing to Sister M. Georgia, O.S.F., Dean, Rosary Hill College, 4380 Maine Street, Buffalo 21, N.Y. Do not write to the Academy. Names of delegates should also be sent to Sister M. Georgia; the Sisters will kindly indicate whether they will be over-night guests and will need accommodations arranged by the local committee. Over-night guests are asked to pay a fee of \$10.00, which will include meals for both days; other guests may also obtain their noon meal at the Academy (\$1.00).

It is hoped that as many Franciscan Communities as possible will avail themselves of this Marian Year opportunity to discuss what proved so interesting a topic at the Friars' meeting, "Mary in the Seraphic Order." The Proceedings will be printed, perhaps as a joint-volume with the August meeting.

The Proceedings of the First Annual Meeting (1952) are available from the Franciscan Herald Press, 1434 West 51st St., Chicago 9, Illinois (\$1.00). The Proceedings for 1953, on "Theology in Daily Life," are on sale at the Seraphic Press, 1501 South Layton Blvd., Milwaukee 15, Wisc. (\$2.00; \$2.25 postpaid). They will provide important and influential additions to a community library. Copies of the Friars' F.E.C. Proceedings may be obtained from Fr. Sebastian Miklas, OFM Cap., Capuchin College, Washington 17, D.C.

A DAY OF PRAYER FOR THE PERSECUTED CATHOLICS IN CHINA

The Union of Prayer for the Church of China, established at the College of Saint Peter the Apostle in Rome, observed May 27 as a day of special prayer for the persecuted Catholics in China. The ceremonies were held in the Basilica of Saint Mary Major, where

Lady, Help of the Roman People, is greatly venerated. It was a reproduction of this image that was first venerated in China, having been brought there by the early Franciscan missionaries. All exiled Chinese and foreign missionaries and friends of China in Rome were invited by letter to attend the ceremonies. The appeal for prayer and sacrifice, however, is limited to the friends of China in Rome, but to all the faithful throughout the world. Our Catholic Brethren in China are undergoing a persecution of relentless cruelty and diabolical cleverness; it is our sacred duty to help them by prayer for the grace of perseverance, and to implore the divine Mercy that "these days may be shortened."

Notitiae Franciscanae Missionariae IV, 1954, 4.

A LETTER FROM THE PERSECUTED CATHOLICS OF CHINA

Dear Brothers in Christ:

Without doubt you are quite well acquainted with the terrible struggles that have been ours for the past five years.

At the present moment our three and a half million Catholics are undergoing a fearful persecution on the part of the Communist government, for the sole reason that they have refused to break away from the Church of Rome and the Pope.

Bishops, priests, and laity—we have openly proclaimed our love for our country, but also our refusal to have a part in any attack on our Faith by means of favor shown to a schismatic church. For this reason an open and violent persecution has begun: imprisonments, endless questioning campaigns of calumny, popular trials, punishments of all sorts. . . .

Up to the present moment, by the grace of God, Catholic China is making every effort to remain worthy of the Mother Church of Rome and she rejoices in being able to bear testimony to Christ by her sufferings.

In our time of trial it is natural for us to turn to you, our fellow Catholics throughout the world, and to rely on you. *We beg you not to leave us alone in this terrible struggle*, but to uphold us by your prayers.

We ask you *now* to take part in our trials by offering for us your daily prayers and sufferings, so that striving together in the combat, may one day rejoice together in the triumph.

Your Catholic Brethren in China

PRAYER FOR THE CATHOLICS OF CHINA

O eternal and all-powerful God, Comforter of the afflicted and Strength of those who suffer, grant that, by the intercession of the holy martyrs of China, Thy persecuted faithful may obtain strength in time of trial, peace in Thy service, and the grace to glorify Thee. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

FRANCISCAN BRIEFS

COUNTED AS MINE. Sister Mary Francis, P.C. Privately printed for the Poor Clare Nuns of the Monastery of Our Lady of Guadalupe, Route 1, Box 285-C, Roswell, New Mexico. Pp. 32. \$1.00.

It is difficult to write an adequate review of a book of poetry, and it is still more difficult when that poetry appears in dramatic form. This is somewhat the case with *Counted as Mine*. There is so much here to claim a reviewer's attention—profoundly beautiful thought clothed in magnificent free-flowing poetry; solid dramatic structure; delicacy of approach; tenderness and sympathy of touch—one hardly knows where to begin. Briefly, the drama tells the story of Juan Diego and Our Lady of Guadalupe. As material for a Marian Year program (and for this purpose it was written) it offers everything a director could ask for. There is music and folk dance, verse-choirs and ballet, and fine opportunities for brilliant costuming. Best of all, for non-professional groups no outstanding histrionic ability is demanded for any of the principal roles—only a good speaking voice and ability to handle dramatic verse.

So much for the play in general. As for the poetry it seems best to offer a few samplings rather than attempt a description. Here are a few lines from the

opening chorus-dance: The God of the Tasselled Corn:

Praise the Little Maid who bore our Savior,

For she is fair as wheat-sheaves in the breeze.

Her lips are bright poinsettias in the winter;

Most gracious little Queen of hills and leas!

Sing to the sweetest Mother of our Savior!

She smiles like morning dews upon the leas.

Our little Queen likes Indians to honor Her tall, brave Son, with songs, and pray to Him.

She walks like gentle winds, and talks like water,

And never in her life did any sin.

The Holy Virgin Mary is our Mother,

And never in her life did any sin.

When Juan Diego, grieving over the death of his beloved wife Maria Lucia, first hears the Virgin calling his name, he is struck with wonderment:

My name was sturdy as my hut, and solid As skins against the wind. Why do I hear it

Fragile as flute-notes on this winter dawn?

I never knew my name is like a star!

My eyes are awakened by it, and my life Is shining like a thousand hunting knives!

I never knew...my name is like a star!
I cannot find my fears!

Where is my sorrow—

Familiar friend of every winter dawn?

My fears are hidden in a maze of music,

My weariness is tangled up in stars.

Now let the sun-dial crumble; let the
sand-glass

Splinter and scatter; let the corn meal
stand

Unneeded and untended! All my living
Is sweetly tangled in a mesh of stars.

Incidentally, the Roswell Clares have just completed a little building venture in the form of a much-needed chapel for their monastery. Our Lady of Guadalupe will surely be pleased to see *Counted as Mine* presented in her honor during the Marian Year and royalties used for the chapel dedicated to her.

DUNS SCOTUS HONORED AT COLOGNE

IN MANY ways this Jubilee Year of Our Lady has brought to the fore the figure of the Blessed John Duns Scotus, the pioneer champion of her Immaculate Conception in the schools of the early fourteenth century.

In Cologne, where Scotus died November 8, 1308, the relics of this Servant of God were given renewed veneration in the past few months. On May 14, His Eminence Cardinal Frings conducted an official recognition and re-authentication of the bones at the famous Cathedral where they had been preserved for the past decade since the destruction of the ancient Minoritenkirche. At that time he assigned an important part of the relics, a bone from the left arm to the Friars Minor, while the rest of the bones were retained

at the Cathedral until such time a original resting-place has been re- This latter task has been undertaken by the Friars Minor Conventual, who set December 8 for the return of the relic.

On the occasion of the translation of this major relic from the Cathedral to the church of the Friars Minor, a special celebration was held in the presence of the Cardinal himself, the Minister General of the Order, friars from Rome (including Fr. Charles Balic, head of the mission to edit the works of Duns Scotus), many Provincials from Germany, England, France, Belgium and Holland, as well as the Universities of Cologne and Bonn participated. After a Solemn Mass celebrated by the Most Reverend Augustin Sepinski, Minister General of the Order, an academic session was held by the University of Bonn. At the latter Doctor Auer, professor of theology at the University of Bonn, spoke on "The Theological Genius of John Duns Scotus." In the late afternoon, after devotion to the honor of Mary Immaculate and an appropriate sermon by the Guardian of the Friary, the relic was joyfully transferred to the crypt of the Church.

May these happy events be one important step toward the beatification and canonization of the Marian Doctor. Let us pray that he whose life was spent in spreading the knowledge of Christ's Primacy and Kingship and in defending the honor of His Immaculate Mother may soon be raised to the honor of the altars.

(Based on an article of Fr. Sophronius Clasen, OFM, in the *Kirchen-Zeitung* of Cologne.)

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