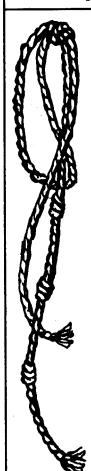
# The

# A FRANCISCAN SPIRITUAL REVIEW



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## The CORD

# A Monthly Franciscan Spiritual Review

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# Standard Abbreviations used in The CORD for Early Franciscan Sources

#### I. Writings of Saint Francis

Adm: Admonitions
BenLeo: Blessing for Brother Leo
CantSol: Canticle of Brother Sun
EpAnt: Letter to St. Anthony
EpCler: Latter to Clerics¹
EpCust: Letter to Superiors¹
EpFid: Letter to All the Faithful¹
EpLeo: Letter to Brother Leo
EpMin: Letter to a Minister
EpOrd: Latter to the Entire Order
EpRect: Letter to the Rulers of People
ExhLD: Exhortation to the Praise of God
ExpPat: Exposition on the Our Father
FormViv: Form of Life for St. Clare

Fragm: Another Fragment, Rule of 1221
LaudDei: Praises of the Most High God
LaudHor: Praises at All the Hours
OffPass: Office of the Passion
OrCruc: Prayer before the Crucifix
RegB: Rule of 1223
RegBB: Rule of 1221
RegEr: Rule for Hermits
SalBMV: Salutation to our Lady
SalVirt: Salutation to the Virtues
Test: Testament of St. Francis
UltVol: Last Will Written for Clare
VPLaet: Treatise on True and Perfect Joy
<sup>1</sup>I, II refer to First and Second Editions.

## II. Other Early Franciscan Sources

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

Quantibus: Marion A. Habig, ed., St. Francis of Assisi: Writings and Early Biographies. English Om-

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

# How to Become "Worthy Men"

#### WILLIAM W. BUECHEL

Pope John XXIII liked this saint so much that he wanted to proclaim him a Doctor of the Church, but he never got around to it. Saint Bernardino of Siena was a marvelous priest, preacher and writer. He lived from 1380 to 1444. Pope John loved his written sermons. The saint preached from one end of Italy to the other. Everyone who heard him was enthralled with him and what he was doing. He was a Franciscan who deeply loved his Order. He was also a learned man dedicated to the values of a Christian university education. In a sermon he proposed to students seven rules that would help them become "worthy men."

The first rule he proposed was "esteem." By that he meant that students should really esteem study as something sublime. The student must have a healthy respect for study, not just because he wants to get good grades in his subjects, but because he really and truly believes in acquiring culture, and not just for what money might eventually be in it for himself, but because he wants to live a full and cultured life. He should read the books of great masters to help get their thinking about life to become a rule of action for himself.

The thoughts of the great masters of literature can so mold one's life and lifestyle that all will recognize the culture he has acquired. He must not only read these great works of literature but also discuss them with others of like mind, thus learning to convey his ideas to others in an orderly and even scholarly fashion. I think it was Pascal who said that if you climb onto another's shoulders, even if you are shorter, you will see

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farther. It is far greater to have possession of great ideas, even if they are someone else's, than to be the one to invent ideas that are mediocre.

St. Bernardino went on to his second rule for those who would become "worthy men": separation. This sounds like an ominous word, but it maakes a lot of sense. What the saint meant by this was that the student should keep himself somewhat apart from those around him so that his study would not be unduly interrupted by other students and other things. There were many things that he put on the "stay-away" list: indecent books and bad company. Had the saint lived in the twentieth century, his list of "stay-aways" would be much longer. He would have mentioned, among other things, drugs, certain movies, magazines, books, videos, and entertainment. A good student needs to keep his standards high, very high. Culture is not found everywhere.

And, by making use of this second rule proposed by the saint, his third rule falls right into place. That rule advises that we remain *calm*, and not let ourselves get stirred up in our minds by the various characters and plots and whatever that our use of the media will certainly excite in us. The mind cannot do both things: retain the vital information we get from school books and other good books, and still dwell on the lurid scenes from these other polluted sources.

Ordination is the saint's fourth rule looking toward "worthy men." That doesn't mean you need to become a priest. It means that the student have order and protection in things of the body and of the spirit. There should be a balance in everything. Neither too much nor too little. Not too much sleep, nor too little. Not too much pampering the appetite nor yet too little eating. Not too much reading, not too little. The best way is always the middle road, neither too fast nor too slow. Too much study can be as bad as too little.

Going just a bit further in this rule: It is better to acquire a little knowledge and know it well, than to work for a lot of knowledge and know none of it too well. The saint tells us to go ahead and have personal preferences in books and authors, and stick with them, but never to despise any of them, whether they are favorites of yours or not.

All these four rules as proposed by St. Bernardino are really great, and can play an important part in one's life, but not unless the fifth rule, "continuation," is skillfully and artfully employed. "Continuation" means nothing more than perseverance. Without perseverance, nothing we do will or can have any lasting effect. It is not enough to embrace any course of studies unless we have an unrelenting purpose to stick with it, even though at times we may want to "chuck it all." Life is that way: we determine to start something and, after a little while, we want to give it up, and start something else. This type of person will never get anywhere.

He is doomed to failure. Unfortunately, even he doesn't realize it until it is too late. It is so easy to give in to laziness, and just sit back and take the easiest way. But that way inevitably leads to failure and remorse. The person who has a strong and tenacious will always succeeds. Coupled with the grace of God, there can be no failure.

And that brings us to the sixth rule proposed by St. Bernardino of Siena, looking toward "worthy men." *Enjoyment*. Every one of these rules is useless if one does not enjoy what he is doing. To study, to read, to think, none of these will ever fulfill their purpose if they are not enjoyed. In the beginning the enjoyment may not be so pronounced, but as the activity goes on, life goes forward, enjoyment becomes more and more pronounced so that life itself takes on new and accelerated meaning making life itself worthwhile.

The saint gives discretion as his final rule. This rule demands careful insight into one's own inner self. How often a person sets his sights on a goal that really is beyond his innate abilities? Everyone wants to be first in everything, but it is an unrealistic goal. There have to be persons in second, third, fourth and other places. You may be just as good as the next fellow, but he may come in first because he had just a wee bit more on the ball than did you. But that doesn't make you any worse than he is. You're still tops, and certainly should be in your own estimation. It pays, for a full life, not to have too much going for you, for then life becomes unbearable, and that is a tragedy. Live life to its fullest, without keeping an eye on a competitor. He may not be a competitor at all, and you've wasted the joy of living.

St. Bernardino gave these seven rules to university students of the fifteenth century. But they can and do apply to anyone interested, student or not. There is a reward for the effort made, and that reward makes of life a real enjoyment.



# Franciscan Missions to Non-Christians and the Rules of 1221 and 1223

## MICHAEL TRIPKA, T.O.R.

From its origins the Franciscan movement was missionary in nature. It was a matter of time before the gospel zeal of the friars, at first aimed at the revival of faith in European Christendom, began to turn toward the non-Christian world. In the early years, this meant the Moslem domains of Spain, Africa and the Near East.

The development of Franciscan missions to non-Christian lands paralelled the development of the order itself. The sending forth, or simply going forth without being sent, of friars armed and equipped with nothing more than zeal, gradually gave way to definite structures and procedures for missionaries, as reflected in the rules of 1221 and 1223.

#### Missions to Moslems before 1221

The beginning of Franciscan missions to non-Christians must be traced to Francis of Assisi himself, who desired greatly to go among the Moslems and to be worthy of the glory of martyrdom. (1 Cel 55-56) This was a very real possibility for any Christian willing to risk going among the Moslems, as the Crusades were in progress and Christian-Moslem enmity was at its height.

Celano records that Francis set out for Spain and Morocco with the desire to preach to the rulers and earn martyrdom, probably in 1213 or 1214, but was able to go only as far as Spain:

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But the good God, whom it pleased in his kindness to be mindful of me and of many others, withstood him to his face when he had traveled as far as Spain; and that he might not go any farther, he recalled him from the journey he had begun by a prolonged illness. (1 Cel 56)

There is no record of friars having been sent to Moslem lands by Francis prior to 1217, and Francis himself did not attempt to go again to the Moslems before then. "A certain brother... who, we believe, is to be venerated among the number of martyrs" (2 Cel 208) is referred to, and unnamed, who could have gone to the Moslems anytime after 1209. A date prior to 1217 is, however, unlikely for this anonymous mission.

Missions to the Moslems by the friars began in earnest after the Pentecost Chapter of 1217. Brother Elias, later to become the minister general of the order, led the first group of friars to the Holy Land in 1217. Brother Giles had been to the Holy Land as early as 1215, but on his own and without leaving record of his activities there.<sup>1</sup>

It was natural that the friars should wish to get a footing in the Holy Land. The capture and possession of the places associated with the earthly life of Christ had been one of the chief objects of the Crusades. It was also an idea which appealed strongly to the followers of St. Francis. One of the distinguishing features of Francis' teaching had been the emphasis which he had laid upon the incarnation and the events of the earthly life of Christ. That Christians should be free to visit these holy places, to kneel in the stable of Bethlehem or on Calvary's hill, was to him an ideal worthy of all that he had to give. <sup>2</sup>

The friars were able to establish their presence throughout the Holy Land, but for only so long as the Crusader states remained as a power in the region. Their fortunes suffered with the advance of the Moslem armies and the decline of Crusader power, and in 1291 the friars were forced to flee to Cyprus with the last of the Crusaders, not to return permanently to the Holy Land until the seventeenth century.<sup>3</sup>

Francis himself was at last able to go to the Moslems after the chapter of 1219, and in the same year sent out to Spain and Morocco that group of friars which has become known in Franciscan history as the Protomartyrs (first martyrs). It is notable that at this time, even though the order had become large enough to warrant the formation of geographic provinces, Francis was still able to personally send missionaries to the Moslems.

The Protomartyrs set out in March 1219 to go to Spain, making their way to Seville. These "excellent friars," five in number as a sixth had remained behind ill in Aragon, promptly made their way to the principal mosque of the city and attempted to enter. Needless to say, this enraged the local moslems (and revealed an incredible ignorance of Islamic belief

and practice, which indicates their degree of preparation for the mission), since for an unbeliever merely to enter a mosque was the height of sacrilege, let alone trying to preach the Christian Gospel therein. The friars were brought before the king of Seville, who would have had them beheaded, but was prevailed upon to send them to Morocco.

In Marakech, the friars began to preach to the populace in the marketplace, which led to their arrest and imprisonment. When after twenty days they refused to renounce the Catholic faith, they were brutally tortured and beheaded. Word of their deaths reached Francis on his return from Egypt in 1220.<sup>5</sup>

Francis set out in May 1219 for Palestine, landing at Acre and then going with a Crusader army to the siege of Damietta in Egypt. He was able to make his way to the court of the Sultan, although there is no record of what common language they might have spoken and no record that Francis spoke any Arabic.

But who can narrate with what great steadfastness of mind he stood before him, with what strength of spirit he spoke to him, with what eloquence and confidence he replied to those who insulted the Christian law? ... But though he was treated shamefully by many who were quite hostile and hateful toward him, he was nevertheless received very honorably by the sultan. (1 Cel 57)

Francis was unable in this encounter either to convert the Sultan or to become a martyr, but did earn the respect of the Sultan who, though disputing his Christian claims, regarded Francis as a man "different from all others." (1 Cel 57)

Francis did not return to the Moslem countries or to the Holy Land. The responsibilities of trying to hold a growing and changing order together were increasing. Just as Francis could no longer personally form and send forth all the men who were coming to the order, so too it was becoming impossible to personally send forth everyone who desired to go among the Moslems, or to determine even if any given friar should be sent. Also, given the potential dangers into which a missionary friar might be entering, it was no longer possible to allow friars to go to the Moslems on their own without being sent by proper authority. This need to balance inspiration with order, affecting all areas of Franciscan life as well as missionary endeavors, was shown clearly in the section on missions in the Regula non-bullata of 1221.

#### Non-Christian Missions in the Rule fo 1221

Chapter XVI of the Regula non-bullata concerns those friars "going among the Saracens and other infidels". This is one of the longest chapters

in the entire document, and is more an exhortation to those who are to expect persecution for the sake of the Gospel than a specific outline of mission procedure. There is, nonetheless, a definite guideline set out for the sending of friars to the unbelievers, as well as definite ways in which the friars might proclaim the Gospel in alien lands.

In a spirit of exhortation and practicality, the fervor of Francis and his followers reveals the sobering and tempering effect of hard-learned lessons. The chapter begins with Matthew 10:16:

The Lord says: Behold, I am sending you as lambs in the midst of wolves. Therefore, be prudent as serpents and simple as doves. (AB 12)

Indeed, anyone who would go into the hostile Moslem world of the time might well find himself as a lamb among wolves, but the exhortation to prudence is significant. The Protomartyrs' approach in the mosque of Seville had been anything but prudent.

Therefore, any brother who desires to go among the Saracens and other nonbelievers should go with the permission of his minister and servant. And the minister should give these brothers permission and not oppose them, if he shall see that they are fit to be sent; for he shall be bound to give an account to the Lord (cf. Lk. 16:P2) if he has proceeded without discretion in this or in other matters. (AB 121)

No longer was it possible to go off to the Moslems on one's own and leave no record of the journey, as Brother Giles had done in 1215. Discretion and caution are uppermost here. There is, however, no definition of what was meant by fitness to be sent. In 1221, and for some decades thereafter, it was still possible for a Franciscan to go to non-Christian lands with no knowledge of the language, culture, or religion of the country, and in fact with little learning or credentials at all except for being esteemed a good and holy friar. Only in the later half of the thirteenth century, especially in the work of blessed Ramon Lull, did Franciscans begin to become educated for the non-Christian missions. As late as 1245, when the Mongol Empire began to apear as a formidable power impinging both on Christiandom and Islam, John of Piano Carpino was sent as a papal emissary to Mongolia without knowing any oriental language.

Education and language skills, however, were not of prime importance to Francis. He set forth two ways in which the friars might proclaim the Gospel, and the one which required no words was of equal standing with the one which called for speaking:

As for the brothers who go, they can live spiritually among them in two ways. One way is not to engage in arguments or disputes, but to be subject

to every human creature for God's sake (1 Pet. 2:13) and to acknowledge that they are Christians. Another way is to proclaim the word of God when they see that it pleases the Lord, so that they believe in the all-powerful God—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—the Creator of all, in the Son who is Redeemer and Savior, and that they be baptized and become Christians, because whoever has not been born again of water and the Holy Spirit cannot enter into the Kingdom of God (cf. Jn. 3:5).

They can say to the Saracens and to others these and other things which will have pleased the Lord, for the Lord says in the Gospel: Everyone who acknowledges me before men I will acknowledge before my Father who is in heaven (Mt. 10:32). And: Whoever is ashamed of me and my words, the Son of Man will also be ashamed of him when he comes in His majesty and that of the Father and the angels (Lk. 9:26). (AB 121-122)

Presence and preaching are both presented as valid Gospel witnesses. The friars might, as God led them, simply live as Christians, in quiet humility. They might also proclaim the Gospel, as appropriate to their circumstances "when they see that it pleases the Lord." One is not presented as higher or more perfect than the other. For those who do preach, "when they see that it pleases the Lord" might well be a call to prudence and caution.

Yet the friars are not to be so cautious or prudent that they become unwilling to risk their lives and health for the sake of the Gospel when this is appropriate and necessary. The remainder of the chapter is an exhortation to be ready for persecution and suffering.

And all the brothers, wherever they may be, should remember that they gave themselves and abandoned their bodies to the Lord Jesus Christ. And for love of Him, they must make themselves vulnerable to their enemies, both visible and invisible, because the Lord says: Whoever loses his life for my sake will save it (cf. Lk. 9:24) in eternal life (Mt. 25:46). Blessed are those who suffer persecution for the sake of justice, for the kingdom of heaven is theirs (Mt. 5:10). If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you (In. 15:20). And: if they persecute you in one city, flee to another (cf. Mt. 10:23). Blessed are you (Mt. 5;11) when people shall hate you (Lk. 6:22) and malign (Mt. 5:11) and persecute you and drive you out, abuse you, denounce your name as evil (Lk. 6:22), and utter every kind of slander against you because of me (Mt. 5:11). Rejoice on that day and be glad (Lk. 6:23) because your reward is very great in heaven (cf. Mt. 5:12). And I say to you, my friends, do not be frightened by these things (Lk. 12:4), and do not fear those who kill the body (Mt. 10:28) and after that can do no more (Lk 12:4). Take care not to be disturbed (Mt. 24:6). For through your patience, you will possess your souls (Lk. 21:19) and whoever perseveres to the end will be saved (Mt. 10:22; 24:13). (AB 122).

The scriptures here are drawn from every possible source on persecution in the Gospels; some from the Sermon on the Mount, some from the sending forth of the Twelve, and some from Jesus' discourses on the last days. To Francis, they seem to have formed one prime thought, that the preaching of the Gospel by words or by life was bound to draw hostility and persecution. The friars were to anticipate this when going on mission to the Moslems, and later to other non-Christians, and to rejoice in persecution when received.

As much as prudence and discernment are enjoined in the first part of chapter XVI, it is possible that this last section reflects some remaining desire of Francis for mission and martyrdom himself. Even though he never returned to the East after 1220, and although his health was soon to begin failing, there is no sign that he gave up wanting to be a martyr. Also, although it was no longer sufficient for a zealous friar to simply go off to the Moslems, prudence was not entirely a limitation on zeal. Ministers were accountable for their discretion, or lack thereof, in allowing friars to go to the missions, but the primary initiative still rested with the friar who desired to go among the Moslems. While responsible for making sure the would-be missionaries were fit for their desired task, the ministers were urged not to oppose those who would go, and readily give permission to them if found fit, however fitness was understood. As is typical through the 1221 rule, authority in this matter is hedged with restraint.

This tone of Scriptural exhortation, restrained authority, and giving the benefit of the doubt to the friars who sought to go among non-Christians changed completely in the rule that was finally approved for the Franciscan order in 1223.

# Non-Christian Missions in the Rule of 1223

The Regula bullata of 1223, approved by Pope Honorius III, retains the practicalities of the Regula non-bullata while trimming the exhortations, prayers, and elaborations of Francis. This is as true of Chapter XII, the chapter pertaining to non-Christian missions, as of the entire rule.

Chapter XII, "Those who go among the Saracens and other nonbelievers," is stripped down to presenting the role of the minister toward those friars desiring to go to the unbelievers:

Those brothers who, by divine inspiration, desire to go among the Saracens and other nonbelievers should ask permission from their ministers provincial. But the ministers should not grant permission except to those whom they consider fit to be sent. (AB 144)

(The remainder of the chapter concerns the cardinal-protector of the fraternity.)

There is a significant change in tone here. The rule has moved from urging the minister not to oppose the friars, if they are fit to go, to urging the minister not to grant permission unless the friars are fit to go. A more restrictive standard of fitness to be sent is implied, although it is still not clear what was meant by fitness.

Bonaventure records that Francis saw in a vision that the rule had become too long, and was inspired to shorten it for approval. (LM 12, 11) In fact, Francis had considerable help from Cardinal Hugolino, who as bishop of Ostia had been a friend and admirer of Francis and the friars, and who later became Pope Gregory IX. (2 Cel 73) Far from wishing to dampen the spirit of the rule, Hugolino. who knew the mind of Francis as well as any of his friars, made the rule a compact and practical document. Francis did not oppose this.

If the emphasis shifted from inspiration toward authority, this was true of the entire rule. Warnings and exhortations on persecution were not necessary to friars who were learning by experience what persecution meant. There is an exhortation to perseverance, not in the chapter on the missions, but in the chapter on fraternal correction:

And those who are illiterate should not be eager to learn. Instead let them desire above all things to have the spirit of the Lord and His holy manner of working, to pray always to Him with a pure heart and to have humility, patience in persecution and weakness, and to love those who persecute us, find fault with us, or rebuke us, because the Lord says: Love your enemies, and pray for those who persecute and slander you (Mt. 5: 44). Blessed are those who suffer persecution for the sake of justice for theirs is the kingdom of heaven (Mt. 5:10). But whoever perseveres to the end, he will be saved (Mt. 10:22). (AB 144)

Persecution and struggle are not unique to those who go among unbelievers, but to anyone who truly would follow the Gospel life according to Francis, whether in Christian Europe or Moslem Asia.

Francis remained suspicious of education, as shown by the sentence on the illiterate. Not long after the approval of the *Regula bullata*, Francis wrote to Anthony of Padua:

It pleases me that you teach sacred theology to the brothers, as long as—in the words of the Rule—you "do not extinguish the Spirit of prayer and devotion" with study of this kind. (AB 79)

This reference to chapter V of the Regula bullata touches again on the question of fitness for missionary work. Increasingly, talented and learned men were going forth to the missions, but it was still possible for the

unlearned and untrained friar to be sent into a situation for which he was unprepared. Increasingly, however this would become less common.

The rule of 1223 places definite structure on the sending of the friars. Within two decades, Franciscans were being sent on missions to non-Christian lands as bishops and papal emissaries.

The sending forth of friars armed and equipped with nothing more than zeal, gradually gave way to definite structures and procedures for missionaries...

# After the Rule of 1223: Missions to Moslems and Mongols

Already in 1217, the Franciscans had established a definite organized presence in Palestine. Increasingly, Franciscan missions among the Moslems were not individual friars, but groups of friars setting up a house in a particular place, or in several places organized into a province. The province of the Holy Land was the first of these. Despite being driven out of Palestine with the fall of Acre in 1291, the friars retained a significant presence in Cyprus, where friars had established houses since the 1220s. The Franciscan Custody of the Holy Land exists to this day.

Despite the early setbacks in North Africa, by 1235 a number of Franciscan houses existed in Marocco and Algeria. The province of Barbary was formed in 1235. <sup>10</sup> A Franciscan, Brother Lupo, was made bishop of Morocco in 1246, <sup>11</sup> and the Franciscan presence in North Africa continued into the late fourteenth century despite increasing Moslem hostility and insignificant numbers of native Catholics. <sup>12</sup>

Late in the thirteenth century, Ramon Lull established a school for missionaries in Mallorca. <sup>13</sup> Lull believed that the Moslems could be converted if Christians would learn their language and culture, so to explain the Christian faith in a way that Moslems would understand. He translated Catholic theological writings into Arabic, including some of his own writings, and went himself twice to Algeria. On his first journey he was imprisoned and eventually deported after debating for some months with the local rulers. On the second journey he died, having fallen ill at sea, his body stoned on reaching shore.

A contemporary of the Franciscans who were studying and teaching at the rising universities of Europe, Lull had a significant effect on Franciscan missions. The school at Mallorca was established about 1276. <sup>15</sup> By the end of the thirteenth century, the day of the uneducated, zealous missionary friar was over for those going to the Moslem world.

While the earliest Franciscan missionaries had concentrated on the Moslems, these being the unbelievers closest at hand, "other infidels" were rising in the east. The Mongol conquest of Asia had already overrun Russia in the 1220s, and in 1240-41 reached into Hungary and Poland before being driven back. <sup>16</sup> Both Islam and Christendom seemed in danger of being overrun.

Pope Innocent IV, hoping to forestall further attacks, sent two Franciscans as messengers to Guyuk Khan in 1245. John of Piano Carpino and Lawrence of Portugal were to go to the Mongols, but in fact Lawrence never went. <sup>17</sup> John was a friar of high reputation, having been largely responsible for establishing the Franciscans in Poland, Hungary, Bohemia and Norway, and a man of advanced age and learning. <sup>18</sup> He did not, however, know any of the languages of Asia, and so took with him brother Benedict the Pole as companion and interpreter. <sup>19</sup> The two friars made their way into Russia, meeting with "Tartars" who captured them and then sent them on their way (often a clear distinction was not made between Tartars, mongols, and various other Central Asian peoples):

On the First Friday after Ash Wednesday we were putting up for the night as the sun was setting when some armed Tartars rushed upon us in a horrible manner, wanting to know what kind of men we were. When we replied that we were envoys of the Lord Pope, they accepted some of our food and went away immediately.<sup>20</sup>

John and Benedict continued onward, and were eventually sent on to the court of Guyuk Khan himself, bearing a letter from Innocent IV urging the Mongols to become Christians and to cease attacking Christian Europe. <sup>21</sup> This was refused by Guyuk Khan, who sent the friars back with a letter of his own:

You have also said that supplication and prayer have been offered by you, that I might find a good entry into baptism. This prayer of thine I have not understood.<sup>22</sup>

Guyuk Khan did know something of Christianity, as there were Christians in many of the Asian lands conquered by the Mongols, especially Nestorians in central Asia and Syrian Jacobites in Persia and India. Guyuk Khan apparently had little respect for these:

Though thou likewise sayest that I should become a trembling Nestorian

Christian, worship God and be an ascetic, how knowest thou whom God absolves, in truth to whom He shows mercy?<sup>23</sup>

A more definitely religious mission was that of brother William of Rubruck in 1248. Sartak, the son of Batu Khan of the Golden Horde (modern Russia), was said in the West to be a Christian. <sup>24</sup> William had letters of introduction to Sartak from Louis IX of France, and was sent specifically to make contact with the Christians of the Mongol Empire. William had these letters translated into Persian and Syrian. Although well received by Sartak, who was very curious about Christianity, William found his Christian faith dubious:

As for Sartach, whether he believes in Christ or not, I do not know. But I do know that he does not wish to be called a Christian. 25

William was sent on to the court of Mangu Khan, where he observed the relations among the many religions current in the empire. The Mongols themselves had as yet a primitive religion, and followed a policy of tolerance toward the religions of their conquered peoples. As to the Nestorians, William had much to say about what he perceived as their laxity and ignorance. <sup>26</sup>

A definite Franciscan presence in Mongolia did not become firmly established until the appointment of John of Monte Corvino as archbishop of Khanbalik in 1307. <sup>27</sup> John had gone to Mongolia in 1291, bearing letters from Pope Nicholas IV, and remained in Mongolia until his death in 1329. Active centers of Roman Catholicism, stimulated by the Franciscan presence, remained in the Mongol Empire until the invasions of Tamerlane in the 1380s. <sup>28</sup>

From the beginnings, the contact of the Western Church with the Mongol Empire had been sought by popes and kings. This was an attempt to meet with a major power on a high diplomatic level, and to engage in effective evangelism among diverse and often highly civilized peoples. It was never a place for simple friars equipped only with zeal. The choice of Franciscans for such a mission points to a development which Francis would not likely have anticipated, given his cautions toward education and toward the seeking of high status. Already by the middle of the thirteenth century, Franciscans had gone from being men who were considered simple and often ignorant to being men who were important contributors to the major intelectual and theological currents of the time. The Franciscan approach to non-Christian missions developed in similar way. Friars had gone from being wandering preachers, going at times on their own and ignorant of the places to which they went, to skilled and learned preachers and administrators whom the highest powers of Chris-

tian Europe might seek out for sensitive missions. This was an evolution well beyond the scope foreseen in 1221 or 1223.

#### Evolving Missions: Were the Rules Reflections or Causes?

The Regula non-bullata and its distillation in the Regula bullata cannot be said to have changed the direction of Franciscan missions to non-Christians. Already before 1221, the Franciscan missionary enterprise was moving in the direction of organization and control. The division of the order into provinces in 1217, (L3S 57) of which the Holy Land was one of the earliest, was a change which laid the groundwork for 1221. Francis did not create ministers provincial anew in 1221; they were already in place in the various parts of the order. The same factors which made such structures necessary in Europe made them even more necessary in non-Christian areas. If a friar going off on his own into a Christian country, not knowing the language or customs, might be exposed to danger by being taken as a heretic (as hapened to the friars in Germany), 29 even greater danger would be posed among hostile Moslems.

Giving Ministers the authority to approve or disapprove the sending of misisonaries definitely would restrict the friars from wandering on their own, but did not necessarily make them more wise, learned, or competent. In the Regula bullata, as noted above. Francis still cautions the friars against being too eager to learn if illiterate. Also, for friars to be sent out by kings and popes, and be made missionary bishops, would have dismayed Francis, who did not want the friars to become bishops for fear that this would lead them to pride and arrogance. (2 Cel 148) Such an enterprise as Ramon Lull's school for missionaries at Mallorca, which involved learning Arabic and translating significant intellectual Christian writings into that language, would have been quite beyond the scope of what Francis envisioned for friars going among the unbelievers.

If the later developments could not have been anticipated by either the Regula bullata or the Regula non-bullata, neither could they be considered to go against the rules. Both rules mandate obedience to the Pope and to the successors of Francis as minister general. (AB 137) The needs of the Church, and the situation of the world around the friars, were changing. If Francis woud have been disturbed by the changed ways in which the friars were going to the unbelievers, he would have been disturbed by many changes taking place in all aspects of the order. Francis found himself in a constant struggle between the ideals of the early years of the fraternity, and the later years when he found the fraternity becoming something much larger than he could have imagined and quite different from what he had envisioned. The battle between the desire to return to

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the simplest form of his original inspiration and the need to establish some workable structure for the enlarged community was often painful, and can be seen in the Testament with its alternation between the vision of the "good old days" and an almost severe stress on obedience to the Rule and to proper authority. (AB 154 - 156). Even in his lifetime, Francis found the friars moving farther and faster then he was himself willing or able to move.

This is reflected in the developing non-Christian missions. Just as the rule of 1221 reflected what Francis saw as the needs of the church and the friars at the time, and just as the rule of 1223 condensed and clarified these needs, the later developments in which friars were sent as bishops and ambassadors reflected the needs of the Church later in the thirteenth century. The rules of 1221 and 1223 did not cause changes which they could not have anticipated, but neither did these changes mean that the rule of 1223 was being ignored. If any line of cause and effect can be seen here, the structuring of the order which began with the chapter of 1217, which was reflected in 1221 and 1223, was what permitted the later missions to grow and be effective. Such a fraternity as the Franciscans required some measure of structure in order to become sufficently effective in the work of evangelization that it could be possible for the highest leadership of the Church to entrust the friars with complex responsibilities.

#### Conclusion

The activities of the early Franciscan missionaries may be divided into three phases. The earliest of these, from 1213 to 1217, was the period in which Francis attempted unsuccessfully to go to Morocco, and in which Brother Giles went to the Holy Land. These travels to the Moslems were purely according to individual inspiration, with no organization or coordination, and with few recorded results.

The second phase, from 1217 to 1221, was the period in which the entire order was finding the need for structure. Provinces were beginning to be formed, including that of the Holy Land. Chapters, and ministers provincial had the authority to send or not to send friars to the unbelievers. Francis himself still had enough direct involvement in the affairs of the friars, although the order was becoming ever larger, that he was able to personally send missionaries to Morocco. This was the period in which the Moslem missions began to take on some recognizable structure, although friars might still be sent forth with more zeal than preparation.

The final phase, from 1221 onward, marked the period of definite structure. The Regula non-bullata of 1221 marked the attempt of Francis to. balance fervor and order. Francis himself was no longer sending friars to

Morocco or to the Holy Land. This was now the responsibility of the ministers provincial. At the same time, Francis showed clearly his own zeal for the conversion of non-Christians and his expectation of persecution for the sake of the Gospel. The *Regula bullata* of 1223 put a definite order on this, giving more firmly to the ministers provincial the authority to send or not to send friars, and in fact encouraging restraint in deciding whom to send.

The later developments in Franciscan missions to non-Christians were an evolution of this final phase. As the order itself became more organized, the needs of the friars going to non-Christians became more complex. And the types of works undertaken became more diverse as well. Such new endeavors as the diplomatic missions to Mongolia, and Ramon Lull's teaching Arabic to the missionaries, were not a turning away from the early Franciscan ideal, but a response to the changing needs of the Church and of the friars. The missionary enterprise, like the Franciscans themselves, had come through a progression from lesser to greater organization; from greater to lesser individualism; and from little or no knowledge of the peoples and places to which the friars would go, to high levels of intellectual preparation and at times high ecclesiastical and political contacts and appointments.

A learned intellectual is not necessarily a better friar than simple and illiterate friar who is good and holy, but there are some tasks which the simple and illiterate one is simply not able to accomplish. Had the friars remained individualistic, unorganized, and untrained, the significant missionary movements of the middle and late thirteenth century would have been impossible. The rules of 1221 and 1223, while not the cause of the effectiveness of the later Franciscan missionaries, sealed and codified the trends which made this effectiveness a realistic possibility.

#### Endnotes

<sup>1</sup>John Moorman, A History of the Franciscan Order. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1968, p. 227.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid

<sup>3</sup>Ibid.

<sup>4</sup>Analecta Franciscana, vol. 3, 15-19, in Proper Offices of Franciscan Saints and Blesseds in the Liturgy of the Hours, New York: Catholic Book Publishing Co., 1973, p. 36.

<sup>5</sup>Moorman, p. 229.

<sup>6</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 230-232.

<sup>7</sup>Christopher Dawson, ed., *The Mongol Mission*. London: Sheed and Ward Ltd., 1955, p. xv.

<sup>8</sup>Moorman, p. 227.

<sup>9</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 228.

<sup>10</sup>Ibid., p. 229.

 $^{11}Ibid$ .

<sup>12</sup>Raphael M. Huber, OFM, Conv., A Documented History of the Franciscan Order, Milwaukee: Nowiny Publishing Apostolate, 1944, p. 770.

<sup>13</sup>Moorman, p. 229.

<sup>14</sup>Moorman, p. 231 - 232.

<sup>15</sup>Huber, p. 779.

<sup>16</sup>Dawson, pp. xiii-xv.

<sup>17</sup>Dawson, p. xv.

<sup>18</sup>Moorman, p. 232.

<sup>19</sup>John of Piano Carpino, History of the Mongols, prologue; Dawson, p. 4.

<sup>20</sup>John of Piano Carpino, chapter IX; Dawson, p. 53.

<sup>21</sup>"Two Bulls of Pope Innocent IV Addressed to the Emperor of the Tartars," Dawson, pp. 73-76.

<sup>22</sup>"Guyuk Khan's Letter to Pope Innocent IV," Dawson, p. 85.

23 Ibid.

<sup>24</sup>William of Rubruck, Journey of William of Rubruck, chapter I; Dawson, pp. 91-92.

<sup>25</sup>William of Rubruck, chapter XVIII; Dawson, p. 123.

<sup>26</sup>William of Rubruck, chapter XXVI; Dawson, pp. 144-145.

<sup>27</sup>Dawson, pp. xxxii-xxxiii.

<sup>28</sup>Dawson, p. xxxiv.

<sup>29</sup>Jordan of Giano, Chronicle of Brother Jordan of Giano, XIIIth Century Chronicles. Chicago: Franciscan Herald Press, 1961, pp. 22-23.



# First Celano and the Mirror of Perfection: Seeing Francis with Double Vision

SR. ROBERTA A. MCKELVIE, C.S.B.

If ever there has been someone who typifies the breadth of the expression "become all things to all people," it is probably Francis of Assisi. It is relatively safe to assume that no single "real Francis" exists, and equally safe to say that who Francis "is" very much depends upon who the person speaking or writing about him is.

Although one of Francis' most cherished values was simplicity. He seems to have been a most complex individual. Part of this complexity, of course, is due to the disparity evident in how he has been portrayed in the primary sources for his life. Two of the most dichatomous of those sources are the First Life¹ written in 1228 by Thomas of Celano and Mirror of Perfection² which dates from 1318. The Francis of First Celano is human, weak, vulnerable, compassionate, saintly, and ultimately lovable. The Francis of the Mirror is somewhat legalistic, a paragon of perfection, a rule-giving visionary, and ultimately, a figure tormented by the growing differences between his dream and the reality of the brotherhood. An examination of the Francis portrayed in these two sources reveals a dichotomy in the following aspects of life: "first among brothers"/founder, former of community, and saint-mystic/exemplar.

I. First Celano places some measure of emphasis on the Francis Bernardone who lived in Assisi as the child-youth-young adult tainted by, if not corrupted by, the evil of his familial and social relationships. We are told he "was brought up by his parents proud of spirit, in accordance with the vanity of the world... (1 Cel. 1). He lived in an environment which exposed

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him to "shameful practices" and "every kind of debauchery" (1 Cel 1), as well as token Christianity. Consequently he "squandered and wasted his time miserably" (1 Cel. 2), outdoing "all his contemporaries in vanities," and he came to be a promoter of evil... (1 Cel 2). He looked forward to a day when he would be both wealthy and famous (1 Cel 4); being "eager for glory" (1 Cel 5), he embarked on a never-completed journey to Apulia. This Francis is also an "unreliable steward" (1 Cel 2), prodigally generous with things, yet too sensitive to be anywhere near someone so repulsive and noisome as a leper (1 Cel 17).

His conversion, therefore, is believable. Certainly, there was much to turn away from. And Celano does not produce an "instant saint." Francis Bernardone goes through a slow, painful, uncertain-of-where-he's going process which becomes a spiral of starts and stops, of searchings and findings, ending only at death. There was the dream about Apulia, "an omen of great success" (1 Cel 5) which did not bring the expected happiness it should have. There was the period of restlessness and inner withdrawal from business as well as the constant secret prayer which exhausted him so much that "one person seemed to have entered, and another to have come out" (1 Cel 6)). The trip to Foligno and an overwhelming desire to be rid of its profit followed; Francis stayed at San Damiano until his father hauled him first home, then before the bishop of Assisi. Francis willingly "put off everything that is of this world" (1 Cel 15) so that "only the wall of flesh should separate him from the vision of God" (1 Cel 15). Francis, the holy man of God, is born. ...

Of this Francis Bernardone, the Mirror of Perfection says almost nothing. We are told only that "he had been accustomed to comfort in the world, was frail by nature, and was further weakened by overmuch fasting and hardship" (SP 18). Of the process of conversion, this source reveals nothing. Francis Bernardone the layman seems never to have existed; Francis of Assisi is already "friar minor" and one of twelve brothers in the earliest chronological passages in this work.

II. How did Francis become a "friar minor," one of a brotherhood of many? Celano gives a fairly thorough sequence of events. After "he had gained his freedom from the hand of his carnally-minded father" (1 Cel 18), Francis worked at rebuilding several churches, "put on a new kind of habit" (1 Cel 21) and, in the third year of his conversion, began living at the Portiuncola. "At this time he wore a kind of hermit's dress, with a leather girdle about his waist; he carried a staff in his hands and wore shoes on his feet" (1 Cel 21). At Mass there one day he heard the gospel about "how the Lord sent his disciples out to preach" (1 Cel 22). It is explained to him in some detail that the disciples of Jesus "should not

possess gold or silver or money; nor carry along the way scrip, or wallet, or bread, or a staff; that they should not have shoes, or two tunics; but that they should preach the kingdom of God and penance..." (1 Cel 22). This was what Francis had been waiting for, or seeking; it confirmed and validated the experience of the immediately preceding years of his life. So immediately he began to carry out these prescriptions for himself. Taking the words literally, he put aside staff and shoes, donned a rough, poor, mean tunic which bore a likeness to the cross, began wearing a small cord, and set out "to preach penance to all with great fervor of spirit and joy of mind, edifying his hearers with his simple words and his greatness of heart" (1 Cel 22-23). Celano reports again that Francis seemed "completely different from what he had been" (1 Cel 23), that he began greeting all with "The Lord give you his peace" (1 Cel 23), and that he was soon joined by others.

The conversion experience in *First Celano* makes only passing reference to the famous encounter with the leper, and then only as a retrospective comment integrated into the account of his going to live with the lepers and serving them (1 Cel 17). That encounter with the single leper seems almost a pre-conversion experience, and does not seem to have apparent relationship to the reading of the Gospel passages which inspired Francis' pursuit of evangelical perfection. And we are really not sure of the time-frame reference between that encounter and the hearing of the Gospel passage which so profoundly changed his life. It seems, because of where and how it is related, far removed from Francis as "first among many brothers."

Quite the contrary, however, is the Francis portrayed in Mirror of Perfection. Although he does greet others with "The Lord give you his peace" and instructs his companions to do the same, this is a fact revealed in retrospect (SP 26) and seems therefore less significant than if the greeting were presented as the end-product of a conversion process. The Francis on whom the Mirror focuses is Francis as founder, with the nuance of Rule-giver. The Mirror's Prologue immediately presents a theophany in which God "owns" the Rule as His, with Francis the intermediary between God and the Order. This is followed by a narration that is apparently intended to reveal the core element of that rule, poverty: "I assure you, brother, that it has been and remains my first and last intention and desire - had the brethren only believed me - that no friar should possess anything but a habit, a cord, and an undergarment, as our Rule allows' " (SP 2). Within the same section, the role of Francis as founder/interpreter of God's will is further delineated: "For the guidance of the order he also caused many things which he had learned from God by constant prayer and meditation, to be written in the Rule, declaring them to be in accordance with God's will" (SP 2). A point to be considered here is what is meant by "things... learned from God by constant prayer and meditation..." Does this mean further direct revelation from the Lord? Or does it mean Francis' inner spirit rising to the surface from the depths of his being, and that these things originated with his inner response to what was going on around him? The latter seems very much possible, if one reads "declaring them to be in accordance with God's will" as an attempt to verify their validity as God's will, not Francis'.

Mirror of Perfection presents Francis not so much as first among many brothers, but more as founder, which has a very different connotation. Francis tried to establish the priority of poverty from the very first days of his new life. The Mirror relates that Francis and his followers "observed the Holy Gospel to the letter in all things and through all things from the very day when Our Lord revealed to him that he and his friars were to live according to the pattern of the Holy Gospel (Sp 19). In conjunction with this evangelical poverty Francis insisted upon striving for perfect humility. "So at the commencement of the order he wished the friars to live in leper houses to serve them, and by so doing to establish themselves in holy humility" (SP 44). However, in many passages of the Mirror it seems that humility is an end in itself rather than a means to an end, rather than a grace that leads to greater compassion. Even in his own life, this seems to be true: "In order to preserve the virtue of holy humility" (SP 39), he resigned "the chief office" during a chapter, remaining subject for the rest of his life and "behaving himself more humbly in all things than any others" (SP 39). This quest for humility is supported with an account of Francis asking for a personal guardian and of his docility in accepting the reality that "some of the brothers did not provide for his needs, or spoke to him in a way that usually provokes a man." (SP 46) The closer he came to death, "the more careful he was to consider how he could live and die in all humility and poverty, and in the perfecting of all virtues" (SP 46). It is interesting, and somewhat significant, that the chapters in the Mirror which cover the themes of charity and compassion precede those on humility rather than follow them.

III. Thus far, it could be said that there are few similarities in the two pictures of Francis revealed in these works. However, both First Life and Mirror of Perfection present Francis as former of community. Some of the same incidents are recounted, although the context in which they are presented are very different.

Celano's former of community is "blessed father Francis" (1 Cel 26), who received daily consolation and grace from the Holy Spirit and who taught his new sons "to walk with undeviating steps the way of holy

poverty and blessed simplicity" (1 Cel 26). He reassured the brothers that God had many wonderful plans for their future (1 Cel 27-28), while "telling them many things concerning the kingdom of God, the contempt of the world, the renunciation of their own will, and the subduing of their own body... (1 Ce; 29)." After their return from their first mission, they:

... gave an account of the good things the merciful Lord had done for them; and, if they had been negligent and ungrateful in any way, they humbly begged and willingly received correction and punishment from their holy father. For ... they did not hide from him the least thought or the first impulses of their hearts. ... (1 Cel 30)

As a result of this bond of trusting love between Francis and his sons, they quickly learned from him "how to do useful, holy, and just works, [although] they knew not at all how to rejoice vainly over them." (1 Cel 30) Celano gives us a Francis who is a member of the community being formed.

Although one of Francis' most cherished values was simplicity, he seems to have been a most complex individual.

The approval of the First Rule by Pope Innocent III is also recounted here, but appears as part of the process of Francis' teaching his brothers how to live. The narrative immediately continues, identifying poverty, joy, humility, patience, and simplicity as the qualities of a "friar minor" formed by Francis. Near the end of Book 1, in a sort of oblique reference to the rule, Celano writes:

Francis' highest intention, his chief desire, his uppermost purpose was to observe the holy Gospel in all things and, with perfect vigilance, with all zeal, with all the longing of his mind and all the fervor of his heart, 'to follow the teaching and the footsteps of our Lord Jesus Christ'. (1 Cel 84)

However, this passage is more an introduction to the story of the manger at Greccio as it is anything else. It really is not an indication of Francis as Rule-giver. Francis, in *First Celano*, teaches his sons/brothers to *live the Gospel personally and communally*.

In sections 54-84 there are many events and incidents which reveal the compassionate charity, the desire for martyrdom, the union with creatures

which were the fruits of evangelical life both in Francis and in his brothers.

On the other hand, Mirror of Perfection repeatedly places before us Francis the Rule-giver, the recipient of direct revelation, and the guardian of the integrity of that revelation. As earlier stated, the Prologue to the text is a theophany; the succeeding 26 chapters all deal with specific "guidelines" for living out the God-given Rule. The feeling one gets from reading these passages is not that of compassionate at-one-ness among the brothers. Francis appears rather fearsome, if not irately unrelenting. "I assure you, brother, that it has been and remains my first and last intention and desire... that no friar should possess anything but a habit, a cord, and an undergarment, as our Rule allows." (SP 2) Section 3 adds sandals, when needed; and a more strident tone emerges:

The Friar Ministers think they can deceive God and me. On the contrary, in order that all friars shall know themselves bound to observe the perfection of the Gospel, I wish it to be written at the beginning and at the end of the Rule that friars are bound to the strict observance of the Holy Gospel of our 'Lord Jesus Christ.' (SP 3) [emphasis mine]

There seems no loving tenderness for the Gospel here, nor in Francis' response to the novice who repeatedly asks for a psalter, nor in the repeated emphasis on observing poverty in books, beds, cells, clothing, buildings, building sites, etc. The *Mirror* highlights a Francis who "hated money above all else" (SP 14) and, it would seem, jealously guarded his version of being a "Friar Minor." This is certainly not the Francis of *First Celano* who was "blessed father Francis."

IV. Finally, there is a strong difference in what each author apparently intended as the "final imprint" of Francis for the reader. Again, some of the same material is presented, and again, the sequence is different. First Celano closes with an account of the sufferings of the last two years of Francis' life, culminating in the reception of the stigmata (Book II) and the canonization/miracles narration of Book III. There is no doubt he wants to leave the reader with the impression of Francis as saint and mystic. Francis is identified as following the "example of the Apostles" (1 Cedl 89), "this new evangelist" (1 Cel 89), who was "not content with obeserving the common precepts, but overflowing with the most ardent charity" (1 Cel 90). Those wishing to "strive after the greater gifts" (cf. 1 Cor 1; 27-28) should "look into the mirror of his life and learn every perfection" (1 Cel 90). So great was Francis' love that the marks of the Passion and of the cross marked his body "as though he had hung upon the cross with the Son of God" (1 Cel 90).

Such a tremendous grace would seem incredible except for the collective

effect of the earlier components of Celano's Francis: the converted sinner, the "blessed father" first among many brothers, the humble and compassionate teacher. In an early "celebratory" passage First Celano gives this accolade:

So great was the faith of men and women, so great their devotion toward the holy man of God, that he pronounced himself happy who could but touch his garment. When he entered any city, the clergy rejoiced, the bells were rung, the men were filled with happiness, the women rejoiced together, the children clapped their hands; and often, taking branches from the trees, they went to meet him singing. (1 Cel 62)

Reminiscent of the triumphant entry of Jesus into Jerusalem just before his Passion, these words precede that section of Book I dealing with miracles Francis worked while alive (1 Cel 64-70), and serve as remote preparation for Francis' suffering, "passion," and death. Book III then simply reaffirms Francis' sanctity, telling of the miracles which occurred at his death and afterward. The final image perceived is that of Francis as another Christ, because even these cures echo those contained in the Gospel. Evangelical perfection was achieved in Francis of Assist.

The Mirror of Perfection makes no reference at all to the stigmata, although sections 91 - 93 relate Francis' "fervor and love for the Passion of Christ." (section title) Rather than a portrayal of sanctity, the Mirror ostensibly chooses Francis as exemplar as its most significant image.

But we who were with him cannot express either in words or writing how many great necessities he denied his body in order to give good example to the friars, and help them bear their poverty patiently. For once the friars began to increase in numbers, he made it his chief concern to teach the brethren what they should do or avoid by his own actions rather than by words. (SP 16)

This concept of example is woven throughout the entire Mirror, apearing frequently enough to be considered a major motif. (See SP 17-20, 27, 28, 71, 75, 81). Francis repeatedly identified himself as the example of how to live; and he achieved perfection in following the example of Christ. Arrangement of the rest of the Mirror (82 ff.) covers admonitions never to leave the Portiuncola, his love for the Passion, Francis' zeal for prayer and spirit of joy, his temptations and sufferings at the hands of devils, his spirit of prophecy, his miraculous relationship with the created world, and finally his death. It is as if the reader should expect to see, if he/she truly reads the pattern of Francis' life, a progression through ascetical struggle to awareness of the miraculously providential care of God. But the tone, while less dissonant than the rest of the work, certainly does not attain the smooth texture and softer qualities of Celano's First Life.

Where, then is the root of the paradox of double vision? Is it in Francis himself? In those who wrote about him? Or in those who now read what has been written? Probably in all three. Undeniably, Francis was a complex, contradictory individual who had to struggle with his own weaknesses and sinful tendencies. Obviously, each author had a specific intention in mind behind the verbal montage he created. Likewise, any given reader will bring his/her own agendas (hidden or obvious) to such material. How did the unconverted Francis metamorphose into a Friar Minor; how did the first among many brothers become "THE FOUNDER"? The passage of time between the writing of Celano's First Life and the spiritualist Mirror of Perfection obviously was important. Ninety years changes many things. Distance and time, one's angle of vision, memory itself — all influenced the differences in these two portraits of the saint.

#### Endnotes

<sup>1</sup>Thomas of Celano, First Life of St. Francis, trans. Placid Hermann, O.F.M., in St. Francis of Assisi Writings and Early Biographies, edit. Marion A. Habig, O.F.M. Fourth rev. ed. (Chicago: Franciscan Herald Press, 1983). All material by Celano is taken from Habig.

<sup>2</sup>Mirror of Perfection, trans. Leo Sherley-Price, with an Introduction by Theophile Desbonnets, O.F.M., in Habig. All material for Mirror of Perfection taken from this version.

# We apologize . . .

The July/August (1989) issue of The CORD carried an article entitled "Pilgrims in the World, Close to God's People, Inspired by Clare." The original article was written in Italian by Fr. Dario Pili, O.F.M., and translated into English by Sr. Agnes van Baer, O.S.C. A failure on our part to communicate with the translator resulted in our publishing a manuscript which unaware to us was unacceptable to both the author and the translator. Fortunately Poor Clare nuns had received the authorized version of the translation in the Quarterly Bulletin "Communion and Communication" (nn. 3 & 4, 4th October, 1987) which is edited by Fr. Dario for distribution to the Poor Clares throughout the world. The editor of The Cord regrets the error and offers his sincerest apologies to the author, the translator, our readers and to all Poor Clare nuns.

# **Book Reviews**

Facing Codependence: What it is, Where it comes from, How it sabotages our Lives. By Pia Melody. San Francisco: Harper and Row, 1989. Pp. 222, including indices. Paper, \$10.95.

Reviewed by Father Richard Mucowski, O.F.M. Ed. D. Executive Vice President of St. Bonaventure University, teacher in the Community Counseling and Psychology Departments, researcher in the field of adult children of alcoholics and codependence.

The author sets out to share her pioneering and careful study of the etiology and treatment of codependence. The book is written in four parts. First, Melody deals with symptoms. The next section of the book flows directly into the nature of the child and how the child's formation is either supported or compromised in the family unit. The third area of the book focuses on the various forms of abuse including physical, sexual, emotional and spiritual abuse. The last section of this work begins to address movement toward recovery which, she notes, has been dealt with in more detail in another book she has written on the subject (Breaking Free: A Recovery Workbook for Facing Codependence.) Finally, an appendix contains an historical account of the codependence movement and an overview of the psychological literature which is available to those who may be interested in studying the subject matter.

One of the most striking items in this book is its accuracy of description in the development of codependence symptomology, formation and manifestation in its various strains. The interesting problem with this particular disorder is its tendency to manifest itself in the extremes. Specifically, either low self esteem or an arrogant and grandiose posture both reflect dysfunctional behavior patterns. In addition, this is the first book on the subject matter from a theoretical standpoint which has some validity based in scientific fact (Mucowski and Hayden, 1988 presentation on Adult Children of Alcoholics and Learning Styles to Eastern Educational Research Association).

Perhaps the weakest section of the book is the last part which is devoted to recovery. The author may have believed that this was covered sufficiently in another work. However, the reader was clearly left with the expectation of the need to go through a significant process to change one's life. Such a process, although outlined, was not thoroughly developed. Because of that, this reviewer was disappointed in where the book left him. Other positive points included the book's easily read style. Some people object based on the pain generated from their life's experience which the text tends to conjure up.

Certainly any keeping professional, doctor, clergy, mental health counselor and those involved in chemical dependency treatment programming will find this book to be an exceptional book for diagnosing the problem of codependency. The general public may also find

the book to be helpful in gaining an awareness of what happens when abuse of any kind occurs, both to the abuser and those abused. For the money, I would have to say that Melody has published one of the very special books in the field which might, someday, become the prime text for describing the development of the codependence disorder.

Clare of Assisi: Early Documents. Edited and translated by Regis J. Armstrong, O.F.M., Cap. New York: Paulist Press, 1988. Pp iii - 345. Paper, \$12.95.

Reviewed by Mother M. Francis, P.C.C. A well-known writer, Mother M. Francis is abbess of the Poor Clare Monastery in Roswell, New Mexico.

Father Regis, already long hailed as loyal brother and good friend of his sisters in the Second Order whom he serves so well not only with his contributions as historian and Franciscan scholar on things Clarian, but perhaps even more with his loving understanding of the mind and heart of Clare, has now done them and all Franciscans a lasting and preservable service with his Clare of Assisi: Early Documents.

It is good to have it "all together." And Father Regis' insights into the prayer of Clare, as instanced especially in his commentaries on the letters to bl. Agnes (currently looking toward canonization) and Ermentrude, which show his appreciation of Saint Clare's completely feminine (as opposed to feminist!) approach to prayer and her relation to Christ are themselves worth many times the price of the book.

The translation of the Rule and Testament are clearly far superior to an ear-

lier translation done in tandem, although there are still some renderings that raise the eyebrows of another translator, and some really painful offerings like, "... exhort my sisters to always wear cheap garments." (Rule, 24) Even to one without a working knowledge of Latin and an eye to the original, this would have to offend not only the ear but more importantly the heart and understanding of a daughter of Clare. Father's earlier translation of Clare's "vestimentis vilibus" as "the poorest of garments" is assuredly a happier and truer translation than this new one.

Much less important but still causing one's shoulders to hunch a bit is rendering Clare's direction about land outside the enclosure garden that it remain "undeveloped" which is more the language of real estate than of the foundress. (Testament, 55).

Baffling and amazing is the translation of Clare's "amatrices dei" as, first, "lovers of your souls." But perhaps the translator had reason to omit her first directive here. Or, happily, it is a printer's omission undetected by the galley proofs reader. (Blessing, 14) And to render the saint's "labore brevissimo" as "with very little effort" is more than distressing. (Testament, 23)

But there is so much gold here, so much cause for gratitude. And Mother Veronica Namoyo's preface is itself worth a lot more than \$12.95.

Did Jesus Know he Was God? By Francois Dreyfus, O.P. Translated by Michael J. Wrenn. Chicago: Franciscan Herald Press, 1989, 154 pp. \$13.95.

Reviewed by Francis Berna, O.F.M., Ph.D. (Fordham). Associate Professor of Theology, St. Bonaventure University.

There was once a teacher who taught the same student over three consecutive years. When the student had graduated he came to spend a few moments with his teacher. Tears soon filled the young man's eyes and the teacher being sensitive person himself allowed the student to cry assuring him that such behavior was good for a man. Then the teacher asked if there was something the young man wished to talk about. The young man replied, "It's kind of silly, but I'm crying because in my twelve years of school you are the only teacher who never told me I was stupid." The teacher was surprised because he could recall moments when he was tempted to say something harsh to the sometimes troublesome student. The teacher was aware that someone greater had graced his words and thus the student was given new life.

Did the teacher's lack of consciousness, his sense of surprise at the student's disclosure, in any way diminish what he really was for the student? Other than developing the teacher's awareness, did the student's comments really alter the teacher's identity? No, the teacher's reality was ontologically and categorically the same despite his self-consciousness or the student's articulation of the teacher's significance in his life.

Why then would the question, "Did Jesus know he was God?" be such a burning issue? Fr. Dreyfus insists that he wants to prove this was the self-consciousness of Jesus to assure believers that the disciples did not misrepresent Jesus. But is it really an issue of possible misrepresentation? Did the student misrepresent the teacher in proclaim-

ing something more than the self-consciousness of the teacher?

To establish the fact that Jesus knew he was God Fr. Dreyfus builds a foundation on the Fourth Gospel, the Fathers of the church, medieval and contemporary theologians. One cannot dispute that the tradition of the Church maintains a conviction that Jesus had a self-consciousness of divinity. The author articulates this position quite clearly.

What immediately becomes a question, however, is what one is to understand by this tradition. One has to wait until Chapter thirteen to get some understanding of the significance, the meaning, of this fundamental assertion. Until then Fr. Dreyfus gives an impression that the historical Jesus clearly identified himself as the eternal Logos of God, the second person of the Blessed Trinity. Such a notion remains rather incredible.

Concentrating on the Gospel of John the author is anxious to establish that the Christ proclaimed by the evangelist is the very historical, factual reality of Jesus of Nazareth. Again the position of Fr. Dreufus seems rather incredible. In his exegesis this noted scholar never once develops the highly symbolic and theological imagery so immediately apparent in the text. The analysis tends to reduce the gospel text to an accounting of the historical consciousness of the pre-resurrection Jesus.

One has to compliment Fr. Dreyfus for the creative way in which he suggests that the revelation of the self-consciousness of Jesus was a gradual unfolding of the truth on the part of Jesus relative to people's ability to understand. The people at large were told as much as they could understand. The wide circle of disciples a bit more. The

inner circle of Peter, James and John were given a still clearer understanding. And finally, Fr. Dreyfus suggests that the fullest understanding was given to that disciple who rested his head on the bosom of Jesus. His analysis does serve the theological consideration of the Scriptures regarding an understanding of Jesus. The question of historicity and the post-resurrection faith of the authors, however, remains a question.

Fr. Dreyfus is at his best in Chapter Thirteen when he explores the meaning of the notion that Jesus knew he was God. What he offers here sounds quite different than the sort of knowledge he suggests in the whole previous section of the text concerned with historical analysis.

Section three of the chapter focuses on the "filial love and self-awareness of Jesus." For the first time the author admits that lesus is not concerned with proclaiming himself, "but only his relationship to the Father" (p. 106). Fr. Dreyfus articulates the very conviction of contemporary theologians when he writes, "Jesus doesn't have an awareness of being God by some sort of reflex consciousness, but through his glance and look of filial love toward his Father" (p. 106). Jesus interprets his existence, establishes his identity, always and everywhere in relationship with God as "Abba." Fr. Drevfus admits the inadequacy of the formula that Jesus knew he was God and states, "It would be better to say: In his look of love toward the Father Jesus sees that the Father has given everything to him, everything that he is, everything that he possesses and that this total gift is completely reciprocal" (p. 107). The notion has a classical understanding of the Trinity as its foundation. This is the definitive and absolute truth of Jesus, a truth which the Scriptures can readily establish as the self-consciousness of Jesus.

And in the same breath one can also recognize that all else is somewhat secondary in an analysis of the question. One wonders then why so much effort was given to the effort of "proving" as historical particular points of the gospel, especially when the proofs remain rather questionable.

The text would prove to be a good exercise for a biblical exegete. The text at least stirs the thought of the systematic theologian. Most everyone would benefit from section three of Chapter thirteen. While Fr. Dreyfus has a sound reputation as scholar and teacher he did not attract this student of Christology to come to class.

The Marginal Catholic Challenge, Don't Crush. By Joseph M. Champlin. Notre Dame, IN: Ave Maria Press, 1989. Pp. 155, Paper, \$8.95.

Reviewed by Fr. Donan McGovern, O.F.M. St. Anthony's Shrine, Boston, Massachusetts. Father Donan is in the Ministry for Divorced, Separated, Remarried as well as to all Alienated Catholics.

For any Priest, Religious, Deacon, Lay Person, involved in pastoral Ministry, indeed for any Catholic this is an excellent book. It is excellent because it deals with what's happening today in the lives of our people, it deals with reality. It states the problems, the salient pastoral problems of today and gives some practical solutions or suggestions for solutions. It comes from the pen — the wisdom of practical pastoral experience of Fr. Champlin himself,

not from the wishful thinking of the "Ivory Tower' mentality.

Besides offering papal Documents. Bishops Statements, Canon Law, Local Pastoral practice, Fr. Champlin wisely asks the Pastoral Agent to examine his/ her own attitudes towards the Marginal Catholic, as one of the positive steps toward developing effective Christlike Ministry with and for these people. He also mentions the importance of developing a "Like on Liker" - called "Peer Ministry" — by the North American Conference of Separated/Divorced Catholics — that Marginal Catholics who have returned to the practice of their faith often make excellent pastoral agents, for they have been there.

A basic question relating to the above

"Why have potentially joyful events, like the baptism of a child, or the wedding of a couple, become such worrisome, difficult, even unpleasant experiences for the clergy and others involved? How do we respond pastorally to those we call Marginal Catholics when they seek a sacrament or service of the Church? What direction does the Church give us for dealing with these gray, borderline situations?"

Who are "Marginal Catholics," so that we may find ways to effectively minister to them? Fr. Champlin leads the reader to a working definition:

"... by Marginal Catholics we mean those who have only a tenuous link with the parish. This fragile bond is manifested when persons seeking a sacrament either overtly reject a major Church tenet, or do not participate weekly at Sunday Mass, or seldom receive communion or penance, or rarely volunteer for Church activities, or never formally register with a particular parish. The presence of any one of these

negative characteristics is sufficient, for the purposes of our discussion, to place these people in the Marginal Catholic category."

To be practical, no sooner was I asked to review this book than the following happened:

I received a phone call from a rather anxious grandmother looking for a priest to baptize her newly born grandson. Would I be so kind as to baptize him or could I find a priest and a Church where the infant could be baptized? She would be so very grateful if I could do this. She then proceeded to tell me the story - common enough these days her daughter is a divorced Catholic remarried outside the Church to a Christian of another denomination, by a "J. P." The couple lives in a different state, but they wanted to have the baptism in grandma's parish, since this is where most of the family lives. The pastor knows the family and would do the baptism, but he took seriously ill, was hospitalized and could not do the baptism. The priest, taking the pastor's place refused to baptize the child because of the marital situation of the parents. How was I to deal with this case without putting the priest who refused in a bad light, since he surely acted in good faith. and to see what could be done to attend to the request of these people. I found out that the parents live near a parish where there is a Separated/ Divorced Catholics group and Come Home program for alienated Catholics. The parents went to the parish, spoke with the pastor, and at his request I did the baptism - most certainly the requirement to bring the child up in the faith is present, along with the parents willingness to reconcile "fix-up" the marriage.

Since there are an estimated 15 million alienated, unchurched, marginal

Catholics, and the number one reason for this alienation is marital difficulties, it is a blessing to have a guide book on hand to help handle the situations that will surely arise in pastoral ministry today.

While praising the much needed and often times very helpful programs for Sacrament preparation, yet attendance at these programs, parochial or diocesan, cannot of itself be the criteria for acceptance or rejection of the sacraments in given cases. For example:

"The imposition of Local Regulations more Stringent than Canonical Directives... Fulfilling Whose Needs?"...

Champlin then presents, "What Are The Church's Directives?" In so doing he quotes from the following sources:

The 1969 Rite of Baptism for Children.

the 1980 Instruction on Infant Baptism.

and the 1983 Code of Canon Law; Regarding Marriage:

The 1969 Rite of Marriage,

The 1981 Apostolic Exortation by Pope John Paul II "On the Family" (Familiaris Consortio),

and the 1983 Code of Canon Law.

I suppose I liked this book so much because I am one of the over 15 million who used on many occasions Fr. Champlin's book "Together For Life," for marriage preparations and agree with a "don't crush" attitude toward those who present themselves for the sacraments.

Father Champlin includes in his work some insights into the interpretation of Law, how understood in the European mind and the American viewpoint of law—very helpful for the non-law student.

The sum in the author's own words:

"Priests, Deacons and Pastoral Ministers need to challenge, but not crush those who come to them seeking the Sacraments and services of the Church... they need above all to be like their Master, the suffering Servant Messiah, extremely careful not to break the bruised reed or to snuff out the smoldering wick".

# **Shorter Notice**

Julian Davies, O.F.M., Associate Editor

Faith & Fame. Celebrities Talk About Their Lives and Spirituality. By Edd Anthony and Curtis E. Johnson. Huntington, IN: Our Sunday Visitor Press, 1989. Pp. 192. Cloth, n.p.

Eighteen first person narratives from the entertainment world comprise the substance of this interesting and easy to read book. Steve Allen, Dick Butkus, June Haver MacMurray, Shari Lewis, Monty Hall, Deneica Williams are just some of the well known people who share their views and practice in regard to God and religion, and how this fits into their lives. Among the themes that emerge are the importance of prayer of gratitude and of meditation, of service, of the evidence for God in love and family, of the Providence of God guiding them. While more than half of the eighteen contributors are Catholics, there is a spectrum of perspectives. Young people in particular might benefit from this book which tells how God is, has been, and will be for real in this world, and in a world often assumed to be God-

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For further information contact Kathleen Moffatt, OSF, Office of Ongoing Formation, Our Lady of Angels Convent, ASTON, PA. 19014 (215) 459-4125

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