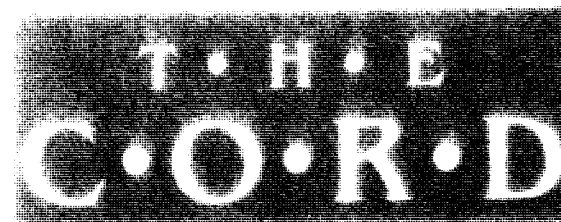


The Cord  
The Franciscan Institute  
St. Bonaventure, New York 14778

Periodical Postage Paid  
at St. Bonaventure, NY 14778  
and Additional Office

# A FRANCISCAN SPIRITUAL REVIEW

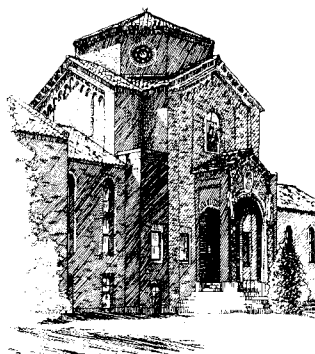


Attention Postal Service:

PLEASE DO NOT CUT OR DESTROY THIS PERIODICAL  
Return Postage Guaranteed.

The Franciscan Institute focuses on a critical study of the origin and early development of the Franciscan movement. It also furthers an understanding of the continuing development of the Franciscan movement and its significance as a vital charism in the contemporary church and world.

- teaching
- research
- publications



## Study Opportunities

- M.A. in Franciscan Studies
- Advanced Certificate in Franciscan Studies
- Franciscan Formators Program
- Sabbatical Renewal
- Credit or audit



## School of Franciscan Studies

The Franciscan Institute  
c/o Franciscan Institute  
St. Bonaventure, NY 14778  
Tel. (716) 375-2105 • (716) 375-2156

*Editorial* .....205

*The Last Illness of St. Francis*

Thomas A. Nairn, OFM. ....206

*A Bonaventurian Paradigm for  
Discovering God in Illness*

Mary Hroschowski, OSF. .... 213

*Bodily Knowing and the  
Theology of Bonaventure*

Mary Catherine Gurley, OSF. .... 217

*Hard Work and Good Times*

David Flood, OFM. ....228

*Exploring the Foundational  
Aspects of Religious Life*

Patricia Fritz, OSF and  
Kathleen Gannon, OSF .....232

*Brother Wolf*

Claire Campbell, SFO ..... 241

*About Our Contributors* ..... 243

*Announcements* ..... 243

*On the Franciscan Circuit* ..... 252

**THE CORD**  
A Franciscan Spiritual Review

Publisher, Anthony M. Carrozzo, OFM  
Editor: Elise Saggau, OSF  
Promotion: Thomas Blow, OFM  
Distribution Manager: Noel Riggs

Editorial Board: Marie Beha, OSC, Murray Bodo, OFM, Julian Davies, OFM,  
Patricia Hutchison, OSF, Frances Ann Thom, OSF, Dominic Scotto, TOR,  
and Ed and Mary Zablocki, SFO.

*The Cord* (ISSN 0010-8685 USPS 563-640) is published bi-monthly by the Franciscan Institute at St. Bonaventure University, St. Bonaventure, NY 14778.

SUBSCRIPTION RATES: \$20.00 a year; \$3.50 a copy. Periodical postage paid at St. Bonaventure, NY 14778 and at additional mailing office.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to *The Cord*, P.O. Drawer F, St. Bonaventure, NY 14778 USA.

NOTICE TO CONTRIBUTORS: Address all manuscripts to Editor, *The Cord*, The Franciscan Institute, St. Bonaventure, NY 14778.

To save unnecessary delay and expense, contributors are asked to observe the following directives:

1. MSS should be submitted on disk or typed on 8 1/2 x 11 paper, one side only, double spaced.
2. The University of Chicago *Manual of Style*, 13 ed., is to be consulted on general questions of style.
3. Titles of books and periodicals should be italicized or, in typed manuscripts, underlined.  
Titles of articles should be enclosed in quotation marks and not underlined or italicized.
4. References to Scripture sources or to basic Franciscan sources should not be footnoted, but entered within parenthesis immediately after the cited text, with period following the closed parenthesis. For example:  
(1Cor. 13:6).  
(RegNB 23:2).  
(2Cel 5:8).  
(4LAg 2:13).

A list of standard abbreviations used in *The Cord* can be found inside the back cover. The edition of the Franciscan sources used should be noted in the first reference in a mss.

ADVERTISING: Ads should be sent to the editor at the above address. Cost: full page, \$50.00; half page, \$25.00; quarter page, \$15.00.

Cover design: Basil Valente, OFM and David Haack, OFM.

*The Cord*, 47.5 (1997)



## Editorial

Matter matters! It is one of the perennial temptations of Christianity to slip into thinking that matter doesn't really matter, that only spirit matters. Our strong sacramental tradition keeps calling us back to a profound reverence for, respect for, matter—not just as that which we “see through” to some more transcendent reality, but as that which we “see into,” recognizing the profoundly sacred character of all that is. It is *being* that all creation shares with God.

Francis and Clare had this awareness—they saw physical, material reality as a marvelous witness to the reality of the Creator God. They read the world as a sacred book that spoke volumes about the source of all being.

The body, then, that most intimate forum of our material and personal experience, requires respectful treatment. In this regard, Francis and Clare are not always the models whose behavior we wish to imitate. They themselves, however, in their more mature years, show evidence of more moderate and respectful attention towards their bodies. But always they were respectful of the bodies of their brothers and sisters, tending them with loving care and assisting them patiently in their illnesses. Their own illnesses they bore with good grace and made the passage through illness to death with a deep conviction that this was a meaningful and even holy journey.

In this issue of *The Cord*, Thomas Nairn reflects on a Franciscan view of illness. Mary Hroscikoski sees in Bonaventure a grounding for an attitude towards one's own illness and that of others. Claire Campbell finds connections between her illness and the wolf of Gubbio. Mary Gurley offers some thoughts on how Bonaventure might have viewed bodily knowing. David Flood affirms the value of human work. And Patricia Fritz and Kathleen Gannon affirm the place of an evangelical life in our own times.

All these know that matter matters.

*It is the prudent Franciscan who is able to resist  
sickness when that is appropriate and to accept  
sickness and even dying when that is appropriate.*

(Thomas Nairn, OFM)

## THE LAST ILLNESS OF ST. FRANCIS \*

Thomas A. Nairn, OFM

### Introduction

As Franciscans, we follow a person for whom example and stories were important. It is no accident that in the years after his death, stories and *legendae* flourished. Today, almost eight hundred years after his death, his followers still gather annually to re-tell the story of his death. We relate the details of his passing from this life to the next. How different from our contemporary image of sickness and dying this story seems! Yet perhaps even in this difference, the story can help form our religious imagination, exhibiting how those values we hold as Franciscans ought to affect the choices we make concerning health care.

Bonaventure described that in his final two years of illness: "Francis now hung, body and soul, upon the cross with Christ" (LM 14:1). We may tend to romanticize this period of his life. We need however to recall that St. Francis was becoming increasingly debilitated by terminal illness. By meditating on his last illness perhaps we are able to discern those values which can help us Franciscans to face sickness, decline, and even death itself.

---

\*This is a reworking of material found in the reflection paper, *A Vision of Life, Health, Sickness and Death for Religious* (©1995 CMSM/LCWR), prepared by the Joint Task Force on Health Care of the Conference of Major Superiors of Men and the Leadership Conference of Women Religious to which I was a theological consultant. Used with the permission of the copyright holder. Quotations are from *The Omnibus*.

*Celano tells us that "Francis, the herald of God, walked in the footsteps of Christ through innumerable labors and severe illnesses" (2Cel 210). He relates that "frequently the brothers admonished him, suggesting to him with great urgency in their entreaties that he should seek to restore his infirm and greatly weakened body in some measure with the help of doctors." Brother Elias "compelled him not to abhor medicine but to accept it in the name of the Son of God by whom it was created, as it is written: The Most High has created medicines out of the earth and a wise man will not abhor them. The holy father then graciously acquiesced and humbly complied with the words of his advisor" (1Cel 98).*

Francis needed to hear that medicine was a creature of God. It motivated him to take the steps available to him in his day to resist the onslaught of his sickness. Like Francis, some of us may need to hear our brothers or sisters tell us that we need to care for brother body and that it is proper to resist sickness. Others of us may need to hear in the words of Brother Elias that medicine is *only* a creature. There does come a time when medical technology reaches its limits, and because of this inherent limitation we cannot put all our hope in it. It is the prudent Franciscan who is able to resist sickness when that is appropriate and to accept sickness and even dying when that is appropriate.

*As we continue the telling the story of Francis's last illness, we see that the medical profession fell into the same temptations in the thirteenth century as it does today. We read: "In those days a doctor from Arezzo, named Buongiovanni (Good John) a friend and favorite of blessed Francis, came to see him. The saint questioned the doctor about his sickness and said to him: 'What do you think, Brother John?' The doctor answered him: 'Brother, with the grace of God, all will be well.' He did not want to tell him that he was going to die soon. Blessed Francis replied: 'Brother, tell me the truth. What is your prognosis? Do not be afraid; for, thanks be to God, I am not a coward who fears death. The Lord, by his grace and in his goodness, has so closely united me to himself that I am as happy to live as I am to die'" (LP 65).*

Today, as in the time of Francis, physicians can tend to give their patients false hope, thinking that hope can only be understood in terms of cure—even when such a cure is impossible. In the midst of this denial, we follow a person who lovingly welcomed death as his sister. Perhaps we, his followers, need to be *truthful* regarding our limits, including speaking the truth about our sickness and dying. Such truthfulness demands courage on the part of the one who speaks and also on the part of those who are willing to listen. Speaking the truth means that we do not allow a simplistic sentimentalizing of illness

and death. Neither does it demand that we simply give up.

Illness, suffering, and death are *evils*. They threaten our well-being and dignity. It is proper to resist such evils to the extent that we are able. But we need not *fear* sickness and dying. If we believe that the paschal mystery proclaims victory over death, we, like Francis, can also believe with courage that it is precisely in vulnerability that we encounter Christ. Grave illness *can* be a time of grace. We who follow the footsteps of the crucified and risen Christ have the power to name illness and death in our lives. Faith lets us glimpse meaning when it seems hidden. It tells us that God is present in the midst of illness, suffering, and even death.

Furthermore, as physicians find it increasingly difficult to say “no” to *any* artificial prolongation of life, perhaps the most important witness a Franciscan can give is that of maintaining the distinction between caring and curing. The example of St. Francis and of those members of our communities who have allowed themselves simply to let go, without clinging to life at all costs, can be a powerful witness both to the sacredness of life and to the naturalness of death. This witness is not reserved only for those who are dying. As we understand better our society’s tendency to do more and have more rather than less, perhaps all of us need to evaluate all medical interventions, especially those involving high technology, in terms of the values we hold as Franciscans. Among other values, these include simplicity of life and our preferential option for the poor.

*As his illness progressed, Francis continued to seek the advice of his brothers regarding the care he should take for his body. Again, Celano relates: “One day he spoke to a certain brother who he knew would give him suitable counsel: ‘What do you think, my dearest son, of the fact that my conscience murmurs so frequently about the care of my body? It is afraid that I will indulge it too much in its illness and be anxious to come to its aid.’ . . . And the brother said, ‘Where then, Father, is your generosity, where are your kindness and discretion? Is it reasonable that you abandon so faithful a friend in such great need?’” (2Cel 210-211).*

Our American culture has placed great value on individual choice and autonomy. Yet the example of Francis is that of deciding *with others*, especially with his superiors (see above, 1Cel 98). As we encounter increasing physical disability and are unable to do things once easily accomplished, we need others more than at any other time in our adult lives. In our sickness we are called to recognize our dependence and to *trust*—trust in God and in others in the community. Each of our vows moves us from believing that we are self-sufficient and invites us into a life of interdependence. Our brothers and sisters

who are chronically sick or dying witness, by their very existence, to that human dignity which demands more than autonomy’s non-interference. By the very fact that they cannot exercise autonomy or choose not to exercise it, they demonstrate that one’s dignity may still be preserved in relinquishing autonomy to a trusted brother or sister. Such “letting go” testifies that we are all members of the same family. The use of durable power of attorney, including the naming of another brother or sister as my agent when I can no longer speak for myself, also attests to trust. With that person I discuss my values and desires regarding end-of-life decisions. All these actions express mutual expectations of reliability and trust. They are powerful witnesses to Franciscan faithfulness and responsibility.

*Francis’s illness became chronic. Celano explains: “These things St. Francis bore for almost two years with all patience and humility, giving thanks to God. . . . He committed his care to certain brothers who were deservedly dear to him. . . . These tried with all vigilance, with all zeal, with all their will to foster the peace of mind of their blessed father, and they cared for the infirmity of his body, shunning no distress, no labors, that they might give themselves entirely to serving the saint” (1Cel 102).*

The Rule of St. Francis states: “If any of the brothers becomes sick, the other brothers should serve him as they would wish to be served themselves” (RegB 6). In order for our brothers and sisters who are facing illness or death to accept it as a time of grace, the rest of us must give witness to faithfulness and care. If we expect our sick and dying brothers and sisters to speak the truth about illness and death, then we must be honest with *them*. If they are called to witness to a spirit of dependence, then our communities must be *dependable*. If they are to give an example of letting go and not clinging to the last remnant of life, then we must not abandon them in their suffering but rather *care* for *them*.

We should not believe that becoming a community of faithfulness and care comes automatically. Conflicts are inevitable. We may experience tensions between the cost of caring for our sick and the financial demands arising from our mission. Furthermore, because of cultural, ethnic, and even familial differences among us, we Franciscans may not always understand the needs of a particular sick brother or sister. In addition, issues with which individuals have wrestled during their lives may become more acute as the end draws near.

*Bonaventure describes the last days of Francis: “In his last serious illness, which was destined to put an end to all his suffering, he had himself laid naked on the bare earth, so that with all the fervor of his spirit he might*

*struggle naked with his naked enemy in that last hour which was given him. As he lay there on the ground, stripped of his poor habit, he raised his eyes to heaven, as his custom was, and was lost in the contemplation of its glory. He covered the wound in his right side with his left hand, and he said to the friars, 'I have done what was mine to do. May Christ teach you what is yours' (LM 14:3). Celano adds that "a certain brother, in his anxiety for all the brothers, said: 'Kind Father, alas your sons are now without a father and are deprived of the true light of their eyes. Remember therefore your orphan sons whom you are now leaving'" (1Cel 109).*

Like Francis, those in our communities who are facing serious illness and death need to know that their brothers and sisters are around them. When one is resisting the onslaughts of disease, he or she needs the encouragement of the community. As illness progresses, our communities must become places of care, giving both physical and spiritual comfort. As diseases enter into their last stages and death approaches, they need the presence of the community and the reassurance that they will not be abandoned. This may sometimes become a practical question of where one will spend one's last days. Yet it also evokes deeper questions of whether others really care about our dying or what we will leave for others after we are gone—whether our lives have had meaning. Those caring for a sick or dying brother or sister may also need to examine their own expectations of suffering and whether these expectations are realistic. There may be times when a caregiver will want to make everything right and "fix" things when the only appropriate response is merely to remain present and powerless with the brother or sister who is suffering.

Furthermore, like the followers around the death bed of Francis, those of us who remain may feel like orphans. The death of each member is a sign of the numerical diminishment of our communities themselves. Thus as our brothers and sisters face death, the rest of us are forced to confront the question of the impermanence of our communities, issues of continual renewal and possible non-renewal. The temptations of denial which an individual may face reflect similar temptations facing the community. Unless we face these issues, however, we cannot be present to our aging and terminally ill brothers and sisters.

As Franciscans, we have come to realize that the story of St. Francis is our own story. We need to see the correspondence not only in the story of his continuing conversion, but perhaps even in the story of his last illness. And as we look to imitate our father in his illness and dying, let his last words remain with us: "I have done what was mine to do. May Christ teach you what is yours."

## APPENDIX

The following guiding principles were developed for the Joint Task Force on Health Care for the Conference of the Major Superiors of Men and the Leadership Conference of Women Religious. They address in a more concise way the values encountered in the above meditation.

### • *Attitudes toward life, health, and death*

*Franciscans are stewards of their physical, mental, and spiritual health.* This stewardship is a life-long task. We are therefore called not only to care for our sick brothers and sisters but also to encourage all members of our communities to be concerned about preserving this precious gift of health in all its dimensions.

*Since life is a gift from God, we are called not only to maintain life but also to return this gift in full freedom to God at the appropriate time.* As stewards of the gift of life, we should use the means at our disposal to resist illness. Yet, we also need to accept our mortality. We believe that, as we are united with Christ in his dying, so are we destined to rise with Christ to new life.

### • *Care of sick or aging brothers and sisters*

*Our communities should be environments where aged or chronically sick brothers and sisters feel at home and truly a part of the community.* To the extent possible, communities should support the independence of their sick brothers and sisters and provide them with planned programs of care in the community setting. This includes formal pastoral care and hospice care, together with the active engagement of friends and other members of the community.

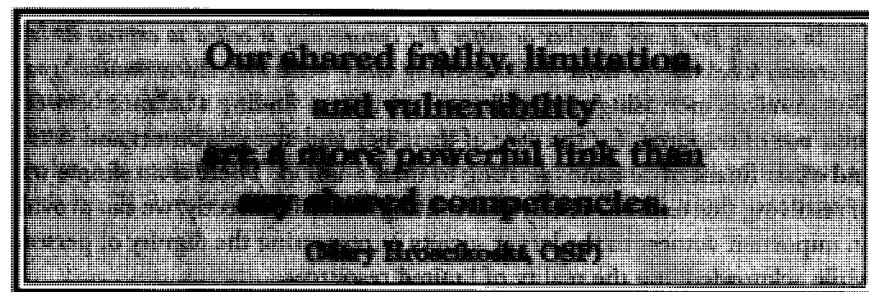
*Caring for a sick brother or sister is a reciprocal ministry.* Sick and dying brothers and sisters are not merely the objects of ministry. They also build up the larger community by means of their prayers and presence. Through their illness, they can help other members of the community as they confront their own limits and mortality.

*In caring for a sick brother or sister, the community is called to express its love generously while at the same time respecting other needs and the communal good.* Communities increasingly are called to struggle in finding a balance between their use of resources for the care of their sick and aging brothers and sisters and other financial demands relating to their mission. There is no simple way of resolving this tension. Yet, by confronting this issue directly, we can provide an important witness to the larger society in respecting the dignity of persons while acknowledging the reality of limited resources.

*When a brother or sister is suffering from serious disease, decisions regarding treatment, especially end-of-life decisions, should be made jointly between the individual and the community. Imitating St. Francis, we realize that such decisions are not simply our own but may involve our local community, a trusted brother or sister who serves as our agent by means of durable power of attorney, or even a representative of the larger community. Joint decision-making is itself a witness to faithfulness and trust as well as to a mutuality of concern and care. To ensure that such decisions are respected when we can no longer speak for ourselves, we should not only complete an advance directive, especially the durable power of attorney for health care, but also discuss our values and desires with the agent we designate. We should inform our families of these decisions but also assure them that they will be included when illness and death overtake us.*

*Both the dignity of the individual and the nature of our Franciscan life require that communities and other caregivers be truthful to our sick and dying brothers or sisters. Members of the community who are sick should be told about the seriousness of their illness and be given reasonable expectations regarding their prognosis, including the probable progress of the disease and whether they are dying. It is unjust to maintain a sick brother's or sister's false hope. Rather, communities are called upon to accompany their brothers and sisters during this final journey, enabling them to come to the point of acceptance.*

*Franciscans have the right, like all people do, to refuse all forms of treatment which are burdensome and do not offer a reasonable hope for benefit. The Catholic moral tradition regarding health care is not simply to preserve life at all costs. At the late stages of a terminal disease, a shift in the burden of proof regarding treatment occurs. Aggressive treatments directed toward cure, which are appropriate in the early stages of a disease, may no longer be appropriate. Forms of treatment requiring high technology at relatively great cost ought to be weighed against the concerns for the common good of the community.*



## A Bonaventurian Paradigm for Discovering God in Illness

Mary Hroschikoski, OSF

Illness in its myriad forms is part of the universal human experience. While the given malady may be based in one aspect of the person—body, psyche, spirit—it is expressed ultimately through the body.

I know the disordered physiology of my diabetes primarily in my body through the constant attention it demands and the fatigue and feelings of unwellness it can create. Through my bodily experience it envelops my self-understanding as one able, and often demanding, to choose to be in control of where I will place my attention. It is enveloped by my understanding of the science of insulin absence and replacement. It fills my memory with the painful consequences of past blood sugars, too high or too low, which have forced me to share my unwanted vulnerability. It teases my imagination with potential complications to come and with possibilities life might hold without the limits it creates. I managed well for two weeks in a Nicaragua barrio, but two years (or even two months?) could be life-threatening at worst and nearly impossible at best.

If, as St. Bonaventure says, God is revealed not only *through* but also *in* sensible things,<sup>1</sup> God is surely revealed in this experience of chronic disease. If our bodies are the vehicles for the encounter with the sacred,<sup>2</sup> so too is the experience of disorder in our bodies. In this bodily experience of frailty, limitation, and vulnerability, I am given the gift of knowing God who is, leaving behind the objective qualifiers which my preferred cognitive knowing wants to add. This bodily knowing draws me too into relationship with other persons. Our shared frailty, limitation, and vulnerability are a more powerful link than any shared competencies.

But working as a physician, I have a bridge to cross to another side of illness. Medicine is "a science-using, judgment-based practice committed to the knowledge and care of human illness, . . ."<sup>3</sup> where "disease is obviously the central theme. . . . The whole bent and purpose of the good physician is the

diagnosis and treatment of disease."<sup>4</sup> In the presence of a patient, then, I experience tension between two demands—should I focus my attention on the person in his or her illness or on the disease itself?

Disease focused, my attention is to the body. It is a focus built into the structure of the clinic and the schedule of the physician-patient encounter. Allot five to fifteen minutes per appointment. Take a focused but thorough history, gathering facts and perceptions. Support it with the physical exam. Develop a diagnosis and treatment plan. Write the prescriptions. Document the encounter in objective detail. Next patient, quickly please. The line is long and the time short.

But my deeper questions lie in a too-little tended fire, coals glowing, waiting to burst into full flame, wanting to illumine the human mystery within. Why are we here—patient, physician? To attend to a malady known and proclaimed in the body, yes. Per an ancient Latin proverb: to cure rarely, to relieve sometimes, to comfort always. But as a person of faith, I am necessarily called deeper into the human experience, to the One who lies hidden within.<sup>5</sup> This faith impels me to invite my patient to the same attention.

What does this illness, this pain mean in your life? How does it speak to who you are? To who you desire to be? How can it be an experience of coming to greater wholeness, whether cured, relieved, or comforted? Where is God hidden in this experience? Is this, can this be a meaningful experience pointing to Meaning itself? Can Beauty be discovered here?<sup>6</sup>

While it is rarely appropriate for me to ask these questions so directly, they frame all my sharings with my patients. Dimly, subtly with the nine-year-old boy with an acute respiratory infection, where the straightforward question is antibiotics or not. Brightly, more overtly with the forty-nine year old woman in for a general physical exam with her more complex problems, fears, and burdens. How do we talk of the worrisome-looking genital lesion that needs to be biopsied?

In medicine, we want to say we are about caring for the person with his or her illness. We do not care only for disease. But we sometimes, perhaps too often, forget how to do that as we work in a structure whose supports of space, time personnel, and money are built around identifying and solving problems. Too, as persons-living-with-illness in a culture devoted to efficiency and productivity, we take on the problem-solving perspective when we seek the quickest, most complete cures which create no interference with our real lives. Not unworthy goals for the healer or for the ill.

But from either viewpoint, as people of faith how do we attend to the Mystery hidden within such experience? St. Bonaventure and the Franciscan tradition give us some guidelines. The starting point: "The divine reality itself lies hidden within everything which is perceived or known."<sup>7</sup> In the experience of illness past, the footprints of which still shape our being, in the dis-

comfort of illness present, or in the anxiety of illness yet to come, God is waiting to be revealed. The finding comes in examining the experience and ourselves in it.

In my own life, I have most often perceived as barriers to God the painful limits diabetes has given me and the limits placed on reflective living in a work environment seemingly antithetical to, but calling forth, such reflection. I feel myself as bent over within these limits, less able or unable to turn to God. While not totally untrue, I suspect these perceived barriers are also an important part of my own self-deception, giving me excuse for turning less than fully to God.

In an artistic and spiritual paradigm on learning to live rightly, *Ordo Vivendi*, Bonaventure supplies a way to examine the parts of an experience in its constitutive relationship to the whole of human life. What do I believe and know in my encounter with this illness? How does my intellect name its causes and effects?—know its meaning? How does my memory call on past times of illness? How does my imagination carry me into possibilities for coping and adapting?—for living with or living against?—for survival or death? How does my body translate the illness? What symptoms does it express? Which do I ignore or deny? Which do I indulge in?

Then, what do I desire? To know myself, and hence the God who is hidden within? To know Christ resurrected, without the crucifixion? Understanding, so as to control? Isolation or relationship? Humility, apprehending my place before God, dependent on God's love?

Lastly, how will I act in the light of my belief and desire? What concrete choices will I make about how I live today in this body with these limitations and these resources? How will I keep a good measure between too little and too much—dependence/independence, self-care/other-attention, control/flexibility?

Bonaventure's exercise of examination provides us with a means for constantly re-orienting our being in re-directing our will that leads us to act. In this rectitude of will, the bent-over creature becomes able to stand upright, turned continually toward God. In entering fully and lovingly into our human condition, our relationship with God will grow. That illness which is bitter will be changed into sweetness of soul and body (Test 3).<sup>8</sup>

## Endnotes

<sup>1</sup>Bonaventure, *The Soul's Journey into God* 2:1, in *Bonaventure: The Soul's Journey into God; the Tree of Life; the Life of St. Francis*, trans. Ewert Cousins, The Classics of Western Spirituality Series (New York, 1978), 69.

<sup>2</sup>Vincent Bilotta, "The Formative Dimension of the Lived Human Body in the Spiritual Life," *The Bulletin* 29.3 (1983): 38.

<sup>3</sup>Kathryn Montgomery Hunter, *Doctors' Stories: The Narrative Structure of Medical Knowledge* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1991), 47.

<sup>4</sup>H. J. L. Marriott, *Medical Milestones* (Baltimore: Williams and Wilkins, 1952), 277.

<sup>5</sup>Bonaventure, *On the Reduction of the Arts to Theology*, 26, trans. Zachary Hayes, OFM (St. Bonaventure, New York: The Franciscan Institute, 1996), 61.

<sup>6</sup>Bonaventure, *The Life of St. Francis*, 9:1, in Cousins, 263. ("In beautiful things he saw Beauty itself.")

<sup>7</sup>*On the Reduction of the Arts to Theology*, 26.

<sup>8</sup>Regis Armstrong, OFM Cap. and Ignatius Brady, OFM, *Francis and Clare: The Complete Works*, The Classics of Western Spirituality (New York, 1982), 154.



Francis X. Miles, OFM

*I beg the sick brother to give thanks to the  
Creator for everything;  
and whatever the Lord wills for him, he should desire  
to be that, whether healthy or sick.*

(RegNB 10:3)

*The Cord*, 47.5 (1997)

## Bodily Knowing and the Theology of Bonaventure

Mary Catherine Gurley, OSF

### Introduction

Perhaps one of the most interesting phenomena in religious literature and one that is beginning to have an impact on contemporary understandings of theology and spirituality is the concept of bodily knowing. Originating in a renewed interest in the medieval women mystics and extended in meaning by research from the fields of psychology, anthropology, literature, and the visual arts, bodily knowing has emerged as the popular term to describe a way of knowing that springs from experiences of "feminist" spirituality. It does not submit to the traditional "disembodied, 'rational' mode of learning attributed to males."<sup>1</sup> It draws its most vivid examples from the devotional experiences of the medieval period and the very dramatic and public evidence of a kind of knowing that is prized for its own sake, a bodily knowing, wherein the person physically experiences—not as metaphor, symbol, or expression, but as fact—Christ himself really, physically interacting with him/her.<sup>2</sup> Indeed, "a number of women writers argue the point that only through the body can human beings know adequately what is good and worthwhile in human life."<sup>3</sup>

What was experienced physically as real knowing was and continues to be generally ignored or denied by traditional theologians. The tensions inherent in the female/male modes of knowing, in the religious expression of medieval women in bodily knowing modes vis-à-vis that of the writings of medieval men in theological tomes, and in the cultural and ecclesial religious articulations of each sex in general have been expressed by Asian writer Marianne Katoppo:



All over the world and throughout history, the churches have tended to give male chauvinism not only a practical expression, but also a theological and even a quasi-divine legitimation. . . . If women are admitted at all to male-dominated institutions of higher theological education and/or patriarchal church structures, they are expected to theologize by proxy, faithfully to relay the ideas fabricated in male chauvinist (and often white supremacist) contexts. A woman's own experience—of discrimination, subordination and oppression—are denied validity. Her personal encounter with God is denounced as heretical or hysterical: if the first, she is figuratively burnt at the stake; if the second, people hasten to find her a husband.<sup>4</sup>

Katoppo's views are strong and expressive of a number of contemporary women writers. She does not, however, speak the whole story. Nor, in pointing a critical finger does she point a direction. However, within the Franciscan tradition, particularly as expressed in the theology of Bonaventure, women and men can find a foundation from which some of the issues raised in the bodily knowing literature might find a place of dialogue.<sup>5</sup>

### Selected Concepts within the Theology of Bonaventure

One might legitimately raise an important question here: Would twentieth-century bodily knowing concepts be "foreign" to Bonaventure? The answer is simple: Bonaventure was a theologian of his time, well-versed in the schema; it would be inappropriate even to suggest that the question of bodily knowing would find a place in his work. Though very visible in devotional practice, bodily knowing was simply not a serious part of theological discussion in Bonaventure's century.

This concept of direct physical knowing, bodily knowing, having been re-introduced into present-day consciousness by contemporary in-depth studies of the medieval mystics, has become a twentieth-century question that is now finding its way into theological circles. The movement began, as would be expected, with women theologians but has expanded to include men theologians as well. The recent widespread interest in Eastern prayer and its attention to bodily readiness and expression has also had an impact on the understanding of bodily knowing, as has the feminist movement.

For the Franciscan, however, the study-journey to understand and respect bodily knowing begins with Bonaventure, who is described by A. Epping as "the most complete embodiment of the spirit of the Franciscan School."<sup>6</sup> And the question that needs to be asked in this age would be: What is there in

Bonaventure's theology that might serve as a starting point for theologians and followers of Francis in contemporary discussions of bodily knowing? For the purposes of this paper the ideas and constructs of Bonaventure that will be touched on as potential starting points for a bodily knowing dialogue include: 1) His understanding of a created universe that links creation and eschatology; 2) His belief that humanity is created body/soul. Is this a hierarchy or a complementarity? and 3) His openness to paradigms for human knowledge other than the ladder.

### Creation and Eschatology in Bonaventure

Zachary Hayes writes:

Bonaventure's understanding of the order of the created universe emphasizes the centrality of humanity. This seems almost inevitable when creation is viewed in terms of its origin in an intelligent God and in terms of its finality in the spiritual union between that intelligent God and intelligent creatures.<sup>7</sup>

Throughout his writings Bonaventure does indeed makes very clear connections between creation and eschatology, but none so eloquent as these lines in the *Breviloquium*:

Therefore, the fabric of his sensitive body is like a house made for man by the supreme Architect to serve until such time as he may come to the house not made by human hands . . . in the heavens. Just as the soul, by reason of the body lives on earth, so will the body, by reason of the soul and to gain reward, some day live in heaven.<sup>8</sup>

With the eschatological promise embedded, as it were, in the body, Bonaventure has already proclaimed the goodness of humanity's physical condition. The inherent goodness of the body flows, he says, from God's desire that his Wisdom might be revealed in "a physical constitution that would be well balanced," that it "be endowed with a manifold organic composition, together with beauty, dexterity, and flexibility," and that it "stand erect with lifted head."<sup>9</sup>

This well-ordered creation of humanity has its perfected parallel in Bonaventure's description of humanity in paradise: a marvelous hymn of balance and beauty.

Concerning the whole man placed in paradise, it must be held that he was given a twofold perception, interior and exterior: of the mind and of the flesh. He was given a twofold capacity of motion: imperative in the will, and executive in the body. He was given a

twofold good: one visible, the other invisible. He was given a twofold command: that of nature, and that of discipline; the command of nature: "Be fruitful and multiply"; the command of discipline: "From the tree of knowledge of good and evil you must not eat."<sup>10</sup>

A similar orderliness is reflected in humankind's corruption by original sin. In the absence of original justice, Bonaventure writes, "Our souls incur a fourfold penalty: weakness, ignorance, malice, and concupiscence." These are "matched in the body by all kinds of pain, imperfection, labor, disease, and affliction."<sup>11</sup>

In the end, the bodies of the just will receive their reward. "The soul cannot be fully happy unless the body is returned to it, for the two have a natural ordination to each other."<sup>12</sup> And finally, in what can only be termed a "hymn of satisfaction," Bonaventure recites the litany of joys that await the glorified, eschatological body.

Tell me, my body, what do you love? My soul, what do you seek? Anything you love, anything you desire is here. Is it beauty that delights you? The just will shine forth like the sun. Is it swiftness and might, and a bodily freedom no barrier may contain? . . . Is it a long and healthy life? . . . Is it repletion? . . . Is it inebriation? . . . Is it melody? . . . Is it pleasure—pure delight? . . . Is it wisdom? . . . Is it friendship? . . . Is it peace? . . . Is it honor and riches? . . . Is it security? How wonderful and great must be the joy whose object is so great and wonderful!<sup>13</sup>

### Body/Soul in Bonaventure: A Hierarchy or Complementarity?

It seems to be a foregone conclusion for one who reads Bonaventure that all of creation, material and spiritual, is arranged in a hierarchy of order. Each element has its own place, its own level, the properties of that particular level. Within the given framework there is perfect harmony. The enemy is anything anyone that would disturb the order:

Sin is . . . a force which contaminates mode, species, and order in the created will;<sup>14</sup>

By their inordinate attempt to rise above what they were, both [Adam/Eve] fell wretchedly below what they were: from the state of innocence to that of guilt and mercy;<sup>15</sup>

The will withdraws from the first Principle in some matter in which it should have chosen to be acted upon by Him in accord with His will and for Him as an end.<sup>16</sup>

Bonaventure, a scholar of his times, was, as were his contemporaries, a master of the form of hierarchical order.

One can also find in Bonaventure, however, many instances of balance and of complementarity. The passage below from the *Itinerarium* serves as illustration of this:

Look at the Mercy Seat and wonder  
that in him there is joined  
the First Principle with the last,  
God with man, who was formed on the sixth day;  
the eternal is joined with temporal man,  
born of the Virgin in the fullness of time  
the most simple with the most composite,  
the most actual with the one who suffered supremely and died,  
the most perfect and immense with the lowly,  
the supreme and all-inclusive one  
with a composite individual distinct from others,  
that is, the man Jesus Christ.<sup>17</sup>

Though this passage is addressed solely to the perfect complementarity of the divine nature with the human nature in Jesus, there are also passages in Bonaventure which indicate a type of complementarity between body and soul of the created person. The passage below, quoted earlier in this paper reflects this complementarity, specifically in the repetition of the word "twofold."

Concerning the whole man placed in paradise, it must be held that he was given a twofold perception, interior and exterior: of the mind and of the flesh. He was given a twofold capacity of motion: imperative in the will, and executive in the body. He was given a twofold good: one visible, the other invisible. He was given a twofold command: that of nature, and that of discipline; the command of nature: "Be fruitful and multiply"; the command of discipline: "From the tree of knowledge of good and evil you must not eat."<sup>18</sup>

In making a case for an approach to theology that recognizes complementarity as well as hierarchy, Bonaventure might be a starting point. His Christocentric approach puts the Incarnation at the heart of all theology. The two-fold nature of Jesus is the perfect mirror for humanity that struggles with its own body/soul duality. Perhaps within such a context, the giftedness of creation that Bonaventure sings so well will be enhanced by a re-ordering of how we structure reality. In such a re-ordering of structures, in accepting a complementarity of body/soul, the richness of bodily knowing will receive new emphasis and practice and God will be glorified anew.

Is such a re-ordering possible? In a rather unusual source, an article about abjection and anorexia in medieval mystics, there is an extended reflection on the meaning of order. It is included here as a backdrop for some consider-

ations on hierarchy and complementarity and as a challenge to break down some mental fences.

That there is meaning at all depends on the human capacity to create boundaries, draw lines, affirm differences and, in so doing, both create and maintain order. Aside from bricks and stones out of which actual fences and walls are constructed, the order we create elsewhere in the world we owe to the capacity of the human mind to make mental fences and walls. Testimonies to our attempts to humanize ourselves by creating boundaries lie everywhere. We order our days with clocks and calendars, our relations with each other by complicated patterns of etiquette, and our surroundings by banishing disorder, which we call dirt, from our midst.

Underlying this fence-making activity, by which order is demarcated from disorder, we find ambiguity. Gray marks the border between black and white; good cannot clearly be distinguished from evil. Thus, at the boundaries separating order from disorder lie power and danger. Power lies there because those parts of existence which are set aside—the irregular, anomalous, or unnatural—are not simply dismissed. . . . Lurking always in the margins of any ordered experience are claims of disorder to pattern and meaning. . . . But in potential for order lies danger. What if, in erecting fences and fortifying borders, we err and include in our midst elements that threaten order?<sup>19</sup>

### Paradigms for Human Knowing in the Thought of Bonaventure

In his article on bodily knowing that was referenced earlier in this paper, Milhaven concludes that an entirely new paradigm of human knowing is needed.

The women are right. Not only by reason, but also in and through their bodies do human beings know other human beings in their humanness, their personalness. Not only by reason, but also in and through their bodies do human beings know much that is intrinsically precious in human life. The recognition of this fact does away with any epistemology, medieval or modern, that propounds a hierarchy of knowledge. It demands instead a bipolarity.<sup>20</sup>

His statements are a beginning. However, if one believes that a new paradigm of knowing would be useful, one should question what Milhaven lists as the ends of bodily knowing—"humanness" and "personalness" of others and "that which is intrinsically precious in human life"—ends that stop short of knowing the Divine. Is Milhaven suggesting that bodily knowing is appropriate creature to creature but stops short of creature to Divine? One should also question Milhaven's suggestion to "do away with any epistemology. . . that

propounds a hierarchy of knowledge." Perhaps the better way is to hold the various paradigms in tension. At the very least, there is need to give serious comparative study to the various paradigms.

Certainly Bonaventure knew and used various paradigms. Any reader conversant with his writings is familiar with the hierarchical paradigm of the ladder that recurs throughout his writings. Bonaventure has also used the circle as a paradigm, specifically in reference to the creation/eschatology and sin/redemption themes. The trinity paradigm, a three-fold representation and illustration of ideas, as well as the cruciform paradigm are additional favorites with Bonaventure. No doubt the careful Bonaventurian scholar could also find examples of a continuum paradigm in the *Opera omnia*.

It is with Bonaventure that one might fruitfully begin the search for a model of knowing that would include bodily knowing. In the deep reverence for knowing and for knowing the things of God, Bonaventure is a master. Whether his paradigms are hierarchical, circular, or cruciform, the focus and the extension are always God. In addition, Bonaventure was the master of inclusion; nothing that spoke of God was outside the parameters of consideration. One could easily conceive of Bonaventure reading the words of Milhaven quoted below and prayerfully researching and discerning their truth. If, indeed, bodily knowing speaks of the things of God and leads the body/soul to its final end, Bonaventure would encompass such knowing in his schema, perhaps even in the paradigm suggested.

If human knowing be bipolar, the various forms of human knowledge of person and value do not constitute degrees of realizing one supreme kind of knowing, as the theologians thought they did. The various forms of human knowledge of person and value fan out between two polar kinds of knowing. One is bodily. The other is rational. All human knowing is constituted by its particular degree of participation in both poles. The poles are irreducible to each other. They are incomparable to each other in value. One cannot be rated superior to the other. Good human living is at any moment determined by both poles.<sup>21</sup>

### Conclusion

Bodily knowing and the theology of Bonaventure—are the two constructs as far apart, perhaps even as mutually exclusive, as one might first suspect? Certainly there is a sufficient supply of both ambiguity and fact to entertain a lively interactive dialogue among the medievalists, the theologians, the feminists, the traditionalists, and unwary students who wander into this particular minefield. One could begin the dialogue with bodily knowing; one could begin it with theological schema. The follower of Francis might begin/end it

with Francis. That is where I would like to venture now with some closing reflections on the Stigmata of Francis and on the Canticle of Creatures.

Addressing the need of medieval women to understand and express their spirituality in a manner true to who they were, Caroline Walker Bynum writes:

Women thus asserted and embraced their humanity. They asserted it because traditional dichotomous images of woman and man opposed humanity-physicality-woman to divinity-rationality-man. Women stressed their humanity and Jesus' because tradition had accustomed them to associate humanity with the female. But humanity is not, in the final analysis, a gender-related image. Humanity is genderless. To medieval women humanity was, most basically, not femaleness but physicality, the flesh of the "Word made flesh." It was the ultimate negative—the otherness from God that the God-man redeemed by taking it into himself. Images of male and female alike were insipid and unimportant in the blinding light of the ultimate asymmetry between God and creation.<sup>22</sup>

The passage has echoes of the final chapter of the *Itinerarium* with its images of the ultimate negative, the otherness, the blinding light, the God-man who redeems by taking [humanity] into himself. One might even suggest that the title of chapter seven ("In Which Rest is Given to Our Intellect when through Ecstasy Our Affection Passes Over Entirely into God") could find its parallel in the excerpt above ("In Which Rest is Given to Our Body when through Ecstasy Our Physical Being Passes Over Entirely into God").

Francis spent the whole of his life after his conversion with the injunction of Paul to put on the mind of Christ (Phil. 2:5). So in love was Francis with his God, so overwhelmed with the utter self-giving of the Godhead in the Incarnation of Jesus, that Francis not only put on the mind of Christ, he bore the marks of Christ in his body. He who had been crucified with Christ could truly say, "I live now not with my own life but with the life of Christ who lives in me" (Gal. 2:20). He knew Christ immediately, physically, with a bodily knowing that sealed and crowned his desire. He was one with his beloved. Of LaVerna, Bonaventure tells us that Francis

passed over into God in ecstatic contemplation  
and became an example of perfect contemplation  
as he had previously been of action.<sup>23</sup>

When the true love of Christ  
had transformed his lover into his image  
and forty days were over  
... the angelic man Francis  
came down from the mountain  
bearing with him

the image of the Crucified  
which was depicted not on tablets of stone  
or on panels of wood  
by the hands of a craftsman  
but engraved in the members of his body  
by the finger of the living God.<sup>24</sup>

In Francis, a bodily knowing of the Crucified, the Stigmata, was the outward sign of a life spent in desire for his Beloved. Francis gave *everything*, including his living, earthly body, into the contemplative embrace of God. Francis, who loved God with his whole heart, his whole soul, his whole mind, and his whole will now also loved God with his whole body as well. Truly Francis experienced a bodily knowing.

William Johnston, author of *Christian Zen*, has developed a concept of what he calls a second kind of asceticism, the asceticism of achieved spontaneity. (The first is asceticism of punitive discipline). The aim of the second is positive, including such things as the recovery of the rhythms and responses of the body, the development of feeling responses to the world, the awakening of such sensory awareness as will prevent the misuse of the body by the mind in sensuality, power-seeking, and the like.<sup>25</sup> About the body and prayer, Johnston writes the following:

Christians should think more about the role of the body in prayer . . . . For the fact is that Western prayer is not sufficiently visceral—it is preoccupied with the brain and not with the deeper layers of the body where the power to approach the spiritual is generated. . . . There is a basic rhythm in the body, linked to a consciousness that is deeper than is ordinarily experienced. . . . Anyone who wants to meditate in depth must find this rhythm and the consciousness that accompanies it.<sup>26</sup>

Nearing his death, Francis, the man of prayer, having walked the road of asceticism, of discipline, had achieved the perfection of an asceticism of spontaneity—body and soul had truly become body/soul and entered into a harmony with the material world as well as the spiritual. Eloi Leclerc believes "Francis experienced the sacred in the cosmos and entered into communion with God through the medium of created things, and indeed in the very depths of created things. . . . It is this aspect of his religious experience that the Canticle of Brother Sun expresses."<sup>27</sup>

At first sight, there is something rather surprising in all this. Here is a man whose diseased eyes cannot bear the light nor any longer enjoy the sight of creatures, a man who is interested only in the splendors of the kingdom. Yet, in order to express his joy, this man sings of matter: matter that burns and emits a brilliant light—the sun and the fire; matter that nourishes—the air, the water and the

earth, "our mother." And he does so in terms strangely reminiscent of ancient pagan hymns in which men gave thanks for the sun's mastery and for the earth's maternal fruitfulness. His language is the ancient language typical of the sacred, the language of the cosmic hierophanies, and he uses it with the spontaneity, directness, and warmth that mark a man's words when he speaks his mother tongue. Moreover, in the entire *Canticum* there is not a single reference or slightest allusion to the supernatural mystery of Christ and his kingdom. It is only material things that are used to celebrate the glory of the Most High."<sup>28</sup>

Bonaventure's theology was a written embodiment of the life and spirituality of Francis. In addition his approach to theology indicates he shared the same profound reverence for God's created world that Francis had for it. If today, in the twentieth century, Bonaventure were asked to write a treatise on bodily knowing, I believe two things would happen: 1) he would say yes, and 2) this is the place he would begin—the place where our Seraphic Father Francis, at the end of his life, *used only material things to celebrate the glory of the Most High God*.

## Endnotes

<sup>1</sup>John Giles Milhaven, "A Medieval Lesson on Bodily Knowledge: Women's Experience and Men's Thought," *Journal of the Academy of Religion*, 57/2 (1989): 341.

<sup>2</sup>Milhaven, 351.

<sup>3</sup>Milhaven, 341. <sup>4</sup>Marianne Katoppo, *Compassionate and Free: An Asian Woman's Theology* (New York: Orbis Books, 1981), 7.

<sup>5</sup>See bibliography for works giving background on medieval mystics, women and men, and the concept of bodily knowing within the medieval milieu. See especially: Bynum, Mazzoni, Miles, Milhaven, Petroff, Reineke.

<sup>6</sup>As quoted by Zachary Hayes, "The Life and Christological Thought of St. Bonaventure," in *Franciscan Christology*, ed. Damian McElrath (St. Bonaventure, NY: Franciscan Institute Publications, 1980), 59.

<sup>7</sup>Zachary Hayes, "Bonaventure: Mystery of the Triune God," in *The History of Franciscan Theology*, ed. Kenan B. Osborne (St. Bonaventure, NY: Franciscan Institute, 1994), 67.

<sup>8</sup>Brev II, 4:5. All citations from *The Breviloquium* are taken from *The Works of Bonaventure*, Vol. 2, translated from the Latin by Jose de Vinck (Paterson, NJ, St. Anthony Guild Press, 1963).

<sup>9</sup>Brev II, 10:4.

<sup>10</sup>Brev II, 11:1.

<sup>11</sup>Brev III, 5:2.

<sup>12</sup>Brev VII, 7:4.

<sup>13</sup>Brev VII, 7:7.

<sup>14</sup>Brev III, 1:1.

<sup>15</sup>Brev III, 3:4.

<sup>16</sup>Brev III, 8:2.

<sup>17</sup>Itin 6:5. All citations for the *Itinerarium* are from *Bonaventure: The Soul's Journey into God; The Tree of Life; The Life of St. Francis*, trans. Ewert Cousins, The Classics of Western Spirituality Series (New York: Paulist Press, 1978). [Note: The sense lines of Cousins's translation have been used to show better the balance/complementarity.]

<sup>18</sup>Brev II, 11:1.

<sup>19</sup>Martha J. Reineke, "This is My Body": Reflections on Abjection, Anorexia, and Medieval Women Mystics," *Journal of the American Academy of Religion*, 58/2 (1990): 246.

<sup>20</sup>Milhaven, 367-68.

<sup>21</sup>Milhaven, 368.

<sup>22</sup>Bynum, 280.

<sup>23</sup>Itin 7:3.

<sup>24</sup>Bonaventure, *The Life of St. Francis*, in Cousins.

<sup>25</sup>William Johnston, *Christian Zen* (New York: Harper and Row, 1971), 55.

<sup>26</sup>Johnston, 55.

<sup>27</sup>Eloi Leclerc, *The Canticle of Creatures: Symbols of Union*, trans. Matthew J. O'Connell (Chicago: Franciscan Herald Press, 1977), xi.

<sup>28</sup>Leclerc, x-xi.

## Selected Bibliography

Bynum, Carolyn Walker. "... And Woman His Humanity: Female Imagery in the Religious Writing of the Later Middle Ages." In *Gender and Religion: On the Complexity of Symbols*. Ed. Bynum, Harrell, Richman. Boston: Beacon Press, 1986.

Mazzoni, Christina. "Feminism, Abjection, Transgression: Angela of Foligno and the Twentieth Century." *Mystics Quarterly*, 17/2 (1991): 61-9.

Miles, Margaret R. *Carnal Knowing: Female Nakedness and Religious Meaning in the Christian West*. New York: Random House, 1989.

—. *Image as Insight: Visual Understandings in Western Christianity and Secular Culture*. Boston: Beacon Press, 1985.

Milhaven, John Giles. "A Medieval Lesson on Bodily Knowing: Women's Experience and Men's Thought." *Journal of the Academy of Religion*, 57/2 (1989): 341-72.

Petroff, Elizabeth A. "Writing the Body: Male and Female in the Writings of Marguerite D'Oingt, Angela of Foligno, and Umilta of Faenza." In *Body and Soul: Essays on Medieval Women and Mysticism*. New York: Oxford Press, 1994.

Reineke, Martha J. "'This is My Body': Reflections on Abjection, Anorexia, and Medieval Women Mystics." *Journal of the American Academy of Religion*, 58/2 (1990): 245-65.

## Hard Work and Good Times

David Flood, OFM

Today's paper (*The Gazette*, Montreal, February 13, 1997) offers new data on work. The business page reports that a store chain in Quebec is closing its doors, with the loss of thousands of jobs. The paper also reports that Ottawa plans to create thousands of summer jobs for students. Work is news. People's lives depend on selling their skills in the work market. The paper also reports the astounding bonuses which a few investors are receiving, but it does not deal at all with the clear connection between the two.

It so happens that Francis and his friends set out together just as the work market in Assisi underwent a major change. We can read about it in the municipal charter of 1210 (re-edited by A. Bartoli Langeli in 1978, correcting the many mistakes of A. Fortini's edition). The charter freed Assisi's working people from feudal restraints, while it told Assisi's managers to put them to work. The first Franciscans formulated their own work policy within the reorganization of labor in central Italy. Several basic determinations sufficed. Francis and his friends did not have to describe at any length their daily routines.

Work and our notions of work belong to our daily life. We cannot do without food, shelter, and the basics of life. Consequently we develop ways to produce the means of life and to distribute them. We supply ourselves consciously; we know what is going on. The morning's paper speaks explicitly to this consciousness.

It was through work primarily that Francis and his brothers reached out to the Franciscan Penitents and proposed common cause. As an expression, "the Franciscan Penitents" covers all those serious Christians who were responding with interest to the brothers' openness to others. Let us look at the line where Francis, as spokesman for the brotherhood, tried to organize the Penitents around a new idea of work.

## Morton's Essay

Before I do that, I mention why I write on this point for *The Cord*. When I was at The Franciscan Institute in early December 1996, I read the latest issue of *The Cord* and in particular Richard Morton's essay on Franciscan leadership in the workplace. I was familiar with Mr. Morton's role in Franciscan life through my association with the Secular Franciscans of Waterville and Norway in Maine. I offer this essay as historical background to the proposal Morton makes that Franciscans work with others in service to common interests. (Cf. Morton, *The Cord*, 46.6 [Nov/Dec., 1996] 274-275). He gets to that point after describing work, given our nature (269), as a duty and a right (271) and as needed for our growth as human beings (271).

Francis's message to the Franciscan Penitents (The Message of Recall and Exhortation, also called The Letter to the Faithful) connects with the work world of central Italy: "We must bring ourselves to submit our bodies to the yoke of service, as each has sworn obedience to God" (2EpFid 40). The operative word in the sentence is *servitium*, service, work as service.

A word depends on its context for its precise meaning; and here two contexts come into play. The first is Franciscan life as it had developed among the brothers. For in his message Francis shares the brotherhood's experience and aspirations with a larger audience. Work is central to the action covered by the Early Rule, a clear alternative to Assisian work. Two distinct forms of consciousness promote Franciscan work and Assisian work. Francis was harking back to the movement's initial frame of mind when, in his Testament, he said simply: I want to work and [therefore I feel free to say that] I want all the brothers to work (Test 20).

## The Message

The second context which helps define *servitium*, work as service, is the whole Message. Francis approaches line 40 by proposing a theory of Christian life (as the Franciscans saw it) and then describing its daily routines. With line 37, Francis begins spelling out Franciscan interaction with other social forces. From this line on, the Franciscans contend directly with the age in which they live. Franciscans seek no social advantage; in the din of daily life, Jesus' words guide them rather than daily hearsay. First of all, however, they do the work which they have taken upon themselves as their primary social role; and in this way they obey God. In those years, and up to recent times, work demanded long physical effort as is rarely the case today. People bent their bodies to the harsh demands of medieval labor.

After stating frankly the demands of daily life, Francis speaks in the following lines (41-44) to those responsible for organizing and directing labor.

He heeds the composition of his penitential audience. In lines 45-47 Francis rounds off the instruction by summing up the Franciscan attitude of ready service to all, "for God," *propter Deum*.

Now, from line 48 on, Francis looks back on what he has proposed. He explains what happens when people engage in such action. The Spirit visits them so that their labor helps transform the lives of others (53). Both here in retrospect and then in his harsh words for those who do not do these things, Francis has in mind work as the origin of a just and blessed society. The impenitent simply do not do justice with their time and means, and they pay the price for their failure (68).

If we look at the whole Message and try to pinpoint the words which connect with daily life and challenge Assisian order, we are led to "service" (*servitium*) in line 40 and "these things" (*talía*) in line 48. "These things" culminate in the service of work. Francis then passes through "these things" to the new life born of the Spirit. He bears witness to the joy and vision which suffused the movement. People together, working for a just world, not only take care of their own needs (material and spiritual), they brighten up others' lives—hard work and good times. In lines 48 to 62, Francis celebrates the return of all good things to God. Here and in the Early Rule, that is the purpose of work as service.

Well . . . at this point in my account, I have to step back and acknowledge little learned support for such a thesis. I can only point to the evidence and invite others to study it. Look at work from the Early Rule 7 through the Message to Francis's recommitment to work in the Testament. Certainly, the argument needs a longer, more careful demonstration. It also needs a little theoretical agreement—the goods of life come from work; and work then (1209) and work now was and is underplayed and exploited. As a result, it is not easy to speak clearly about work.

Yet work gives us the world in which we live. Such is the central role of work in our lives that it inevitably mixes into the dilemmas and problems we confront in our efforts to reach a just order at home and in the world. And special interests try to preempt the discussion with false problems. Not enough work? Nonsense! Such an idea stems from an arbitrarily truncated notion of work. A Franciscan group which does not take work today seriously has lost the connection with common people which was so strong in the early Franciscan years.

### Churchy Sermons or Political Clout?

In the late 1260s, a Franciscan, speaking for the Order, drew up and circulated a pamphlet of questions and answers on those Franciscan practices

which were bothering people. The pamphlet has come down to us under the title: "Answers to Questions about the Rule of the Friars Minor." We do not know who the author was. Although the text emanated from Franciscan officialdom (and was published in the *Opera omnia* of Bonaventure of Bagnoregio), Bonaventure himself did not write it.

One chapter has to do with the relations between religious Franciscans and Franciscan Penitents. The question raised was: "Why don't you promote the Penitents, an order which Francis began?" The answer runs through a list of troubles, of social entanglements, which would result from close contact, from communal enterprise, with the Penitents. The Order's apologist wanted the Penitents and others to come hear the brothers preach; but he wanted nothing which would tie the brothers to the Penitents' daily struggles.

At the end of the chapter, the apologist tried to set aside an historical argument, for the Penitents were challenging the Order's policy by referring to early Franciscan history. Lamely, the apologist wrote:

It was different with Saint Francis, for the order and people related to one another differently and variously in that country and at that time. And the holy reputation of Saint Francis and the first brothers led to action which, though considered right then, would not have the same success now and in other countries (*Bonaventurae Opera Omnia* VIII, 369).

From that refutation, I derive the Penitents' argument, and they were right—Francis and his brothers stood with the Penitents in the trenches. With their wit and by their spirit they strengthened the Penitents' efforts to make God's good things circulate justly. And that is what the Penitents expected from true brothers in the 1260s.

Richard Morton's essay on work is a worthy descendant of that penitential call for a common policy on work. His proposals deserve attention and discussion.

**Francis and his brothers  
stood with the Penitents  
in the trenches.  
With their wit and by their spirit  
they strengthened the Penitents' efforts  
to make God's good things circulate justly.  
(David Flood, OFM)**

## Exploring the Foundational Aspects of Religious Life

Patricia Fritz, OSF and Kathleen Gannon, OSF

### Introduction

Within the past decade, a number of religious communities have gone through a process of re-founding<sup>1</sup> with the hope of revitalizing their congregations. Set before each group was the choice of life, survival, or death. Although most congregations opted for life, the lived experience continues to be survival or a slow dying. This is expressed in decreased numbers of members and candidates, economic struggles, but more significantly a grasping for a common commitment and focus as members seem to drift into their "own way" of ministry and mission. Undoubtedly, re-founding gave us hope, helped each congregation revisit the rooted charism of its particular foundress or founder, and stimulated energy around realistic choices for the future. The lens of charism provided an important context for study and reflection for each congregation.

As beneficial as all of this was, and we are indebted to Gerald Arbuckle for his charismatic energy around this, one cannot help but ask the question: "Is it/was it enough?" In this paper we invite you to view religious life from a different vantage point. We will try to position ourselves at the beginnings of religious life in early Christianity. Whether identified as apostolic or evangelical, many United States congregations have their roots in monasticism. All subsequent directions, expressions, and charisms of religious life have been impacted directly or indirectly by the first religious communities. For our purposes, we will present some of the foundations of the evangelical life, namely, desire, gift and exchange, poverty and *exemplum*, birthing, and integration. We will approach each chosen dimension of evangelical life from theological, historical, and personal perspectives. We will include reflections on our lived reality, as well as some of the challenges that confront vowed religious in light of the evangelical option. All that is said will readily apply to apostolic communities as well.

### Desire

At the root of the pilgrim's spiritual journey is desire for God. This desire is not motivated by something outside a person, but rather it is a quality with which each of us is born. It is part of our very being. Since we are made to the image and likeness of God, we have a compatibility with and a capacity for God. Michael Casey presents a key aspect of this desire in his book, *Thirst for God*, when he states that human desire for union with God is but a mirroring of the divine desire which created the human race with no other purpose in view than that such a union should exist. "He [the bridegroom] himself desires to come, for it is his desire which creates yours."<sup>2</sup>

Endlessly, desire and possession cause each other to increase because God's love is inexhaustible. Desire grows even in eternity. Jean Leclercq, quoting St. Peter Damien, aptly describes the dynamic quality of desire: "Always eager and always satisfied, the elect have what they desire: satiety never becomes wearisome, and hunger kept alive by desire never becomes painful. Desiring, they eat constantly, and eating they never cease to desire."<sup>3</sup> Gregory the Great repeatedly states that desire presents its own paradoxical experiences of presence/absence, possession/non-possession, certainty/uncertainty, light/darkness. The reality of the experience of God lies in the midst of the paradox, holding both sides.

The spiritual masters tell us that it is the love of God to which we should cling, not our love for God but rather God's love for us. Truly, desire is the "treasure hidden in the field" (Mt. 13:44), and it is for us to "sell" our sense of having to do and be open to receive the gift. We will no longer have the need to cling to our works, our successes, our opinions; we will rather cling to the love of God and perhaps with Mary, our beings will "proclaim the goodness of God" (Lk. 1:46). Since God initiates, our desire for God begins with our focus on God, which, in turn, leads to self-knowledge.

During our formative years in religious life the word "desire" was not often used. It seemed to be associated with satisfying carnal or fleshly appetites. There was almost a suppression of passion and desire for fear that we would lose control of ourselves. The examination of conscience was considered an important practice in deepening self-knowledge. Often the focus was on our weaknesses, limitations, and sins. Rarely was it presented that another integral part of self-knowledge was realizing our privilege of being an *imago Dei*.

At times, when the love of the world lures one, then the attention of the soul is drawn to God. Leclercq defines compunction as an "act of God in us, an act which awakens us, a shock, a blow, a sting, a sort of burn."<sup>4</sup> Hence, even the awareness of our sinfulness is a gift. God works in this mysterious purification. Our part is to be sensitive to and consent to this invisible action of God,



which comes, as Leclercq says, as an "inner song, a slight murmur, a silent word."<sup>5</sup> Our receptivity to this gentle urging sparks desire anew.

Religious life, and society as well, is filled with expressions of the longing to be satisfied and to feel whole. The manifestations of the compulsive activity to satiate this craving are multiple, ranging from drugs and addictions of all kinds to consumerism in its innumerable forms. None of these satisfy the heart in this obscure and unrelenting quest: the exclusive pursuit of God. St. Clare in her Fourth Letter to Agnes of Prague expresses this when she writes:

Happy, indeed is she  
to whom it is given to share in this sacred banquet  
so that she might cling with all her heart  
to Him  
Whose beauty all the blessed hosts of heaven  
unceasingly admire  
Whose affection excites,  
Whose contemplation refreshes,  
Whose kindness fulfills,  
Whose delight replenishes,  
Whose remembrance delightfully shines (4LAg 9-12).<sup>6</sup>

To follow this desire to cling to God seems to make no sense. There does not seem to be any obvious outcome nor necessary active response. There is no apparent social end for peace and justice nor does it appear practical. However, in the eyes of love it is the only thing that is worth pursuing. The clarity of vision expressed in this letter highlights the importance of a focused attention and intention (*intuitio*) for all who are called to the evangelical way of life.

*Intuitio* is not merely one's purpose in doing a particular act. It fixes one's intention on God rather than worldly affairs. The opposite of this intention is aimlessness, a lack of direction, a carelessness and insensitivity to spiritual realities. Often we are caught up in frenetic activity which we impose upon ourselves through unreflective choices. An excessive concentration on immediate issues and dispersal of energy with the intention of "making it all better" diverts us from our exclusive pursuit of God.

Desire is the center of our quest for God and lies at the heart of our way of life. Elizabeth Johnson places desire in a contemporary context: "The fascination with the mystery of God is endemic to religious life everywhere and at all times."<sup>7</sup> She describes the "fascination" which unites persons in communities as a "search for relationship with the sacred leading to a certain kind of absorption with the religious dimension of life."<sup>8</sup> We are coming to understand more clearly this foundational aspect of our lives. Indeed, we may be arriving where we started but with a fuller understanding of where and who we are.

We shall not cease from exploration  
And the end of all our exploring  
Will be to arrive where we started  
And know the place for the first time.<sup>9</sup>

Desire for God opens one to the ultimate gift—God! One cannot get a gift on one's own nor by one's own efforts or acts of will. Gift is that which is gratuitously given. The call to and mystery of religious life is one of the many gifts given to us. It is given for the Church and the world. For our purposes, we will focus on the religious vocation of Franciscan, in which we have been called to live out the evangelical charism given to us through Francis and Clare.

## The Mystery of Gift and Exchange

The root of the English word "mystery" comes from the Greek verb *muein*, which means "close to the mouth." Lewis Hyde develops this meaning: "Mystery cannot be talked about; . . . it can be shown, witnessed or revealed, not explained."<sup>10</sup> Gift extends into one's outer life, "moving the heart, reviving the soul, delighting the senses, giving courage for living."<sup>11</sup> Does our desire for God open up the reality of the gift dimension (mystery and expression) of religious life? We live in a world of consumerism, dominated by market value rather than gift exchange. Daily we run the risk of destroying gift by converting it into a commodity to be sold or purchased. In other words, our gift can easily be and sometimes is equated to a marketable item. Our society, even in ecclesial and religious life circles, equates one's worth with acquisition of degrees, status, money, power, goods, property, and success. Getting, rather than giving, is the norm. Undeniably, we have a responsibility to work for a living, as Clare and Francis exhort us to a "holy manner of working"; however, do we honestly work for daily sustenance or do we work for tomorrow? We religious comfortably talk about Divine Providence; yet in the reality of our lives we seem to be storing up and getting enough for tomorrow.

Marcel Mauss cites three related obligations of gift economies: 1) obligation to give, 2) obligation to receive, 3) obligation to reciprocate.<sup>12</sup> One cannot help but wonder if we, even in religious life, are so caught up in market economy that the world of exchange is almost irrelevant or foreign to us. Obviously, the gift can only be given within our own milieu. If, for the most part, our society values profit and gain, then to desire to give a gift gratuitously seems like foolishness. Hyde maintains that "where gifts have no public currency, where gift is neither valued, recognized, nor honored, then our inner gifts will find themselves excluded from the very commerce which is their nourishment."<sup>13</sup> Is it possible to live a life of exchange, or have we allowed (consciously or unconsciously) outside influences to deny us and others this possibility? Are we and

are those with whom we interact excluded from the very exchange which is our and their nourishment?

Many factors account for the lethargy, burn-out, and near demise of religious life. Our world in many ways functions from the stance of avarice and greed. This environment has undoubtedly had an impact on religious life. The evangelical response for today is a decision to name and internalize the desire for God and the gift of exchange as essential to a passionate, enthusiastic living out of religious life.

In times of scarcity, diminishment, loss, fears about the future, concerns about limited resources, such as, money, energy, personnel, health, etc., we easily grasp, cling to, or hoard what we have rather than give it away. However, the gift that is not given, used up, consumed ends up being lost. When Jesus was sending his disciples on mission he exhorted them: "The gift you have received, give as gift" (Mt. 10:8). At times, this giving feels like a place of emptiness, a lack of control. It is important to note that "the gift finds the one attractive who stands with an empty bowl s/he does not own."<sup>14</sup> The mendicant is the one who stands in an empty place and who has a duty beyond begging. When empty, the wealth of others touches his/her bowl at all sides, and the mendicant gives it away again when she/he meets someone who is empty. However, this is the very place of exchange where involvement and engagement with others builds bonds of attachment and unity—a large corporate heart.

Celebrating, sharing the gift that is ours, we are united. The fruits of the exchange truly satisfy our deepest needs and longings and those of our hungry world. Francis and Clare lived such lives of exchange. It was not a horizontal, but a circular exchange. They were aware of their gift and desire to share it with others. So too they were aware and open to receive the gift of the other, whether beggar or bishop. We all know from experience that in giving or receiving a gift a relationship is established or strengthened among those involved. Clare and Francis witness to the truth that, as a gift is passed along, it may not earn a profit, but it definitely gives increase. In other words, when we have nurtured our gift through fidelity to our call and generosity, the gift grows and feeds us in return. In the world of exchange, our gift is never used up; it remains abundant. For Francis and Clare, the world of exchange allowed the Word to become reality. "Who are my mother and brother? . . . These are my mother and my brothers . . . Whoever does the will of God is brother and sister and mother to me (Mk. 3:34-35).

### Poverty and *Exemplum*

Considering that we are immersed in this market economy, we must ask the question about witness (*exemplum*). In the world of bartering, the focus is

on objects and often necessitates extensive talking and activity. In the world of gift-giving, the focus is on relationship, and more often than not allows for a reverent silence. Each of us is invited to reflect on our own world view which dominates our choices.

The world being the cloister of Franciscans, we must be open to answer the question of insertion, immersion, and witness. Charles Williams reminds us that religious life is the establishment of a state of *caritas*. It mirrors the humanity and deity of the Redeemer. "We shall be graced by one and by all, only never by ourselves."<sup>15</sup> It is only in community that the individual gains her/his individuality, that is, being made to the image and likeness of God in a unique way. As this awareness grows, so too does our reverence for the other increase.

Francis and Clare were known for their ministry to lepers. In their society, lepers were considered the lowliest, the filthiest. Yet, in giving the gift of self to such as these, that which was bitter became sweet (Test 3). In their poverty, Francis and Clare realized their need for others, their need to be in relationship.

Embracing the leper, Francis became aware of God's love for all. One way in which Francis learned of God's preferential love was through Clare, who had a preferential love for Francis. A noble, beautiful, intelligent, and holy woman loved Francis, who considered himself in many ways to be like a leper. Francis began to redefine himself through her eyes. In turn, Clare redefined herself through his eyes as she experienced this holy man's attraction to her. Hence, in the midst of their own poverty, the world of exchange blossomed as Francis showed mercy to the leper, as Clare showed mercy to Francis and he to her. To be brother and sister were not idle words but rather "word and example." Francis and Clare recognized and acknowledged their poverty, their need for one another; hence they were open to receive, as well as to give.

In the midst of a society which was becoming increasingly depersonalized because of urbanization and the rise of a money economy and the exploitation of people for one's own profit, Clare and Francis emphasized the dignity of the individual, made to the image and likeness of God.

With new scholarship, we have, within the past two decades, seen a renewed interest in Franciscan incarnational spirituality. In recovering an awareness that we are made to the image and likeness of God, there has been more of a focus on Jesus (*contemplatio*) and the necessity to follow in his footsteps (*exemplum*). A strong adherence to poverty, though expressed differently by Clare and Francis, was the result of perceiving how people were abused, disregarded, and treated unjustly for the sake of material gain, whether it came in the form of money or property. Time and again, Francis and Clare encourage us to focus on and follow the poor, crucified Christ.

Clare and Francis were people of their time and responded appropriately. Are our words and actions the result of seeing (*contemplatio*) the truth of our society and responding (*exemplum*) accordingly? As we discern the way we are called to live the evangelical life, from whom do we receive the call? As Jesus responded to his brothers and sisters, we too are challenged to nurture relationships where the primacy of the individual is violated. The incarnational spirituality which we embrace as Franciscans situates us in the heart of our world. This is the locus of the action of God for us. It is here that our emptiness (poverty) gifts us with the space to respond lovingly to the Word of God made manifest in the moment. "We are mothers, when we carry Him in our hearts and body through divine love and a pure and sincere conscience and when we give birth to him through his holy manner of working, which should shine before others as an example" (1EpFid 1:10).<sup>16</sup>

## Birthing

Images of motherhood permeate the writings of Clare and Francis. Recent scholarship has devoted attention to Francis and Clare's *animus* and *anima*. One cannot help but marvel at the integrated personalities of Francis and Clare. Their society was less dualistic than ours. We tend to compartmentalize and to think conceptually. The people of the Middle Ages lived in a milieu of relationship and metaphor. Clare and Francis often used dual images of Jesus with Mary, speaking of them in relationship, not as separate entities.

Clare and Francis's prophetic stance comes from their unwillingness to polarize and attribute qualities to only one gender or the other. Their emphasis was on human beings made to the image and likeness of God and thus endowed with the vocation to give birth to the Word in the world. Francis, in his Letter to All the Faithful, invited every man and woman into the process of "birthing Christ," not only making but being Christ incarnate in the historical and sacramental moment. This birthing is the ultimate meaning in the Christian life. It is the spiritual motherhood of which the mystics speak—a process of union with the divine, a transformative means to union, a becoming the mother of God.<sup>17</sup> The womb of the soul is the sacred and hallowed space which receives, nurtures, and brings forth the Word.

When Clare and Francis spoke about the womb, they moved with ease in and out of metaphors of the heart or the cave, thus creating a network of metaphors and meanings. When they talk about giving birth to the Word, they address nurturing, caring, dependence, suffering, and make references not only to Mary but also to Jesus as mother.

One of our greatest contemporary challenges is to witness and give birth to a renewed vision of the kingdom. Two important tasks in this revisioning are: 1) the integration of the masculine and feminine and 2) the further inte-

gration of body/soul. The fruit of these two tasks is the whole person—the *imago Dei*.

## The Tasks of Integration

The basis of the spirituality of Clare and Francis was the desire for God and an awareness of the kingdom. Consequently, they did not categorize people but emphasized what Paul preached: "There does not exist among you Jew or Greek, slave or free, male or female. All are one in Christ Jesus" (Gal. 3:28). The spirituality of Gregory the Great embraces a "return to the body as integral to the expression of the spiritual."<sup>18</sup> God does not remove human reality but fills it with divine presence. "Through life in the body, man comes to know himself and his Creator, to understand what it means to be human and, by contrast, to glimpse something more of divine perfection."<sup>19</sup>

As we contemplate Jesus' life, we are confronted with paradox—he is God and he is bread; he is human and he is divine; he is servant and he is Lord. Our lives, also, are filled with paradox. We seek solitude and at the same time the shared life of community. We are attracted to a contemplative way of life while attempting to respond to all the demands of ministry. We long for a simplicity of lifestyle as we are wooed by the world's consumerism. We want to give generously of our resources while financial necessity is insurmountable. Ours is to live in the midst of the paradox of our time as did Jesus, Clare, and Francis. Unless we are willing to accept and respond lovingly to this tension, we will find ourselves walking outside our vocation to evangelical life.

## The Challenge Which is Ours Today

Living the evangelical life, then, is the activity of the whole person in a concrete historical moment, an activity that moves beyond mere words and deeds and becomes a way of life. Herein lies the challenge! It is impossible for us to replicate the experience and response of Francis and Clare in our time. However, all of us together have the necessary elements, namely, the inspiration of the Gospel, gifted, creative women and men in our congregations, and the concrete historical moment. As Eric Doyle said: Franciscan "theology and spirituality lead one to a material spiritualism or spiritual materialism, to a holy worldliness or worldly holiness."<sup>20</sup> Since "the world is our cloister," the heart of the world holds both the gift and the challenge of our contemporary response.

Clare and Francis had the ability to capture the seeds of spirituality in the midst of their world in such a way that it connected with the lives of others, engendering a passionate response to God and all peoples. Within our Church and our society there are signs that the time is ripe for the charism of the

evangelical way of life to flourish anew.

Our time needs the *exemplum* of a way of life which understands, respects, and appreciates the fullness of the human person; holds as sacred all of creation; rejects primacy of power, competition, money, and consumerism; shares life with the poorest among us; embraces and builds the human community; and, most especially, integrates all of this within the desire for and intimacy with the Incarnate God.

## Endnotes

<sup>1</sup>Gerald Arbuckle, SM, in *Out of Chaos: Refounding Religious Congregations* (1988), presented a theory of the importance of "refounding," or prophetic persons in the history of religious congregations and the need for such persons today.

<sup>2</sup>Michael Casey, *Athirst for God* (Kalamazoo: Cistercian Publications, 1988), 73-74.

<sup>3</sup>Jean Leclercq, OSB, *The Love of Learning and the Desire for God* (New York: Fordham University Press, 1961), 74.

<sup>4</sup>Leclercq, 39.

<sup>5</sup>Leclercq, 39.

<sup>6</sup>Quotations from Clare's writings are from Regis Armstrong, OFM, *Clare of Assisi: Early Documents* (New York: Paulist Press, 1988).

<sup>7</sup>Elizabeth Johnson, "Between the Times: Religious Life and the Postmodern Experience of God," *Review for Religious* 53/1 (Jan./Feb., 1994): 16. (This article by Johnson is part of a research project under the sponsorship of the National Conference of Catholic Bishops, the Conference of Major Superiors, and the Leadership Conference of Women Religious.)

<sup>8</sup>Johnson, 16.

<sup>9</sup>T. S. Eliot, *Four Quartets* (San Diego: Harcourt, Brace, Jovanovich, Publishers, 1971), 59.

<sup>10</sup>Lewis Hyde, *The Gift: Imagination and the Erotic Life of Property* (New York: Vintage Books, 1979), 280.

<sup>11</sup>Hyde, xii.

<sup>12</sup>As cited in Hyde, xv.

<sup>13</sup>Hyde, xiv.

<sup>14</sup>Hyde, 23.

<sup>15</sup>Charles Hefling, ed., *Charles Williams: Essential Writings in Spirituality and Theology* (Boston: Cowley Publications, 1993), 230.

<sup>16</sup>Quotations from Francis's writings are taken from Regis Armstrong, OFM Cap, *Francis and Clare: The Complete Works* (New York: Paulist Press, 1982).

<sup>17</sup>Wendy M. Wright, "Birthing Jesus: A Salesian Understanding of the Christian Life," *Studia Mystica*, 13 (Spring, 1990): 23.

<sup>18</sup>Carole Straw, *Gregory the Great: Perfection in Imperfection* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1988), 127, 193.

<sup>19</sup>Straw, 127.

<sup>20</sup>Eric Doyle, OFM, "Seven Hundred and Fifty Years Later: Reflections on the Franciscan Charism," *Review for Religious*, 36 (Jan., 1977): 35.

*The Cord*, 47.5 (1997)

## BROTHER WOLF

Claire Campbell, SFO

Last year I began to experience severe pain in many muscles. Blood tests revealed extensive inflammation. I was given a tentative diagnosis of "Systemic Lupus Erythematosus." This is a serious immune disorder of unknown origin and there is no cure, only some palliative relief of symptoms with steroids or chemotherapy. Both medicines can cause dangerous side effects.

I prayed about my situation and felt a need to find out all I could about my mysterious illness. Surprisingly, my research led me into an unusual Franciscan meditation. I discovered that *lupus* is the Latin word for wolf. The disease got its name because some lupus patients, (not all) develop an area of inflammation on their face that resembles the markings on the face of a wolf. Like the wolf, lupus is also unpredictable.

I just had to smile! I've always been fascinated by wolves. I associate these elusive and beautiful creatures with St. Francis. The legend about him and the wolf of Gubbio is one of my favorite Franciscan stories.

The more I visualized Francis with *his* wolf, the more at ease I became with *my* wolf. It occurred to me that all Franciscans share things with wolves. For example:

- Wolves live in communities in simple surroundings just the way Franciscans do. They share everything the way St. Francis did.
- Wolves are protective of one another, yet can show extraordinary patience and gentleness toward the very young. As a child were you ever taught by Franciscans?
- At times wolves can become quite playful. Have you ever witnessed Franciscan joy?
- Wolves even "sing" together when Sister Moon lights their night.
- Franciscans fill the midnight air with the song of Matins.

- The ears of wolves are, oh so sensitive. They *really* listen! Try telling your troubles to a Franciscan sometime.
- Both wolves and Franciscans are always aware of every part of Creation and search through it daily for perseverance.

For me, wolves have become symbols of survival, because they have endured for centuries. Franciscans have also survived for over eight hundred years and continue to show me daily where to find spiritual nourishment.

Yes, my wolf is unexpectedly teaching me about Franciscanism, especially when I realize deep in my heart how very, very lovingly Francis cared for his hungry friend, Brother Wolf.

I'm hungry, too, Francis.

Kay Francis Berger, OSF



*That which  
seemed bitter  
to me  
was changed  
into sweetness  
of soul  
and  
body.  
(Test 3)*

## Contributors

**Claire Campbell** is a Secular Franciscan from Hendersonville, North Carolina.

**David Flood, OFM**, is a friar of the Montreal province. His most recent book is *Work for Everyone* (Quezon City: CCFMC Office for Asia/Oceania, 1997). He collaborated with Gedeon Gál in producing *Nicolaus Minorita Chronica* (1996) and *Peter of John Olivi on the Bible* (Franciscan Institute Publications, 1997).

**Patricia Fritz, OSF**, is a member of the Franciscan Sisters of Rochester, Minnesota. She is presently coordinator of spiritual care and mission integration at Our Lady of the Angels Care Center in Cannon Falls, Minnesota. She has done retreat ministry for the past several years.

**Kathleen Gannon, OSF**, is a member of the Sisters of St. Francis of Philadelphia, Aston. She is a spiritual director in Berkeley, California, and serves as the Assistant Program Director for the School of Applied Theology in Berkeley.

**Mary Gurley, OSF**, is a Sister of St. Francis of Philadelphia, Aston. For the past three years she has been Director of the Franciscan Renewal Center in Portland, Oregon.

**Mary Hroscikoski, OSF**, is a Franciscan Sister of Little Falls, Minnesota. After five years teaching and practicing in a family medicine residency program, she is now engaged in a faculty development fellowship at the University of Minnesota. She will be developing research skills with a focus on integrating Franciscan spirituality with the practice of medicine.

**Thomas A. Nairn, OFM**, is a member of the Sacred Heart Province. He is Associate Professor of Christian Ethics at Catholic Theological Union, Chicago, and Ethics Consultant for the Alexian Brother Health System. He also serves on his provincial council.

## RETREATS CONFERENCES

*Come Away . . .  
Pray Play  
Rest Reflect*

**SAN DAMIANO  
RETREAT**

### UPCOMING RETREATS:

**October 3-5, 1997:** Margaret Carney, OSF. "Francis: the Memory and the Meaning—A Festival in the Spirit of Clare."

**October 10-12, 1997:** A Weekend with Richard Rohr, OFM. "An inquiry into Contemporary Spirituality with an Eye toward the Millennium."

**October 17-19, 1997:** Megan McKenna. "Women and Scripture: Stories of Hope."

For information on retreats or scheduling conferences call or write:  
PO Box 767, Danville, CA 94526, Ph. 510-837-9141

**New**

*from The Franciscan Institute*

## **The Franciscan Leader**

**A Modern Version of The Six Wings of the Seraph  
A Guide for Christian Leaders in the Franciscan Tradition**

Translated by Philip O'Mara

*The Six Wings of the Seraph*, long-attributed to St. Bonaventure, is a study of the virtues of a religious superior.

Consistently popular over the centuries, it has been helpful to religious leaders of many institutes, both within and outside of the Franciscan family.

Available here in a very readable and recently up-dated English translation, this handbook commends the virtues of discretion, love, zeal, good example, patience, and devotion.

A well-documented introduction by the translator explains the authorship of the work.

\$8.00 103 pages paper  
ISBN: 1-57659-126-3

## **Francis of Assisi The Message in His Writings**

by Thaddée Matura, OFM

In this book, the author focuses his attention on the message to be found in Francis's writings, believing that it is in these writings that the true spirituality of Francis is to be found.

While many works on Francis tend to concentrate on his personality, this work searches the body of literature that Francis left behind to guide his followers.

It offers a rich, balanced message that teaches a vibrant spirituality centered on God and humanity.

\$12.00 208 pages paper  
ISBN: 1-57659-127-1

**New**

*from The Franciscan Institute*

## **Retrieving a Living Tradition Angelina of Montegiove: Franciscan, Tertiary, Beguine**

by Roberta Agnes McKelvie, OSF

This work examines the story of Angelina and the religious movement associated with her from within the tradition—

A greatly expanded and revised perspective on the historical significance of Angelina as a Franciscan tertiary and Italian Beguine, it represents a significant step forward in telling one of the many untold stories of a leader among Third Order Franciscan women.

\$13.00 211 pages paper  
ISBN: 1-57659-131-x

## **St. Francis and the Song of Brotherhood and Sisterhood**

A Reprint of  
*St. Francis and the Song of Brotherhood*  
by Eric Doyle, OFM

*"The Canticle of Brother Sun is a charter of peace, and as such it is a charter of creaturely rights: human, animal, vegetable and mineral. The most basic meaning of peace is being at home with all creatures, loving all life, reverencing all matter.*

*The Canticle has a message of peace for all nations."*

*For those who find in St. Francis an inspiration, this book will provide practical starting points for the application of the Franciscan way to everyday life.*

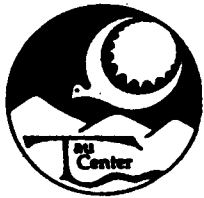
\$12.00 233 pages paper  
ISBN: 1-57659-033-8

Order from:



The Franciscan Institute  
St. Bonaventure University  
St. Bonaventure, NY 14778

Ph: 716 378 2108 FAX: 716 378 2186



## TAU CENTER

A Place for Franciscans  
to nurture and  
strengthen their charism.

### Programs:

January 20-April 13, 1998

#### **SABBATICAL FOR CONTEMPORARY FRANCISCANS**

A twelve week time of study and personal renewal in a community setting with others interested in exploring the meaning of the Franciscan charism in the world today. *Cost: \$4,200.00.*

March 5 (5:00 pm) - March 8 (11:00 am), 1998

#### **LEGENDA MAJOR: FRANCIS' LIFE AS A PARADIGM FOR THE SPIRITUAL JOURNEY**

Regis Armstrong, OFM Cap. did his doctoral dissertation on the spiritual theology of Bonaventure's major legend of St. Francis. New insights will be presented on this writing as a paradigm for our spiritual journey. *Cost: \$150.00.*

### Retreat:

November 16 (4:00 pm)-November 22 (1:00 pm), 1997

#### **PRAYING WITH FRANCISCAN MYSTICS**

Ramona Miller, OSF, and Ingrid Peterson, OSF, present the lives and writings of some of the active and contemplative Franciscan women and men who followed Clare and Francis. A daily conference, liturgical prayer, and optional afternoon activities will provide a rhythm for this unique opportunity to pray with Franciscan mystics. *Cost: \$325.00.*

For further information contact:

TAU CENTER  
511 Hilbert Street  
Winona, MN 55987  
Ph. (507) 454-2993 FAX: (507) 453-0910

## Franciscan Gathering XVIII

February 1 - 6, 1998

Franciscan Center, Tampa, Florida

### **Toward a Franciscan Spirituality for the 3rd Millennium**

Presented by

Gabriele Uhlein, OSF, Ph.D.

Gabriele brings twenty years of retreat work and Jungian-based spiritual development experience to the ongoing cultivation of an appropriate Franciscan presence. A psychologist and theologian, her present interest is the power the "new millennium" holds in our American consumer-driven society. In addition to several articles, she has authored *Meditations with Hildegard of Bingen*.

The annual Franciscan Gathering is always "Kairos" for the sisters and brothers, religious and secular, who share a common history and dreams. Come, celebrate a week of prayer and liturgy, presentations and process, leisure and laughter with other Franciscans in sunny Tampa. Limited to 50 participants. Register early!

For information or brochure contact:

Jo Marie Streva, OSF  
Franciscan Center  
3010 Perry Avenue, Tampa, FL 33603  
Ph.: 813-229-2695; Fax: 813-228-0748  
E-mail: Francntr@aol.com

# Franciscan

## **NEW!** St. Francis of Assisi and his Conversions

Pierre Brunette, *ofm*  
translated by Paul Lachance and Kathryn Krug

Translated from the French, *François d'Assise et ses conversions*, this book is a non-technical study which examines Francis' conversion from a lay to a religious life.

95 pp. (paper) ISBN 0978-5 / \$8.95

## St Francis of Assisi: Omnibus of Sources: Writings and Early Biographies

Marion A. Habig, *ofm*, ed.

The classic English resource for primary texts on the life of St. Francis.

ISBN 0862-2 1665 pp. (cloth) / \$64.95

## Marriage: The Sacrament of Divine-Human Communion: A Commentary on St. Bonaventure's 'Breviloquium'

Sister Paula Jean Miller, *tsa*

A new and original study of St. Bonaventure's theology of marriage as it is expressed in his *Breviloquium*.

ISBN 0967-X 268 pp. (paper) / \$24.95

## Clare of Assisi: A Biographical Study

Ingrid Peterson, *osf*

Drawing from historical, sociological, spiritual, theological, and ecclesiological backgrounds and specialists, Ingrid Peterson created the definitive biographical study of Clare of Assisi.

ISBN 0964-H  
436 pp. (cloth) / \$23.50

## The Ethical Theory of John Duns Scotus: A Dialogue with Medieval and Modern Thought

(Thomas A. Shannon)

ISBN 0966-1 151 pp. (paper) / \$10.95

John Duns Scotus: Mary's Architect  
(Allan Wolter, *ofm*, and Blane O'Neill, *ofm*)

ISBN 0960-2 90 pp. (paper) / \$10.95

The Harmony of Goodness: Mutuality and Moral Living According to John Duns Scotus

(Mary Beth Ingham, *csj*)  
ISBN 0969-6 159 pp. (paper) / \$12.95

## A Window to the Divine: Creation Theology

Zachary Hayes, *ofm*

Originally published in 1980 as *What Are They Saying About Creation?* (Paulist Press), Fr. Zachary's study summarizes the developments on the fundamental questions concerning the theology of creation.

ISBN 0979-3 100 pp. (paper) / \$9.95

## Studying the Life of Francis of Assisi: A Beginner's Workbook

William R. Hugo, *ofm Cap.*

A practical approach to primary Franciscan texts for those interested in studying the life and writings of Francis of Assisi.

ISBN 0970-X 223 pp. (paper) \$17.95

## Living the Incarnation: Praying with Francis and Clare of Assisi

Sister Frances Teresa, *osc*

This book articulates the message of Francis and Clare helping us to understand more clearly the call of the Gospel in our lives.

ISBN 0971-8 135 pp. (paper) / \$12.95

## Collations on the Six Days

St. Bonaventure / José de Vinck, trans. and ed.

The *Collationes in Hexaemeron* represents the final synthesis of Bonaventure's thought as well as his response to the controversy over the Latin Averroism at the University of Paris.

ISBN 0974-2  
400 pp. (hardcover) / \$25.95

# Press



## Christian Ethics: An Ethics of Intimacy

John J. Lakers, *ofm*

Reflecting a lifetime of work as a philosopher, teacher, and counselor, Fr. J.J.'s monumental study traces the Christian "metaphor of intimacy" through western cultural history, drawing on studies in a wide range of fields in the humanities and social sciences in order to define a distinctively Christian ethics.

438 pp. (paper) ISBN 0972-6 / \$16.95

## To Cling With All Her Heart To Him: The Spirituality Of St. Clare Of Assisi

Benet Fonck, *ofm*

Illustrations by Kay Frances Berger, *osf*

A popular account of the life and spirituality of St. Clare using Clare's own words.

ISBN 0973-4 78 pp. (paper) / \$10.95

## Making the Journey with Christ: The Way of the Cross

Judy Sardello, *sfo*

New stations of the Cross for Secular Franciscans.

ISBN 0965-3 40 pp. (paper) / \$0.95

## Acompañando a Jesús en su Jornada: El Via Crucis (Spanish version of Making the Journey)

Judy Sardello, *sfo* / Gloria Sanchez, *sfo*, trans.

ISBN 0965-S 40 pp. (paper) / \$0.95

## Clare of Assisi

Marco Bartoli

Sr. Frances Teresa, *osc*, trans

Historian Marco Bartoli wrote this book in a lively narrative style with the general reader in mind, as well as scholars and Franciscans.

ISBN 0963-7 244 p. (paper) / \$21.95

## The First Franciscan Woman: Clare of Assisi and Her Form of Life

Margaret Carney, *osf*

A scholarly study of Clare's Rule.

ISBN 0962-9 261 pp. (paper) / \$12.95

## The Pastoral Companion: A Canon Law Handbook for Catholic Ministry

(second series, second edition)

John M. Huels, *osm*, *jcd*

ISBN 0968-8 432 pp. (paper) / \$20.00

## GERMAIN GRISEZ

### The Way of the Lord Jesus, Volume III: Difficult Moral Questions

In this new volume, Grisez answers 200 practical, moral questions raised by the readers of the first two volumes.

ISBN 0981-5 927pp. (hardcover) / \$35.00

### The Way of the Lord Jesus, Volume II: Living A Christian Life

Responding to Vatican II's call for renewal, Prof. Grisez deals with the specific questions that concern all or most Catholics, explaining the church's teachings so that its truth is clarified in the light of Gospel values and a profoundly Christian humanism.

ISBN 0961-0 950 pp. (cloth) / \$35.00

### The Way of the Lord Jesus, Volume I: Christian Moral Principles

Treats the foundations of Christian morality.

ISBN 0861-4 971 pp. (cloth) / \$35.00

For more information on these and FHP  
backlist titles write:

### Franciscan Press

Quincy University  
1800 College Avenue  
Quincy, IL 62301-2699

Telephone: 217-228-5670

Fax: 217-228-5672

Web site: <http://www.quincy.edu/fpress>



## Franciscan Scripture Calendar 1998

*Scripture Calendars make thoughtful, spirit-filled gifts.*

This unique Franciscan calendar, created by the Franciscan Sisters, contains the scripture references for each day of the liturgical year and timely and inspirational words of St. Francis and his followers.

It folds to a convenient 8 1/2" x 4 1/2".

Available after October 15, 1997.

Prices:

1 to 9 - \$3 each

10 or more - \$2.75 each

Please include shipping and handling:

1 to 4 calendars - \$1

4 to 9 calendars - \$2

10 or more - \$3



Sister Mary Charles, OSB

*All proceeds support the ministries of the Franciscan Sisters of Little Falls, Minnesota.*

Please send order and payment to:  
Franciscan Sisters, Office of Development  
116 SE 8th Avenue  
Little Falls, MN 56345-3597

Ph.: 320-632-2981; Fax: 320-632-1714; E-mail: commrela@uslink.net



## GATE

Mexico GATE Pilgrimage  
Retreat for Franciscans  
February 3-13, 1998

Reflections will be led by Roberta Cusack, OSF

Global Awareness Through Experience teams with Sister Roberta to offer a retreat in Mexico that invites Franciscans to walk with the *minores* seeking Christ for the twenty-first century. Discover how Franciscan Values impel us to conversion along a path of solidarity with our sisters and brothers. Come open to prayer, dialogue, and the journey.

Contact:

GATE

912 Market Street

La Crosse, WI 54601-8800

Ph.: 608-791-5283 Fax: 608-782-6301

E-mail: gateusa@juno.com

*GATE is sponsored by the Franciscan Sisters of Perpetual Adoration,  
La Crosse, WI.*

## 1998

## FRANCISCAN INTERNSHIP PROGRAM

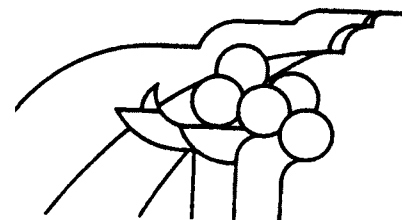
## 1998

in  
Spiritual Direction  
and  
Directed Retreats

March 29-June 20, 1998  
(Deadline: December 15, 1997)  
29th Session

A three-month ministerial and experiential program born out of the conviction that our Franciscan charism enables us to bring a distinctive Franciscan approach to our ministries.

Helpful to religious and lay formators, retreat directors, parish and hospital ministers, contemplatives, missionaries, community leadership, personal renewal.



*For more information contact:*

Marilyn Joyce, osf; Tom Speier, ofm  
St. Francis Center  
10290 Mill Road  
Cincinnati, OH 45231

Phone (513) 825-9300 • FAX (513) 825-1083

## ON THE FRANCISCAN CIRCUIT COMING EVENTS 1997

### Friday, September 26-Sunday, September 28

**Facing the Christ Incarnate.** Sponsored by the Franciscan Federation at Madonna Retreat Center, Albuquerque, NM. Contact: Franciscan Federation, PO Box 29080, Washington, DC 20017, ph. 202-529-2334, fax 202-529-7016, e-mail [franfed@aol.com](mailto:franfed@aol.com)

### Saturday, September 27

**Mysticism in the Marketplace: Franciscan Tradition of Prayer.** Franciscan Day of Recollection in Preparation for the Feast of Francis, with Ingrid Peterson, OSF. At St. Anthony Shrine, the Worker Chapel, 100 Arch Street, Boston, MA, ph. 617-542-6440, fax 617-542-4225. Contact: Violet Grennan, OSF.

### Friday, October 3-Sunday, October 5

**Francis: the Memory and the Meaning—A Festival in the Spirit of Clare.** Margaret Carney, OSF. Contact: San Damiano Retreat, PO Box 767, Danville, CA 94526; ph. 510-837-9141.

### Friday, October 10-Sunday, October 12

**An Inquiry into Contemporary Spirituality with an Eye toward the Millennium.** Richard Rohr, OFM. Contact: San Damiano Retreat, Danville, CA (see above).

### Friday, October 10-Sunday, October 12

**Facing the Christ Incarnate.** Sponsored by the Franciscan Federation at Franciscan Sisters of OLP, St. Louis, MO. Contact: Franciscan Federation, PO Box 29080, Washington, DC 20017, ph. 202-529-2334, fax 202-529-7016, e-mail [franfed@aol.com](mailto:franfed@aol.com)

### Friday, October 17- Sunday, October 19

**Women and Scripture: Stories of Hope.** Megan McKenna. Contact: San Damiano Retreat, Danville, CA (see above).

### Thursday, October 30-Sunday, November 2

**Franciscan Connection,** A weekend experience for candidates in initial formation. Srs. Diane Marie Collins and Mary Elizabeth Immler. At the Portiuncula Center for Prayer, Frankfort, IL. Contact Jean Schwieters, OSF, 727 E. Margaret, St. Paul, MN 55106, ph. 612-772-1740.

### Saturday, November 8-Sunday, November 9

**Facing the Christ Incarnate.** Sponsored by the Franciscan Federation at Franciscan Spirit and Life Center, Pittsburgh, PA. Contact: Franciscan Federation, PO Box 29080, Washington, DC 20017, ph. 202-529-2334, fax 202-529-7016.

### Sunday, November 16-Saturday, November 22

**Praying with Franciscan Mystics.** Ramona Miller, OSF, and Ingrid Peterson, OSF. \$325. Contact: Tau Center, 511 Hilbert St., Winona, MN 55987, ph. 507-454-2993, fax 507-453-0910, e-mail, [taucenr@luminet.net](mailto:taucenr@luminet.net)

### Sunday, November 30-Sunday, December 7

**Bringing Forth Christ.** Advent retreat based on Bonaventure's Five Feasts of the Child Jesus. André Cirino, OFM. \$230. Contact: Marie Therese Kalb, OSF, Shalom Retreat Center, 1001 Davis St., Dubuque, IA 52001.

## Writings of Saint Francis

Adm	Admonitions	FormViv	Form of Life for St. Clare
BenLeo	Blessing for Brother Leo	1Fragm	Fragment of other Rule I
CantSol	Canticle of Brother Sun	2Fragm	Fragment of other Rule II
EpAnt	Letter to St. Anthony	LaudDei	Praises of God
EpCler	Letter to the Clergy	LaudHor	Praises to be said at all the Hours.
EpCust	Letter to the Custodians	OffPass	Office of the Passion
1EpFid	First Letter to the Faithful	OrCruc	Prayer before the Crucifix
2EpFid	Second Letter to the Faithful	RegB	Later Rule
EpLeo	Letter to Brother Leo	RegNB	Earlier Rule
EpMin	Letter to a Minister	RegEr	Rule for Hermitages
EpOrd	Letter to the Entire Order	SalBMV	Salutation of the Blessed Virgin Mary
EpRect	Letter to the Rulers of the Peoples	SalVirt	Salutation of the Virtues
ExhLD	Exhortation to the Praise of God	Test	Testament
ExhPD	Exhortation to Poor Ladies	TestS	Testament written in Siena
ExpPat	Prayer Inspired by the Our Father	UltVol	Last Will written for St. Clare
		VPLaet	Dictate on True and Perfect Joy

## Writings of Saint Clare

1LAg	First Letter to Agnes of Prague
2LAg	Second Letter to Agnes of Prague
3LAg	Third Letter to Agnes of Prague
4LAg	Fourth Letter to Agnes of Prague
LEr	Letter to Ermentrude of Bruges
RCI	Rule of Clare
TestCI	Testament of Clare
BCI	Blessing of Clare

## Early Franciscan Sources

1Cel	First Life of St. Francis by Thomas of Celano
2Cel	Second Life of St. Francis by Thomas of Celano
3Cel	Treatise on the Miracles by Thomas of Celano
AP	Anonymous of Perugia
CL	Legend of Clare
CSD	Consideration of the Stigmata
Fior	Fioretti
JdV	Witness of Jacque de Vitry
LM	Major Life of St. Francis by Bonaventure
LMin	Minor Life of St. Francis by Bonaventure
LP	Legend of Perugia
L3S	Legend of the Three Companions
Proc	Acts of the Process of Canonization of St. Clare
SC	Sacrum commercium
SP	Mirror of Perfection