



# T • H • E C • O • R • D

## *Fiftieth Anniversary Year!*

### *Editorial*

Margaret Carney, OSF. . . . . 1

### *"This is What We Proclaim to You"*

Joseph P. Chinnici, OFM . . . . . 2

### *Franciscan Eremitism*

Thomas Merton, OCSO. . . . . 23

### *A Franciscan Inspires the Jubilee*

Joseph Wood, OFMConv. . . . . 30

### *A Biographical Profile of*

Waldemar A. Roebuck, SFO. . . . . 35

*About Our Contributors.* . . . . 37

### *Book Reviews*

Anthony Carrozzo, OFM. . . . . 38

Anthony LoGalbo, OFM . . . . . 42

*Announcements.* . . . . 43

*On the Franciscan Circuit* . . . . . 56



**THE CORD**  
**A Franciscan Spiritual Review**

Publisher: Margaret Carney, OSF  
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Poetry Editor: Frances Ann Thom, OSF  
Promotion: Thomas Blow, OFM  
Distribution Manager: Noel Riggs  
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Editorial Board: Marie Beha, OSC, Murray Bodo, OFM, Mary C. Gurley, OSF  
Patricia Hutchison, OSF, Bernard Tickerhoof, TOR, Joseph Wood, OFM Conv.,  
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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). (2Cel 5:8).  
(RegNB 23:2). (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.

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**Fiftieth Anniversary Year!**  
**Jubilee!**

**Guest Editorial**

Funds from an anonymous benefactor, authorization from Rev. Pius Barth, OFM, President of the Franciscan Educational Conference (d. 1990), and the editorial zeal of the Franciscan Institute's first director, Rev. Philotheus Boehner, OFM (d. 1955) and his able assistant, Sr. M. Frances, SMIC,\* combined to launch *The Cord* in 1950. Boehner's inaugural editorial states that "The primary purpose of *The Cord* is to aid in effecting among us a deeper knowledge and more ardent love of the Franciscan way of life." The economic precision of this first "mission statement" is joined to a passionate appeal for the cultivation of authentic Franciscan spirituality in contrast to "superficial and sentimentally romantic concepts of Franciscanism." The founding editor is insistent that Franciscans must have more access to resources that will allow them to reproduce the "radiant countenance of our Father [Francis]" in a world that looks to the Franciscan Orders "with admiration and confidence."

As I review this first editorial and survey the fifty volumes of *The Cord* that follow, the countenance of Philotheus Boehner smiles down from a photograph above my desk. Does that smile of gentle wisdom take into account the amazing procession of persons and events, articles, editorials, book reviews, poems, notices, and advertisements that have bound generations of Franciscans together with a common tool for personal growth and corporate reflection? An honor roll of editors and writers, an unsung assemblage of skilled production personnel, and several generations of publishers must be summoned to mind as we begin the Golden Anniversary of this journal.

Unable to do justice to all of them in this short editorial statement, I invite the readers who receive this first jubilee issue to offer a psalm of praise for the veritable "cloud of witnesses" who have fulfilled this original vision. We reach a bend in the road of our *itinerarium*. What must *The Cord* be and become in order to remain the respected and important "tie that binds" together a Franciscan global community called to be salt and light in a new century?

*Margaret Carney, O.S.F.*  
Publisher

\*Sister M. Frances, SMIC, of Paterson, NJ, is still living and working in New Mexico.

## **"This is What We Proclaim to You" Facing the Christ Incarnate**

Joseph P. Chinnici, OFM

[This is the text of a presentation made at an international assembly  
of the Franciscan Sisters of Allegany, July 1996.]

### **Meditatio Pauperis in Tempore**

Fifty years ago, not long after World War II, a young monk living at the "center of the world" in Gethsemani, Kentucky, published his autobiographical memoir, *The Seven Storey Mountain*. The book was an immediate success both nationally and internationally as it met the spiritual hungers of a whole generation of Catholic, Christian, and secular people. The story of one life, so different, so removed, became, in a short period, a vocational statement unlocking a way and a meaning for thousands. It was a question not of literary merit or greatness, for the book seems dated now, but rather a question of convergence—the coming together of languaged personal experience with the greater incoherent speech of social and spiritual aspiration. Largely unnoticed at the time, *Seven Storey Mountain* concluded with a short reflection piece entitled "Meditatio pauperis in solitudine" [the meditation of a poor man in solitude], a title surely reflective of the first chapter of Bonaventure of Bagnoregio's *Itinerarium mentis in Deum*, entitled "Speculatio pauperis in deserto"<sup>1</sup> [speculation of the poor man in the desert]. In his reflection, Merton, who had been a teacher at St. Bonaventure University, referred explicitly to the two great scholastic theologians, Thomas and Bonaventure, and pointed to St. Francis as a model for the life of the Christian in the Church and the world. "Christ implanted His own image upon St. Francis," Merton wrote,

in order to draw out some men [and women], not a few privileged monks, but all truly spiritual men [and women] to the perfection of contemplation which is nothing else but the perfection of love.<sup>2</sup>

These were the words of a monk writing from within his solitude fifty years ago; they were not the words of a Franciscan man or woman. However, Merton got it right for us as we try to face the Incarnate Christ. It is about being imprinted with, contemplating, and exemplifying, sometimes all in one moment and sometimes over a long period of time, the "perfection of love." We do not do it *in solitudine*, alone. That is not our vocation. But we do it together and *in tempore*, in time, in history, in community. So I entitle my reflection with you "the meditation of a poor person engaged in history" in hopes that together we might discover our witness to the "perfection of love." This is a *meditatio*—a reflection from faith on history; it is not an exposition of doctrinal truth nor a detailed, abstract analysis of our Franciscan christological tradition. Neither is it a great projection of our future life nor an essay full of answers. It is about the meditative intersection between ourselves, our history, and a recovery of the Incarnate Christ, as seen from the perspective of a poor human being, a creature. I would like to divide my meditation into a three step process:

- An *exemplum* or story to prime the imagination;
- A *meditation* on the journey of a post-conciliar Franciscan; a *memoria passionis*<sup>3</sup> as the social base for facing our Christ Incarnate;
- The spirituality of facing the Christ Incarnate: a beginning picture.

### **An Exemplum**

We stand at the beginning of the twenty-first century and in the midst of one of the most exciting theological retrievals of our time—the retrieval of our Franciscan christological tradition. Someone has been here before us, at the start of our own twentieth century, and I would like to begin with a reflection on her life. Evelyn Underhill (1875-1941), the great Anglican spiritual writer, was born in the last third of the nineteenth century. She described her own life as "one on the borderlands," that zone of a personal geography of faith which places an individual between places and marks her forever as emotionally and intellectually homeless. Married to Hubert Stuart Moore in July 1907, she found herself attracted to Roman Catholicism but unable to convert; her husband simply could not accept her desire for allegiance to the Roman Church and still remain married to her. At the same time, as a studious person, she found also that she could not convert to a type of Roman Catholicism which seemed intellectually stifling. Yet, she wanted to convert with her whole heart;

she wanted things to be different. Underhill's life became marked by an "*Impossibility*," a dilemma, an experience of tension, polarity, struggle between what she wanted to believe and what she could in fact achieve, what was indeed historically available for her. She wanted to touch and realize what she perceived to be the ideal, the spiritual, the transcendent, the divine, the truthful, the beautiful (oh, how she loved the Church and wanted to belong to it!), and yet this way seemed blocked for her. She could not stop loving her husband nor could she simply accept the limited, earthly, political, and, at times grotesque, institution of Catholicism.

As an initial solution to her personal and institutional dilemma, Evelyn Underhill turned to the mystics of the Christian tradition. She tried to recover personal religious experience when that was not given to her by a stifling tradition and environment. She sought spiritual mystery while living in the midst of dogmatic and formalized definitions of science and of faith. She discovered in historical models examples of inner freedom, self-enhancement, action, and power not otherwise available to her. Through the mystics she restored the "authority of personal religious experience."<sup>4</sup> In her view, God was accessible and provided a point of stability in the midst of a world full of difficulty and "impossibility." As she herself put it, she adored Christ's head and neglected his feet. "I am finding," she wrote in 1913, "that most devout persons are docetists without knowing it, and that nothing short of complete unreality will satisfy them."<sup>5</sup> "Mystical consciousness," she wrote

has the power of lifting those who possess it to a plane of reality which no struggle, no cruelty, can disturb: of conferring a certitude which no catastrophe can wreck. Yet it does not wrap its initiates in a selfish and otherworldly calm, isolate them from the pain and effort of common life. Rather it gives them renewed vitality; administering to the human spirit not—as some suppose—a soothing draught, but the most powerful of stimulants. Stayed upon eternal realities, that spirit will be far better able to endure and profit from the stern discipline which the race is now called to undergo, than those who are wholly at the mercy of events; better able to discern the real from the illusory issues, and to pronounce judgments on the new problems, new difficulties, new fields of activity now disclosed. Perhaps it is worth while to remind ourselves that the two women who have left the deepest mark upon the military history of France and England—Joan of Arc and Florence Nightingale—both acted under mystical compulsion.<sup>6</sup>

Evelyn Underhill's faith in this platonic God of the mystics collapsed under the pressure of World War I, an event so terrible, so heart wrenching, so unreasonable, so useless, so full of sin, so dead-ending that it seemed totally

incompatible with the existence of a transcendent God of pure spirit. Her source of power collapsed; she "went to pieces," and her life, disembodied, became marked both by great activity and inner emotional starvation.<sup>7</sup> Before her very eyes appeared the sufferings of others.

In this crisis of her life, Evelyn Underhill had nowhere to rest her weary head, so she continued to do what she had always done—write. In 1919 she published one of the first modern English works on the Franciscan poet Jacopone da Todi.<sup>8</sup> A year later, she discovered fellowship in the "Confraternity of the Spiritual Entente," a small group of interdependent Christians founded by an Italian Franciscan sister. In 1921-1922 Baron Freidrich von Hugel, her famous spiritual director, gave her a way out of her historical and institutional dilemma—daily devotion to the humanity of Christ, participation in a circle of spiritually interdependent friends expressed in the fellowship of the sacraments and the Church, and contact with the poor.<sup>9</sup> She began to learn an "inclusive mysticism which saw all of life, thought, action, and feeling as material to be transformed by God."<sup>10</sup> In 1925, after some time of this practice, she wrote of St. Francis:

He emerged from the "rut of use and wont," to make a fresh contact with reality; and this contact took the form of a mysticism which was penitential, uncloistered, poetic and Christlike. . . . He was above all else a spiritual realist, who wished his inward and his outward life to be at one: we shall never learn to know him by studying or admiring his outward actions, unless we perceive these as the expressions of an unwavering interior attitude. We may prefer to call him a "little brother of the birds," forgetting that he was also a "little brother of the lice"; we shall only understand and correlate these facts when we remember that he first called himself and his companions the "penitents from Assisi." He accepted in the most practical sense the old ascetic prescription of an unmitigated meekness and an unlimited love, as the double foundations of all true relationship between created and uncreated Spirit.<sup>11</sup>

Evelyn Underhill learned over time to face the Christ Incarnate, a God not of pure spirit but a God who is powerful enough to dwell as a human being in misshapen institutions, in sinful and limited corners of life, in the experiences of impossibility, in the small piece of bread, in human beings, in the poor, in imperfection, in her very self. Perhaps Evelyn began to plumb the depths of what the poet of her generation wrote in the trenches of the war:

The straggled soldier halted—stared at Him—  
Then clumsily dumped down upon his knees,  
Gasping, "O blessed crucifix, I'm beat!"

And Christ, still sentried by the seraphim,  
Near the front-line, between two splintered trees,  
Spoke him: "My son, behold these hands and feet."

The soldier eyed Him upward, limb by limb,  
paused at the Face: then muttered, "Wounds like these  
Would shift a bloke to Blighty just a treat!"  
Christ, gazing downward, grieving and ungrim,  
Whispered, "I made for you the mysteries,  
Beyond all battles moves the Paraclete."<sup>12</sup>

"More and more my whole religious life and experience," Underhill wrote,

seem to centre with increasing vividness on our Lord—that sort of quasi-involuntary prayer which springs up of itself at odd moments is always now directed to Him. I seem to have to try as it were to live more and more towards Him only—and it's all this which makes it so utterly heartbreaking when one is horrid. The New Testament, which once I couldn't make much of or meditate on, now seems full of things never noticed—all gets more and *more* alive and compelling and beautiful. . . . Holy Communion, which at first I did simply under obedience, gets more and more wonderful too. It's in that world that one lives.<sup>13</sup>

As I see it, this journey of Evelyn Underhill, her journey to face the Christ Incarnate, is an *exemplum* for our time; and it is given to us not simply as individuals but in our corporate experience. I will try to explain what I mean in our next section.

### Meditation on the Journey of a Post-Conciliar Franciscan

In the wake of the Second Vatican Council, we religious were challenged to appropriate the conciliar decrees *Lumen Gentium*, *Gaudium et Spes*, and *Perfectae Caritatis*. Beginning in 1967, we held chapters; changed our dress, our customs, our daily horarium; updated our theology; diversified our ministries; restructured our government; and eventually even came up with new terms to describe our style of life. All of this occurred in a society in tremendous mutation. We can recall where we were when John F. Kennedy, Martin Luther King, Jr., Robert Kennedy, and the students at Kent State University were shot. We remember the occupation of Columbia University offices and the disturbances in far away California; the folk music of Peter, Paul, and Mary; Bob Dillon's ballads. We experienced the great changes occurring in the lit-

urgy, the parish council, the diocesan synod; we knew first hand the battles over constitutional changes and the place of religious life in societal transformation. Those from Central or South America remember the period of revolution and civil war, the advent of liberation theology in the ferment of peoples associated with the *comunidades insertas* and *comunidades de base*, the official statements from Medellin (1968) and Puebla (1979), and the emerging religious vision which united both Americas in an uneasy solidarity of wealth and poverty, power and colonialism, affluence and exploitation.

In 1972 the Leadership Conference of Women Religious issued an overall assessment of the immediate impact of these developments under the title of "principal changes introduced and experiments being carried out."<sup>14</sup> Let us listen a bit to our own history. The language, I think, is important:

- *Poverty*: a) the quest for experience of evangelical poverty is evoking a need among some to identify with the poor and to work for the eradication of poverty's causes; b) priorities among needs are being determined in such a way that personal and financial resources may be more effectively used for supporting programs that enable the poor and oppressed to experience justice and a truly human life. . . .
- *Obedience*: a) obedience is coming to be understood as a faith response to needs which have been discerned after prayer and consultation. Responsibility for and dedication to a corporate vision demand both personal involvement and community ratification of service choices; b) authority is being exercised in a context of service and in a manner that is fraternal; c) dialogue and consultation with those whose lives are influenced by decisions are becoming integral to the decision-making process. . . .
- "*Small communities*": Currently the phrase describes new modes of living where persons can experience more authentic 1) personal relationships, 2) sharing of the faith, and 3) spontaneous responses to people's needs in the context of Jesus' mission. . . .
- *Forms of Prayer*: Prayer forms are coming to be appreciated as authentic to the degree that they assist in making ordinary life experiences lead to deepening of relationship with the Living Presence who is at the center of life. . . .
- *Forms of Government Based on Collegiality*: a) a more collegial spirit is begetting new and untried ways of administration and decision-making (e.g. teams, executive committees, full-time councils); b) decisions at every level are tending to be based on experiences of communal discernment.

The report of this 1972 conference went on to list several effects of these profound changes on our sense of ourselves, our sense of affiliation, our sense

of the future. In retrospect it seems to me that three sections of the report are extremely significant in setting the stage for what would develop in the next thirty years; the report summarizes experiences in this way:

- Internal divisions and polarizations arising from disagreements about what constitutes the essentials and accidentals of religious life; increasing pluriformity perceived as destructive of unity; increased personal responsibility alien to a life of obedience; anomie and apathy in the application of the principle of co-responsibility; psychological inability of some to cope with change and to accept responsibility.
- Withdrawals from religious life because of the rapidity of change, disenchantment with the institutional church, the personal experience of women [and men!] religious who appear judgmental, intolerant, and unconcerned; loss of reverence for the sacred.
- Vocational crisis. Here the report refers to such items as the huge gap between the inherited structures of religious life and the aspirations of a younger generation marked by alienation from all institutions, especially those closely connected with the Church; the growing valuation of the lay vocation in the world as equally blessed to that of the religious vocation; the "lack of proper respect for religious women as women in the Church, especially lack of their inclusion in many ministries and in decision-making, especially decision-making concerning their own life and ministries, whether at local, diocesan, or Roman levels.

The affective and intellectual responses attached to these experiences named themselves: overreaction, carelessness, aggression, hostility, confusion, insecurity, anxiety, powerlessness, avoidance, unevenness, obduracy, depression, regression, apathy, carelessness, hurt, fear. What was called for was acceptance, respect, appreciation, mutual trust, risk, social sensitivity, openness of heart, flexibility, personal responsibility, a sense of dignity.

I recall all of this history between 1965-1972 not because I want to belabor the obvious. I do it by way of description. As an historian I believe that we can begin to "face the Christ Incarnate" only to the extent that we can enter into the memory of our own life's passion, and I have been astounded by the extent to which I myself and others, growing up in a society of denial, forgetfulness, and evasion, are skilled at avoiding the passion of our own lives and the lives of our neighbors. I have noticed that people talk with reluctance about those years of transition and massive change. Most recently, polarized descriptions of the events have begun to surface in historical and theological literature, and the complexity of the situation, its hopes and sufferings, the injuries caused and experienced, are placed once again at the service of competing

ideologies.<sup>15</sup> Certainly, the historical testimony within our own Franciscan family indicates that we followed a pattern similar to that outlined by the Leadership Conference.<sup>16</sup> The simple truth is, we need to look closely at the emergence during these years of the alloy of our personal, social, and ecclesiastical experience. The fire of the charged tensions of that period and their contemporary recall will forge the coin which bears the face of the Franciscan Christ Incarnate.

What the historian notes about this particular period, perduring from 1965 to approximately 1979, is the startling conjunction in people's experience of both life and death, hope and pain, infinite possibilities and finite practicalities, gain and loss, glory and despair, joy and suffering, aspiration and impasse, sin and grace, complicity in mutual hopes and complicity in mutual destruction. This was not the religious experience of the generation before us, nor that of the turn of the century, nor that of the immigrant church. This type of conjunction has not occurred since the sixteenth or thirteenth centuries. It provides the social key to the development of a new Christological image, if that image can be named and discovered in people's experience. On the one hand we have great idealism—the search for justice, relationships, mission for others, union with God, a sense of personal dignity. On the other hand we have personal, communal, ecclesiastical, and political impasse. What happens with such a mixture of elements is a fracturing of inherited identities, categories, structures, and relationships. The holy migrates from institutions with their forms, roles, functions, solidarities, universal symbols, intellectual meanings, and securities. Who cannot remember the universality of scholastic philosophy and theology or their immediate post-conciliar substitutes in humanistic psychology and the synthesis of Teilhard de Chardin, or the unitary symbols of the motherhouse, novitiate, corporate apostolates?—the holy migrates from these places to individuals with their talents, gifts, desires, feelings, local rituals, private interpretations, and relationships.<sup>17</sup> And, in the gap between inherited structures and new valuations of the holy, there begins a search for new forms of affiliation—houses of prayer, intentional communities, *comunidades insertas*, groups, circles of friendship, associations. When these do not readily emerge in any lasting way—and how can they in an age of heightened aspirations and limited historical possibilities?—personal and communal desires become frustrated, blocked, caught in a coincidence of personal and social opposites. History and expectation conflict.

I do not think it is accidental that the experiential polarities which emerged fully in the 1960s and developed in the 1970s reached their social and historical impasse by the early 1980s. This happened with the waning of liberation theology in the Americas, the public emergence of ideological blocks in both Church and State, and the growing sense that the horizon of our possibilities

was suddenly narrowing. The limitations inherent in the immediate post-conciliar period suddenly became transparently obvious—aging membership coincided with declining vocations; the expectations of social change floundered hard against the greater economic and political realities; institutional extension no longer matched personal and communal resources; changes in the Church left us orphaned and publicly invisible; the fracturing of community, which had occurred as a reaction to the submergence of the person in a corporate image, now turned back upon itself and kept people from engaging in the very task which their hearts desired: the formation of a community of equals.

Frustrated and blocked desire became partnered with emotional disengagement or displacement or victimization or retreat into the interior. More and more religious lived by themselves or concentrated on “tilling their own garden,” or committed their energies to the development of what was manageable, or affiliated, by choice, only with those of like mind and heart, or lived as victims within institutions whose goals and methods spelled discouragement. The many who did not react in these ways were still yoked to the experiences of their sisters and brothers. It was precisely in the mid-1980s that a Carmelite nun penned a famous article, “Impasse and Dark Night,” in which she tried to relate this contemporary religious experience with the tradition of John of the Cross. Impasse, she noted, was the ground from which a new imaginative vision could be birthed. Constance Fitzgerald called at that time for a revival of contemplation and, following Dorothee Soelle, called it “revolutionary patience . . . the epitome of passionate desire, activity, self-direction, autonomy, and bondedness.”<sup>18</sup> The impasse, however, continued to develop, so much so that we find almost the same experience described by Joan Chittister in 1995. “As we see the old resources crumble around us,” she notes,

the old institutions lose their luster and their glory, the old social situations dry up and blow away, our own perspective begins to shift. The life struggle of religious commitment that used to be taken for granted, done with love, in fact, looms larger than possible, larger than acceptable. The idea of starting over to do new work with a new energy wearies us to the bone. Without the numberless numbers of candidates, the great, stable systems, public approval and parochial support, the question of who we are and what we do gnaws at the heart and leaves us arid of soul.<sup>19</sup>

Most recently, a past president of the Conference of Latin American Religious described the situation in this way:

Aunque a muchos nos parezca por todas partes nos invaden sentimientos y experiencias de desilusión, de ineficacia y de impotencia frente a la cruda realidad de una injusticia y corrupción crecientes. Los religiosos

que se entregaron con total generosidad y coarje en favor de los pobres comprueban con tristeza la esterilidad de sus esfuerzos concientizadores y evangelizadores. El dolor se hace mas hondo cuando no solo se experimenta la falta de interes por parte de la propia familia religiosa o de Iglesia, sino que muchas veces hay que padecer como uno especie de castigo por haberse jugado por la causa de Jesus, optando por los pobres.<sup>20</sup>

We Franciscans are hardly immune to the personal and social trajectories embedded in this post-conciliar journey. From my own experience, I would say that we too ask the question: Where can we go: to a diocesan church which has defined us either as functionaries or as invisible? to our corporate commitments, whose large structures have escaped our control? to our brothers and sisters, themselves caught as we are in the vortex of social change and blocked desire? To whom do we belong? It is at this point that, in our tradition, the most basic religious question of all arises not only on a personal level but also on a collective one: Who am I Lord, and Who are You? We become together a “poor person” in time, a *pauper in deserto*, just as was Bonaventure at the beginning of the *Itinerarium*.<sup>21</sup> He climbed the mountain of La Verna not simply as himself but as one bearing in his own body a collective identity, “successor as Minister to all the brethren in the place of the blessed father after his death.” For everyone’s sake, he searched for the place where the Lord had been taken; he longed to give a face to the Christ Incarnate so that all his brothers and sisters could recognize themselves. We are fortunate historically to be at a similar point. It is now that the Body of Our Lord can be given historical flesh and blood and be named as Jesus, “the God who was placed poor in the crib, lived poor in the world, and remained naked on the cross” (Clare, *Testament*, 45). Finally, I would like to share with you some experiences of how this collective face of the Christ Incarnate might be delineated.

### The Spirituality of Facing the Christ Incarnate: A Beginning Picture

It seems to me that the distinctly Franciscan face of the Christ Incarnate emerges when the forces of our religious imagination and affection, constricted by the personal, communal, and ecclesiastical impasse which we experience, burst forth to paint a picture of our God which focuses on the following elements in its spirituality (presented here only as starting points):

- the Incarnation as a protest in favor of the human creature;
- the mirror effect, or the realization that we belong to a communion of enfleshed grace;

- mourning, the active and tearful longing for lost salvation;
- the prayer of delight in all God's works.

## The Incarnation as a Protest in Favor of the Human Creature

During the course of the post-conciliar changes, many of us experienced the holy, that which is blessed by God and truly valuable, as migrating from institutions to people, from programs to human activities, from laws and customs to personal choices, from work to value driven days. This development, so clear in the house of prayer movement, the concentration on personal gifts and talents, the trend away from corporate to diversified ministries, was accompanied by a loss of a previously defined role in Church and society. Against the backdrop of the sacralized structures of religious life, the 1972 LCWR report carried a significant section on the "incident of secularism within religious life." "Secularism," in this context, was positively defined as the relinquishing of symbols "which are no longer meaningful," the affirmation of the autonomy of the secular, and "being present to the world in its life and activities."<sup>22</sup> At the same time there was an accompanying turn towards the poor, precisely those who had been excluded from being equal participants in the contemporary social and political settlement, an option for those who had become disenfranchised.

What was happening? Let me interpret these events in the light of our Franciscan tradition and show their implications for our Christology. I believe that we as religious were engaged in recovering an identity which we shared with all people, an identity even more fundamental than our vowed life—our identity as human beings. Although we did not know it, we were engaging in a process very similar to that of Francis of Assisi and his followers, when, in the course of his conversion, he took off the habit of the religious person of his time, the hermit, and put on the habit of an ordinary human.<sup>23</sup> In that very action he was moved by God to discover the holy in a condition which all people without distinction shared.

We need always to remember that Francis of Assisi lived at a time of humanistic revival, a period which historically valued rights, participation, conscience, beauty, techniques, tools for work and trades, new modes of communion, the emergence of the public offices of notaries, lawyers, secretaries, merchants—all areas which the inherited structures of his time often viewed as either evil or ambivalent. Francis, Clare, and the penitents embodied an image of holy presence—one with eyes, arms, hands, feet, mind, and heart—which found value in people, discovered "sweetness" in activities institutionally defined or judged as "bitter." But the members of the Franciscan movement did more than that. They also made a fundamental human option

for those who were excluded from being participants in this history (i.e. citizens without rights, diseased persons who had no place in society, sinners marked with the sign of moral judgement, poor people without resources and social power). The Lord led them to reclaim for the others with whom they shared exclusion a place in the world of human making. In a similar way, they also wanted to recover for others their right to participate as human beings in shaping their own fate and creating their own history.<sup>24</sup>

In the midst of being moved in this way, we Franciscans found ourselves without a category of identification in Church or society—one simply could not be just a human being. It is too universal a category and allows for no boundaries; it carries with it the naming of all other humans as "sisters" or "brothers"; it implies freedom from social control and the challenge of becoming the agent of one's own fate; it demands too great a self-acceptance and is beholden to no one but God alone. In such an atmosphere and with such a challenge, we became dislocated. We were neither religious nor lay, neither in the world nor of it, neither rich nor poor, neither sacred nor secular. We were in fact sociologically and institutionally homeless, left with nothing but our personal and relational resources to fall back upon, and, as I have indicated, these could not carry the freight of identity. Because we had little knowledge of our Franciscan christological tradition, we also had no image of the Incarnate Christ to bless our condition and to strengthen us on our journey. But that is precisely the point. Francis too had no inherited image of Christ to fit his experience<sup>25</sup>; it is from within that experience of dislocation and identification with the human that he, with his brothers and sisters, fashioned something new. They discovered that God, in choosing to become human, made a loud word of protest in a world which had forgotten what it means to be human. Theirs was a Gospel Word which, for example, valued:

- *each person*: "Be conscious, O man, of the wondrous state in which the Lord God has placed you, for He created you and formed you to the image of His beloved Son according to the body, and to His likeness according to the Spirit" (Adm. 5).
- *the birthing process*: "Through his angel, Saint Gabriel, the most high Father in heaven announced this Word of the Father—so worthy, so holy and glorious—in the womb of the holy and glorious Virgin Mary, from which He received the flesh of humanity and our frailty" (2EpFid 4).
- *those defined as non-existent*: "And they must rejoice when they live among people [who are considered to be] of little worth and who are looked down upon, among the poor and the powerless, the sick and the lepers, and beggars by the wayside" (RegNB 9:2).
- *the world of work*: "Those brothers to whom the Lord has given

the grace of working should do their work faithfully and devotedly" (RegB 5:1).

- *women*: "Since by divine inspiration you have made yourselves daughters and servants of the most high King, the heavenly Father, and have taken the Holy Spirit as your spouse, choosing to live according to the perfection of the Holy Gospel. . . ." (FormViv 1).
- *enemies*: "Let us pay attention all [my brothers], to what the Lord says: *Love your enemies and do good to those who hate you*, for our Lord Jesus Christ, Whose footprints we must follow, called His betrayer "friend" (RegNB 22;1).
- *death*: "Praised be You, my Lord, through our Sister Bodily Death, from whom no living man can escape" (CantSol 10).
- *every human emotion*: "Let us all love the Lord God *with all [our] heart, all [our] soul, with all [our] mind and all [our] strength and with fortitude and with total understanding, with all of our powers*, with every wish, every effort, every affection, every emotion, every desire, and ever wish. He has given and gives to each one of us [our] whole body and soul, and [our] whole life" (RegNB 23:8).
- *their own souls*: "Indeed is it not clear that the soul of the faithful person, the most worthy of all creatures because of the grace of God, is greater than heaven itself? For the heavens with the rest of creation cannot contain their Creator. Only the faithful soul is his dwelling place" (3LAg 21-22).
- *time, place, circumstances, history, story*: "The Lord granted me . . . afterward . . . wherever . . . after . . . I used to . . ." (Test passim).

And the fundamental image of the Gospel Word which Francis, Clare, and the others finally placed at the center of their creative imaginations and their own self definition, the image which spoke volumes about their protest, was described in this way: "And for the love of the most holy and beloved Child who was wrapped in such poor little swaddling clothes and laid in a manger and of His most holy Mother, I admonish, beg, and exhort my sisters to always wear poor garments" (RCL 2:18). By this action the Word of God takes up the entire human journey with others, embedded in time and history. This is the Franciscan appropriation of one of the greatest teachings of the Second Vatican Council:

In reality, it is only in the mystery of the Word made flesh that the mystery of man [the human being] truly becomes clear. . . . Human nature, by the very fact that it was assumed, not absorbed, in him, has been raised in us to a dignity beyond compare. For by his incarnation, he, the Son of God, has in a certain way united himself with each man [person]. He worked with human hands, he thought with a human

mind. He acted with a human will, and with a human heart he loved. Born of the Virgin Mary, he has truly been made one of us, like to us in all things except sin.<sup>26</sup>

## The Mirror Effect, or the Realization that We Belong to a Communion of Enfleshed Grace

One of the key post-conciliar experiences is that of personal, social, and ecclesiastical impasse. Our experience has revealed to us not only that we are human beings full of dignity, aspiration, talents, and promise, but that we are limited in our capabilities, hemmed in by our social opportunities, often as not caught in a conjunction of forces which make for historical "impossibilities." The problems of the poor increase; our own capabilities decrease. Frustrated and blocked desire become part and parcel of our lives. We experience in ourselves and our neighbors a host of affective responses and behaviors which end in aggression, hostility, confusion, insecurity, anxiety, victimization, hurt, withdrawal, apathy, worthlessness, and sin. When expectation and historical forces conflict, we find ourselves very much aware of our true size—small. Our own North American experiences have been well described by a commentator on Latin American religious life:

Consciente o inconscientemente, teníamos la ilusión de ser protagonistas de la nueva evangelización, de los cambios de estructuras, de los procesos de liberación y de las obras de promoción. Per hemos comprobado la inutilidad de nuestros esfuerzos.<sup>27</sup>

The difficulty for us as religious was that when we experienced impasse in all of its personal and collective forms, the face of our God, the God who had filled us with the energies and expectations of the post-conciliar period, the face of our God who had once appeared so transparent in our pursuit of perfection, our good works, and the Church's sure guidance, the face of the God who had dominated the great expansion of the post World War II period, disappeared, hidden behind the veils of personal and collective disappointment. The places where we had found God were no longer credible: the institutional Church, our religious family, our mission. As with the experience of a young child whose parent has left the room, the eyes, smile, touch, word, and pleasure of incarnate love which had given us identity—who **mirrored** us back to ourselves—became a "missing object," and with it disappeared our deepest sense of self.<sup>28</sup> The heritage we received gave us some puzzle pieces but no directions on how to picture a God who could take us in human arms and turn to us a human face capable of loving this experience of life. Fortunately, a return to our Franciscan sources accompanied our post-conciliar experience.

Francis, Clare, and their companions had a similar experience of personal, social, and ecclesiastical impasse. For many people of their time, the face of God's presence had disappeared behind the violence, inhumanity, arrogance, and moral depravity of people in society and the Church. The result was anger, apathy, withdrawal from the Church, reactionary exclusion of people from belonging to the human community. Where had they taken the body of the Lord? "On my bed at night I sought him whom my heart loves," the bride cries in the Canticle.

I sought him, but I did not find him.  
I will rise then and go about the city:  
In the streets and crossings I will seek Him  
whom my heart loves.  
I sought him but I did not find him.  
The watchmen came upon me  
As they made their rounds of the city.  
Have you seen Him whom my heart loves? (3:2-3)

Within such an experience, Francis, Clare and companions reimagined their inherited images of God and Christ. They had to do this to survive with hope, to free their blocked desires for action.

When we read the writings of Francis and Clare we find a startling range of words describing not only the greatness of the human condition but also the shape it takes within ordinary experience. Favorites among these words are *fragilitas* (3x), *fragiles* (2x), *humanitas* (2x), *humanus* (8x), *debiles* (4x), *debilitas* (3x), and above all *infirmis* (17x) and *necessitas* (30x).<sup>29</sup> These words communicate the physicality of existence, its sufferings and limitations; its experiences of persecution, tribulation, struggle; its insertion in time and space; its lack of freedom and feeling of being caught. In the language of the period, *necessitas* implies a return to experience, itself a resounding rejection of the myth of absolute freedom. A respect for "necessities," things we cannot live without (air, food, drink, shelter, clothing, self-love, love of neighbor), an acceptance of our human weakness and infirmity, forces us not to violate our human nature—nor the nature of our neighbors. We know in our hearts and in our experience that we must love ourselves and that to do this we must accept our need to be loved by another. Necessity forces compassion. In fact, it is through this law of necessity and weakness that God leads us to beatitude by modifying our tendency towards selfishness, uniting us to others, and filling our soul with the experience of gratitude.<sup>30</sup> The challenge was, of course, to accept their own necessities and the necessities of their neighbors, to rediscover in their world the presence of God.

In the Letter to All the Faithful, Francis presents a new image of the Lord for their consolation. He announced *this* "Word of the Father—so worthy, so

holy and glorious—in the womb of the holy and glorious Virgin Mary, *from which he received the flesh of humanity and our frailty*" (2EpFid 4). The generic term which Clare, Francis, and others use for this human experience of Christ is "poverty." What have they done? They have placed their Savior in the middle of their own experience; they have accepted their human condition by seeing themselves through the eyes of God's love incarnate. We can see the process taking place in Clare's reflections in her fourth letter to Agnes of Prague. Let us listen to the text:

Look at the border of this mirror, that is, the poverty of Him  
Who was placed in a manger and wrapped in swaddling clothes.  
O marvelous humility!  
O astonishing poverty!  
The King of angels,  
The Lord of heaven and earth,  
Is laid in a manger!

Then, at the surface of the mirror, consider the holy humility, the blessed poverty, the untold labors and burden that He endured for the redemption of the whole human race. Then, in the depth of this same mirror, contemplate the ineffable charity that led Him to suffer on the wood of the Cross and to die there the most shameful kind of death.

Therefore, that Mirror, suspended on the wood of the Cross, urged those who passed by to consider, saying: *All you who pass by the way, look and see if there is any suffering like my suffering.*

Let us respond, with one voice, with one spirit, to Him crying and grieving Who said, *Remembering this over and over leaves my soul down-cast within me* (4LAg 19-25).

The image of the Lord is that of someone who out of "ineffable love" willingly embraces the poverty of the human journey and from within that shared journey speaks the Word to the poor one longing for the face of God. This "enfleshed grace," the true form which the Body of Christ chooses to take in this world, mirrors back to Clare, and to us, the image of ourselves as belonging, even in our limitations, our impasse, and our sin, to the Creator of all things.

In the clarity of that loving glance coming from the body "suspended on the wood of the cross," Francis, Clare, and others also see clearly and with hope how God must come to be imaged in a time of historical impossibility, a time when limitation and sin hide the face of God in a broken world and Church. In this image, desire becomes unblocked; the missing object reveals itself; our collective identity in Christ is rediscovered and our dignity restored; our human condition is changed, not destroyed. We need not seek perfection nor to be other than we are; we need simply to begin to live from the love of the

Incarnate Christ. And Clare's response to Agnes continues: "From this moment, then, O Queen of our heavenly King, let yourself be inflamed more strongly with the fervor of charity" (4LAg 27).

Here then is the full face of the Franciscan Christ Incarnate. When a sense of human dignity meets with historical impasse, only a focus on the image of the Christ who chooses willingly to be a poor human being can restore us to creatureliness, that blessed state of belonging, in all our limited works and hopes, to a God of love. Francis, Clare, and companions embraced this Lord and followed him, thus once again making the face of Christ Incarnate visible and credible in and to the people of their Church and world. Our Lord became for them, not simply the one who joined with each human being, but also the one who accompanied them on their journeys full of impotence, limitation, poverty, and historical impossibility. He was the one who took shape in the disfigured form of their sisters and brothers, the one whose Body, the Church, appeared hardly human. Francis and Clare gave their spiritual and physical experience a name: *Poverty*. They married her by the wedding ring of faith, and they said that, in the mirrored light of their Incarnate Lord, their own human experience with others was indeed a beautiful way to be. "Happy, indeed, is she, to whom it is given to share in this sacred banquet" (4LAg 9).

### Mourning, the Active and Tearful Longing for Lost Salvation

I have tried to describe the full face of the Franciscan Christ Incarnate by focussing on the twin realities of human dignity and human limitation. Knit together by God's love for us, this historically real *Imago Dei*, in whose image we are made, enables us to accept ourselves as creatures and to enter into the blessed state of belonging to a God of love. However, our post-conciliar experience has taught us more than this. Embedded in it has been the continuing battle to negotiate the impasse created by the confrontation between our infinite desires (that there be justice, that people be one family, that the poor be recognized, that peace prevail, that happiness reign, that the community grow, that the Church be alive) and historical impossibilities, human weakness, and sin in ourselves and others. If we do not back away from this coincidence which in God's love creates the Incarnation, we have the experience of mourning. We become, if you like, creatures whose lives are full of tears, tears of love and tears of repentance, tears of hope and tears of disappointment, tears of fulfillment and tears of expectation, tears of joy and tears of repentance.<sup>31</sup> In response to how much is happening and to the size of our own efforts and hopes, we either fracture our relationships, withdraw from the task, work while dogged by hopelessness, retreat into apathy, or we weep.

These experiences are the affective counterparts to facing the Christ Incarnate in our tradition. Francis and Clare, in their writings, caution their followers against taking the false roads of temporary gain, discouragement, anger, hopelessness, withdrawal, and dissension. (See Admonitions, RegNB 22, 3LAg 20). Instead, as Clare admonishes Agnes: "[If you] weep [with Him] you shall rejoice with Him" (2LAg 21). It is the only way to keep desire from being crushed and engagement from being dissociated. Francis wept because "love is not loved" (2Cel 196). The Legend of Clare describes the experience more fully:

Crying over the Lord's passion was well known to her. At times, she poured out feelings of bitter myrrh at the sacred wounds. At times she imbibed sweeter joys. The tears of the suffering Christ made her quite inebriated and her memory continually pictured Him Whom love had profoundly impressed upon her heart.

She taught the novices to weep over the Crucified Christ and, at the same time what she taught with her words she expressed with her deeds. For frequently when she would encourage them in private in such matters, a flow of tears would come before the passage of her words (30).

Existentially, Clare and Francis weep because they long for lost salvation (i.e. peace, justice, unity, friends, God) much as the woman in the Canticle of Canticles mourns for the complete physical presence of her hidden lover. Mourning fills the spaces between their actions, their experiences, their results, and their yearnings, allowing them to keep themselves humanly alive, full of desire, and yet still engaged in tasks with limited outcomes and in a Church and society which seem always to fall short. Mourning is the counterpart to the repentance which flows from love (2Cor. 7:10); it is the companion of pilgrims full of joy because they, along with their friends, are on the way, full of sadness because of the struggle and full of energy because of yearning.

When Clare cries over the Lord's passion, she has something very concrete in mind—the image of the Incarnate Christ. The sight of him, so poor yet so full of dignity and life, living in her sisters, her brothers, her city, her church, her world, breaks her heart and moves her to pour out the alabaster jar of mercy on some very dirty feet (Lk. 7:36-40). At the same time, mourning for her is the result of love. Having seen herself the way God sees her from the "wood of the cross," she rejoices in her tears. They make her like Christ, who lamented,

Jerusalem, Jerusalem, you slay the prophets and stone those who are sent to you! How often have I wanted to gather your children to-

gether as a mother bird collects her young under her wings, and you refused me! (Lk. 14:34-35).

Finally, mourning for Clare is an act of justice, for embedded in it is both the recognition that all is not well and the expectation that God is true to the promise and hears the cry of the poor, that the Lord is coming soon! Mourning is a demand, a cry from the importunate widow (Lk. 18:1-8).<sup>32</sup> To face the Christ Incarnate in our tradition is to become a "poor person in history," full of joy and mourning for lost salvation.

## The Prayer of Delight in All God's Works

There is one other element in the spirituality of facing the Christ Incarnate in the Franciscan tradition which I would like to indicate. This note runs throughout all of Francis's writings and is the culmination of his Office of the Passion. I can do little more than recite it to you, but I hope that what I have said has clarified how this prayer might be the psalm of all who are blessed to be post-conciliar Franciscans:

All you nations clap your hands  
Shout to God with a voice of gladness.  
For the Lord the Most High  
the awesome, is the great King over all the earth.  
For the most holy Father of heaven, our King before all ages,  
has sent His beloved Son from on high and has brought  
salvation in the midst of the earth. . . .  
Offer up your bodies and take up His holy cross,  
and follow His most holy commands even to the end.  
Let the whole earth tremble before His face, say among  
the nations that the Lord has ruled from a tree (OffPass 7).<sup>33</sup>

### Endnotes:

<sup>1</sup>Works of Saint Bonaventure, II, ed. Philotheus Boehner, OFM, and M. Frances Laughlin, SMIC (The Franciscan Institute, 1956), 38.

<sup>2</sup>See Thomas Merton, *The Seven Storey Mountain* (New York: Harcourt, Brace & World Inc., 1948), 418-419 for reflections on Bonaventure and Francis.

<sup>3</sup>For this term and some theological reflection supportive of the position, see Johann Baptist Metz, *A Passion for God, The Mystical-Political Dimension of Christianity*, trans. J. Matthew Ashley (Paulist Press, 1998), 5, where *memoria passionis* is described as "the remembrance of the sufferings of others as a basic category of Christian discourse about God."

<sup>4</sup>See Evelyn Underhill, "The Authority of Personal Religious Experience," and "The Sources of Power in Human Life," in Dana Greene, *Evelyn Underhill, Modern Guide to the Ancient Quest for the Holy* (State University of New York, 1988), 119-131, 69-85.

<sup>5</sup>As cited in Charles Williams, ed., *The Letters of Evelyn Underhill* (New York: Longmans, Green and Co., 1943), 29. See "Introduction" for explanation of Underhill's "Impossibility," and p. 24 for "feet" and "head" analogy.

<sup>6</sup>Underhill, *Practical Mysticism* (Columbus, OH: Ariel Press, 1942), 13-14, (first published 1914).

<sup>7</sup>For this interpretation see Dana Greene, ed., *Evelyn Underhill, Modern Guide to the Ancient Quest for the Holy* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1988) and "Introduction," *Fragments from An Inner Life, The Notebooks of Evelyn Underhill* (Harrisburg, PA: Morehouse Publishing, 1993).

<sup>8</sup>Evelyn Underhill, *Jacopone da Todi, Poet and Mystic—1228-1306, A Spiritual Biography* (London: J.M. Dent, 1919).

<sup>9</sup>See the insights in *The Letters of Evelyn Underhill*, p. 155, where she writes to a friend: "And (as regards specifically Christian beliefs) it means getting beyond the idea of Christ as a 'perfect example,' 'spiritual genius' and so forth, to a realization of the principle of incarnation (and as a derivative therefrom, of sacramentalism also) as involving the special self-expression and self-imparting of the Infinite God, in humanity and for humanity." See also her essay, "Christian Fellowship: Past and Present," in Greene, *Evelyn Underhill, Modern Guide*, 103-116.

<sup>10</sup>Greene, *Evelyn Underhill*, "Introduction."

<sup>11</sup>Evelyn Underhill, *The Mystics of the Church* (London: James Clarke, 1925), 90-91 in a chapter entitled "Franciscan Mysticism."

<sup>12</sup>D. Felicitas Corrigan, *Siegfried Sassoon: Poet's Pilgrimage* (London, Victor Gollancz, 1973), 81, an unpublished poem.

<sup>13</sup>*Letters*, 27.

<sup>14</sup>What follows is taken from "The Report of the Leadership Conference of Women Religious of the U.S.A., in regard to *Topics Proposed to the Plenary Assembly of October 23-25, 1972 for Information, Reflection and Advice and Questionnaire on the Conference of Major Superiors of Men and Women*, July 6, 1972," copy in CFP, Baltimore Carmelite Monastery.

<sup>15</sup>See for some examples Ann Carey, *Sisters in Crisis: The Tragic Unraveling of Women's Religious Communities* (Huntington, Indiana: Our Sunday Visitor Press, 1997); and for the opposite, Lora Ann Quinonez, CDP, Mary Daniel Turner, SNDdeN, *The Transformation of American Catholic Sisters* (Temple University Press, 1992).

<sup>16</sup>See for examples Ann Cannon, OSF, Maria Vianney Donovan, OSF, *Allegany Franciscan Study 1972*; Anne Maria Knawa, OSF, *As God Shall Ordain, A History of the Franciscan Sisters of Chicago, 1894-1987*, (Franciscan Sisters of Chicago, 1987); La Verne Frietich, OSF, *A Time for Beginning . . . A Time for Letting Go: History of the Sisters of Saint Francis, Oldenburg, Indiana, 1945-1975* (Dayton Ohio: Marianist Press, 1990); Mary Assumpta Ahles, OSF, *In the Shadow of His Wings: A History of the Franciscan Sisters* (St. Paul: North Central Publishing Company, 1977).

<sup>17</sup>For background on the developments in religious life during this period, see Mary Jo Leddy, *Reweaving Religious Life: Beyond the Liberal Model* (Mystic CT, 1990); Helen Rose Ebaugh, *Women in the Vanishing Cloister: Organizational Decline in Catholic Religious Orders in the United States* (Rutgers, 1993); Patricia Wittberg, SC, *The Rise and Decline of Catholic Religious Orders, A Social Movement Perspective* (State University of New York, 1994).

<sup>18</sup>Constance FitzGerald, OCD, "Impasse and Dark Night," reprinted in Joann Wolski Conn, *Women's Spirituality: Resources for Christian Development* (Paulist, 1986), 287-311, with quotation from p. 308. She refers to Soelle's *Revolutionary Patience*.

<sup>19</sup>Joan Chittister, OSB, *The Fire in These Ashes: A Spirituality of Contemporary Religious Life* (Sheed & Ward, 1995), 76.

<sup>20</sup>Luis Coscia, OFM Cap., "Nuevos Acentos de la Vida Religiosa en America Latina," *Cuadernos Franciscanos*, 29 (Enero/Marzo, 1995): 3-7, with quotation from p. 7; see also, for over-

view of Latin American developments since the council, Nilo Agostini, OFM, "Perspectivas de la Nueva Evangelización en la América Latina," *Cuadernos Franciscanos*, 26 (Octubre/Diciembre, 1992): 237-256.

<sup>21</sup>Bonaventure, *Itinerarium Mentis in Deum*, Prologue, Chapter 1. The quotation is taken from the Prologue, 2.

<sup>22</sup>"The Report of the Leadership Conference of Women Religious of the U.S.A." (1972), 10-11.

<sup>23</sup>For background see Theophile Desbonnets, *From Intuition to Institution, the Franciscans* (Franciscan Herald Press, 1988); for application to the penitential movement see Giovanna Casagrande, *Religiosità Penitenziale e Città al Temo dei Comuni* (Roma, 1995), 113-127; for a general approach compatible with this understanding see Jacques LeGoff, "Franciscanisme et Modèles Culturels du XIIIe Siècle," in *Francescanesimo e Vita Religiosa dei Laici nel '200* (Assisi, 1981), 83-128.

<sup>24</sup>See the current interpretations of the Franciscan movement by Ovido Capitani, "Verso una nuova antropologia e una nuova religiosità," in *La Conversione all Povertà nell' Italia dei Secoli XII-XIV, Atti del XXVIII Covegno storico internazionale, Todi, 14-17 Ottobre 1990* (Spoleto, 1991), 447-471 and the articles by Manselli and Mollat in *La Povertà del Secolo XII e Francesco D'Assisi* (Assisi, 1974).

<sup>25</sup>See Norbert Nguyen-Van-Khanh, OFM, *The Teacher of His Heart: Jesus Christ in the Thought and Writings of St. Francis*, trans. Ed Hagman, OFM Cap., (St. Bonaventure, NY: The Franciscan Institute, 1994), 19-57.

<sup>26</sup>*Gaudium et Spes*, 22. For the significance of this passage in a new Christological humanism, see Josef Ratzinger in *Commentary on the Documents of Vatican II, V, Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World* (Herder and Herder, 1969), 159-163. Part of this passage becomes the centerpiece for John Paul II's ethic of community, defense of every human life in *Evangelium Vitae*, and condemnation of fratricide.

<sup>27</sup>Coscia, "Nuevos Acentos de la Vida Religiosa en América Latina," *Cuadernos Franciscanos*, 29 (1995): 7.

<sup>28</sup>For further elaboration on this phenomenon, see the works of Dom Sebastian Moore, who builds on the psychoanalytic insights of Alice Miller's *The Drama of the Gifted Child*. For a fascinating application to an individual, see Cynthia Griffin, *Emily Dickinson* (Wolff & Knopf, 1986) and Constance Fitzgerald, "The Mission of Therese of Lisieux," in *Contemporary Carmelite Women, The Way Supplement*, 89 (1997): 74-96.

<sup>29</sup>For a listing of these words see G. Boccali, *Concordantiae Verbales* (Assisi, 1976).

<sup>30</sup>For an exposition of this view of "necessity" see Bernard of Clairvaux, *On Loving God, with an Analytical Commentary*, ed. Emero Stieglman (Kalamazoo, MI, 1995), 99-108.

<sup>31</sup>For background on this interpretation see the classic work, Irene Hausherr, SJ, *Penthos: The Doctrine of Compunction in the Christian East*, trans. Anselm Hufstader, OSB (Kalamazoo, 1982). Most recently Elizabeth Dreyer has called for a revival of this spiritual tradition in her "Blessed Are They Who Mourn: Tears, Compunction, and Forgiveness," in *Franciscan Leadership in Ministry: Foundations in History, Theology, Spirituality, in Spirit and Life, A Journal of Contemporary Franciscanism*, 7 (1997): 179-204.

<sup>32</sup>See Johann Metz, "Theology as Theodicy," in *A Passion for God: The Mystical-Political Dimension of Christianity*, trans. J. Matthew Ashley (Paulist, 1998), 54-71.

<sup>33</sup>In *Francis and Clare, The Complete Works*, trans. and ed. Regis J. Armstrong, OFM Cap. and Ignatius C. Brady, OFM (Paulist, 1982), 88-89. All quotations from Francis and Clare in this essay are taken from this book or from *Clare of Assisi, Early Documents*, trans. and ed. Regis J. Armstrong, OFM Cap., (St. Bonaventure, NY: Franciscan Institute, 1993).

## Franciscan Eremitism

Thomas Merton

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Saint Francis's love of solitude, intimately related to his conception of a poor and wandering life, can easily be treated as so much romantic trimming, something to be admired but not imitated, like preaching to the birds. But eremitical solitude is more than mere ornament in Franciscan spirituality. The spirit of solitary adoration, in the midst of nature and close to God, is closely related to the Franciscan concept of poverty, prayer, and the apostolate. At the present moment, when there is a revival of eremitism in the monastic orders, it might be interesting to consider Franciscan hermits in their historical perspective. To do this, we have to understand the very important pre-Franciscan movement of itinerant and preaching hermits in the tenth and twelfth centuries.<sup>1</sup>

Traditionally, eremitism in the west was closely related to the monastic orders. The Rule of Saint Benedict<sup>2</sup> provided that after a long period of probation in the monastic community certain monks could retire into solitude for the sake of greater mortification, perfection, and prayer. This solitude could be absolute or relative, and the pattern of life was usually worked out by the monk himself under the guidance of his abbot. But in any case monastic eremitism at this time implied a further withdrawal from the society of men into a life entirely alone with God in contemplation. In a conception of the monastic life in which the community provided a mitigated solitude for the average man who could not go all the way into the desert, the step to eremitical solitude was considered higher because more perfectly and unequivocally "monastic" and world-denying. Many monks obtained permission to live as re-

cluses, permanently enclosed in a cell in the monastery itself usually adjoining the Church, and at a certain period these monastic recluses formed a kind of spiritual and contemplative elite. We seldom find a really developed conception of any obligation to share with others the fruits of contemplation. True, the recluse was often consulted in spiritual matters by his brethren. But he was normally not in a position to preach and no one would have expected him to do so.

In the tenth century a new movement began which was for the most part independent of monasticism. Lay people and secular clerics began to withdraw directly into solitude without passing through a period of monastic formation. Living in the woods and developing as best they could their own mode of life, they remained in rather close contact with the poor (that is, generally speaking, with their own class), with outlaws and outcasts, and with the itinerants who were always numerous in the Middle Ages. Closely identified as the hermits were with the under-privileged, the oppressed, and those for whom the official institutions of society showed little real concern, the non-monastic hermitage quickly became a place of refuge for the desperately perplexed who sought guidance and hope—if not also a hiding place and physical safety. Thus the non-monastic hermit, by the very fact of his isolation from the world, became open to the world in a new and special way.

Since in fact preaching had been practically abandoned in the parish churches and the monks did not preach to the people but only to themselves, there was an urgent need for the gospel message to be announced to the poor in simple language they could understand—the language of penance, conversion, salvation, and love of the Savior. Consequently these lay hermits often became itinerant preachers and the movement of preaching hermits acquired a kind of charismatic aura in the eleventh century. The name of Peter the Hermit, preacher of the first crusade, is there to remind us of this fact. Many of these hermits had their preaching mission confirmed by the popes themselves. Others were approved by bishops. Still others just “got up and went,” and their words were well received. Some of these itinerant hermits thought of going to preach to the Saracens and even attempted to do so in the hope of being martyred. When they failed, they returned to their solitude and to the “martyrdom of contemplation.” The picture is a familiar one: we can see that the movement of itinerant hermits of the tenth and twelfth centuries provided a background and a precedent for the eremitism of the first Franciscans.

It is true that by the thirteenth century the eremitical movement had died out or been absorbed back into monasticism. The Cistercian lay brothers of the twelfth century were largely recruited from among the kind of people who might otherwise have become itinerant hermits. The Cistercian lay brotherhood in the twelfth century had something of an eremitical as well as a dis-

tingly “lay” character: the brothers were destined by vocation to live outside the monastic enclosure if necessary, on distant farms and granges or in crofts where they might be entirely alone for long periods. The simple life of the brother was very close to that of the lay hermit, and the brothers of Citeaux and other monastic reforms tended to replace the hermit movement.

St. Francis, however, was in the direct line of the earlier hermit tradition. The First Rule of the Friars Minor, approved orally in 1209, does not specifically legislate for hermitages, but it mentions them in passing as taken for granted:

Let the brothers wherever they may be in hermitages or other places take heed not to make any place their own and maintain it against anybody else. And let whoever may approach them, whether friend or foe or thief or robber, be received kindly (RegNB 7).

Here we find not only the spirit we would expect from having read the lives and legends of St. Francis but also the authentic tradition of the earlier itinerant hermit movement which was non-monastic and completely open to the world of the poor and the outcast. It is taken for granted that the hermit will meet with thieves and robbers, and he must not place himself above them or separate himself from them but must show himself to be their brother. The hermit is not just the man who, like St. Arsenius, has fled entirely from other human beings. He is not just the man of deep contemplative recollection. He is the vulnerable, open, and loving brother of everyone—like Charles de Foucauld in our own time. He is a “Little Brother of the Poor.”

The special statute or instruction composed by St. Francis for those returning to hermitages is well known (RegEr).<sup>3</sup> A hermitage is in fact a small community of three or four brothers, some living entirely in silence and contemplative solitude with others who take care of their needs as their “Mothers.” These “Mothers” must also see that their “children” are not disturbed by outsiders. But the contemplatives should also from time to time take over the active duties and give their “Mothers” a rest. It is a charming document which, however, does not give a very detailed picture of the life these hermits led.

The importance of the document lies in the spirit which it exhales—a spirit of simplicity and charity which pervades even the life of solitary contemplation. It has been observed that the genius of sanctity is notable for the way in which it easily reconciles things that seem at first sight irreconcilable. Here St. Francis has completely reconciled the life of solitary prayer with warm and open fraternal love. Instead of detailing the austerities and penances which the hermits must perform, the hours they must devote to prayer, and so on, the Saint simply communicates the atmosphere of love which is to form the ideal

climate of prayer in the hermitage. The spirit of the eremitical life as seen by St. Francis is therefore cleansed of any taint of selfishness and individualism. Solitude is surrounded by fraternal care and is therefore solidly established in the life of the Order and of the Church. It is not an individualistic exploit in which the hermit, by the power of his own asceticism gains a right to isolation in an elevation above others. On the contrary, the hermit is reminded above all that he is dependent on the charity and the good will of others. This is certainly another and very effective way of guaranteeing the sincerity of the hermit's life of prayer since it shows him how much he owes it to others to become a true man of God.

Meanwhile, we shall presently see that Franciscan eremitism had another aspect—it was open to the world and oriented to the apostolic life.

St. Francis founded at least twenty mountain hermitages, and there is no need to remind the reader what outstanding importance his own solitary retreat at Mount Alverna played in his life. He received the stigmata there in 1224. Franciscan mysticism is centered upon this solitary vision of the Crucified, and the love generated in this solitude is poured out on the world in preaching.

Blessed Giles of Assisi was essentially an itinerant hermit. On his return from the Holy Land in 1215, he was assigned in obedience to a hermitage by St. Francis. In 1219 he went to Tunis vainly seeking martyrdom. From 1219 to about 1225, he lived at the Carceri in a small chapel surrounded by other caves. It is interesting that the Carceri, which had once been used by Benedictine hermits, became after Mount Alverna the symbol of Franciscan solitude. It is thought that St. Francis wrote part of the Rule there. The mysticism of Blessed Giles developed in the hermitage of Cetona, and he also founded other hermitages himself.<sup>4</sup>

With Blessed Giles we also find another emphasis. The hermitage is the stronghold of the pure Franciscan spirit, the primitive ideal of the Holy Founder, threatened by others too preoccupied, as some thought, with power and prestige. In the struggle to preserve the primitive spirit of poverty and utter Franciscan simplicity, the hermitages played the part that may be imagined. It is interesting, incidentally, that when St. Bonaventure was made cardinal he received the news while he was washing dishes in a hermitage.

It is not hard to understand that in periods of reform the ideal of solitude has had an important part to play in renewal of the Franciscan life and apostolate. This is especially clear when we study St. Leonard of Port Maurice and the Franciscan revival in Italy in the eighteenth century. St. Leonard himself got his vocation while listening to the Friars chant compline in the Ritiro on the Palatine, and his promotion of the Ritiro movement is both characteristic and important in his life as a reformer.

The Ritiro movement<sup>5</sup> went back perhaps to the sixteenth century. In addition to hermitages, which always existed and provided solitude for Friars desiring a life of more intense prayer, specially fervent communities were formed to serve as models of observance. A Ritiro must not in fact be confused with a hermitage. It was simply a community of picked volunteers who elected to live the Rule in its perfection with special emphasis on poverty, cloister, prayer, and all that could enhance the contemplative and ascetic side of the Franciscan life. However the Ritiri were not unconnected with the eremitical strain in the Order, and the first Ritiro founded by Blessed Bonaventure of Barcelona had developed out of a hermitage.

St. Leonard of Port Maurice began by reforming a Ritiro (even a Ritiro could eventually need to be reformed!) when he became Guardian of San Francesco al Monte in Florence. His emphasis here was not specifically on solitude and contemplation, but simply on the exact observance of the rules. The Ritiri were not originally centers of eremitical life; they were meant to be houses of model regularity and fervor. To promote greater solitude, St. Leonard of Port Maurice created the *Solitudine*.<sup>6</sup> The purpose of this more frankly eremitical type of community was the life of pure contemplation. St. Leonard described his purpose in these words:

By complete separation from the world to become able to give oneself to pure contemplation and then after the acquisition of greater fervor to return into the communities to apply oneself more avidly to the salvation of one's neighbor.<sup>7</sup>

As always, in the Franciscan tradition, the idea of solitude is not self-sufficient. Solitude opens out to the world and bears fruit in preaching.

The character of the *Solitudine* instituted by St. Leonard is that of the reforms of that time. The strictness and austerity remind one of De Rance and La Trappe. The cells were so small that when standing in the middle one could touch the ceiling and the two sides. The discipline was taken daily in common for half an hour. Fasting continued all the year round. Perpetual silence was observed. The Friars went barefoot. There were small hermitages attached to the convent, and to these one might retire for greater solitude and more prayer.

This rigorous and solitary life was not intended to be permanent. Most of the five retreatants in the community were men who were there for two months only. However, Friars could remain in the *Solitudine* for longer periods and even for years. Besides the retreatants, there was a Superior (*Presidente*) with a gatekeeper and a cook (the latter a Tertiary). There were also cells for religious of other orders who might want to come there to renew their fervor.

There is an obvious resemblance between the *Solitudine* and the Carmelite "Desert." It is a place of temporary eremitical retreat to which one withdraws

in order to renew the spirit of prayer and fervor and from which one returns to the work of preaching with a more perfect charity and a message of more convincing hope. The emphasis is on the fact that in solitary prayer and meditation one gets deeper into the root of things, comes to see oneself more clearly as one is in the eyes of God, realizes more perfectly the real nature of one's need of grace and for the Holy Spirit, and comes to a more ardent love of Jesus crucified. With all this one is normally opened to the world of others and made ready for the more complete gift of self to the work of saving souls.

However, both the *Ritiri* and the *Solitudini* came under very heavy criticism. First they seemed to create a division within the Order. Second it could be asked whether their spirit was too formal and rigorous to be called authentically Franciscan. It is certainly true that the rather forbidding austerity of the *Solitudine* might be considered a little alien to the primitive Franciscan spirit of simplicity and evangelical freedom. The severe regulations contrast with the warm and tender spirit of St. Francis's statute for hermits. But the solitary convents evidently had the effect that St. Leonard desired, and the preaching of the Saint when he emerged from his solitude was said to be characterized by a great tenderness which, instead of frightening sinners; encouraged and strengthened them.

This very brief outline suggests a few conclusions. The eremitical spirit has always had a place in the Franciscan life, but it is not the spirit of monasticism or of total, definitive separation from the world. The eremitism of St. Francis and his followers is deeply evangelical and remains always open to the world, while recognizing the need to maintain a certain distance and perspective, a freedom that keeps one from being submerged in active cares and devoured by the claims of exhausting work.

In all forms of the religious life we are asking ourselves today whether the accepted methods of renewing our fervor are quite adequate to present day needs. Certainly the prescribed eight-day retreat has its value. But the new generation is asking itself seriously whether this rather formalistic exercise really produces any lasting fruit. Is it simply a tightening of nuts and bolts on machinery which is obsolete? Modern religious who feel the need of silence generally seek it not merely for the purpose of self-scrutiny and ascetic castigation, but in order to recuperate spiritual powers which may have been gravely damaged by the noise and rush of a pressurized existence. This silence is not necessarily tight-lipped and absolute—the silence of people pacing the garden with puckered brows ignoring each other—but the tranquillity of necessary leisure in which religious can relax in the peace of a friendly and restful solitude and once again become themselves.

Today more than ever we need to recognize that the gift of solitude is not ordered to the acquisition of strange contemplative powers, but first of all to

the recovery of one's deep self and to the renewal of an authenticity which is twisted out of shape by the pretentious routines of a disordered togetherness. What the world asks of the priest today is that he should be first of all a person who can give himself because he has a self to give. And indeed, we cannot give Christ if we have not found him, and we cannot find him if we cannot find ourselves.

These considerations may be useful to those whose imaginations and hopes are still able to be stirred by the thought of solitude and of its important place in every form of the religious and apostolic life, in every age, especially our own.

## Endnotes

<sup>1</sup>G. G. Meersman, "Eremitismo e predicazione itinerante dei secoli XI e XII," in *L'Eremitismo in Occidente nei Secoli XI e XII*, (Milan, 1965).

<sup>2</sup>Rule of St. Benedict, Ch. 1.

<sup>3</sup>In *The Words of St. Francis*, an anthology compiled and arranged by James Meyer, OFM (Chicago, 1952), 111-113.

<sup>4</sup>For Bl. Giles see Raphael Brown, *Franciscan Mystic, Giles of Assisi* (New York, 1961).

<sup>5</sup>Angelo Cresi, OFM, "S. Leonardo di Porto Maurizio ed i conventi di Ritiro," *Studi Francescani*, 49 (1952): 154ff.

<sup>6</sup>Angelo Cresi, OFM, "S. Leonardo di Porto Maurizio e l'Incontro," *Studi Francescani*, 49 (1952): 176ff.

<sup>7</sup>As quoted by Cresi, "S. Leonardo di Porto Maurizio ed i conventi di Ritiro," 168.



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Artist unknown

## A Franciscan Inspires the Jubilee

Joseph Wood, OFM Conv.

### Day of Anger, Day of Wrath

A tremendous sense of doom and desperation accompanied the ending of the first millennium of Christianity. On Christmas Eve in the year 999, the faithful poured into the squares and streets of Rome, sure that the end of the world and Divine Judgment were close at hand. All were singing and praying and imposing severe penances on themselves. High above, the church bells tolled, not for a new year, but for the final one. When the fateful hour of midnight struck, the crowd barely dared to breathe. But the moment passed and the earth did not open to swallow the wretched masses; fire did not rain down from heaven. Then all stirred as if waking from a bad dream. Amid weeping and laughing, friend and stranger embraced. Even enemies exchanged the kiss of peace. The bells of every church began to ring as with a single voice. The fearful moment had passed, and the world could be reborn.<sup>1</sup>

### New Attitudes

One thousand years later some attitudes have changed. On New Years Eve 1999 most of the world was witnessing the *commencement* of the third millennium, rather than the demise of the second. Fear of the Last Judgment had paled before the dread of computer glitches. Most people prayed only for deliverance from traffic jams while on their way to this or that end-of-the-year party.

Not everyone living beyond the threshold of the new millennium understood this significant event as being sacred. Most readers of this journal, however, could at least appreciate the calculated passing of time as something more

than the welcoming of a new year. And yet, after two thousand years of patient or anxious waiting for the Second Coming, Franciscans can also admit that somewhere along the way we too exchanged our cups of wrath for glasses of champagne.

As the Year of Jubilee began, the simultaneous opening of the Holy Doors of the patriarchal basilicas of Rome and the designated Holy Doors in our own local dioceses all over the world renewed our belief in an Advent God, a "prodigal" Father, one who is truly imminent and "waiting in hope" for *our* return. We have come to appreciate that, while God is a judge, He is also merciful.

St. Francis realized the gift of unmerited mercy and pardon at Poggio Bustone when he received a vision of Christ assuring him of heaven. At that moment Francis's scrupulous medieval sense of unworthiness was transformed into such an uncontainable joyfulness that G. K. Chesterton could later write: "The stars which passed above that gaunt and wasted corpse . . . had for once . . . looked down upon a happy man."<sup>2</sup>

That same joyfulness in the face of God's mercy has transcended the ages, has transcended even the creeds and personalities of modern day journalists. *Time* magazine listed St. Francis as one of the ten most influential people of the second millennium.<sup>3</sup> And not only that, but this same list includes Columbus, Gutenberg, Michelangelo, Galileo, and Mozart—all personally influenced by later sons of St. Francis (the first four were Secular Franciscans).<sup>4</sup>

Most non-Franciscans would scoff at the thought that somehow Francis and his followers had something to do with "The Great Pardon" or "The Great Jubilee." But in fact there is evidence that Franciscans played a role in the development of this observance.

Francis was assured of pardon at Poggio Bustone in 1209. How could someone like Francis be satisfied with his own assurance of heaven without seeking the same assurance of mercy and peace for others? Thus he was emboldened to request an indulgence to be attached to the Portiuncula, a request which was granted in 1216. And how could the followers of Francis not seek a variety of means by which each generation could be assured of the same incredible gift of pardon?

### A Franciscan Jubilee

In a brief article in *Assisi Mia* regarding tourism in the new millennium, PierMaurizio della Porta reminded his readers that it was a friar, Blessed Andrew of the Counts of Segni, who actually inspired the Christian Jubilee. Friar Andrew was the uncle of Pope Boniface VIII, the first pope to proclaim a Year of Favor in order to calm the terrified masses who had marched on Rome in December 1299.<sup>5</sup>

Supporting this surprising revelation and in preparation for the Jubilee of 1950, the *Osservatore Romano* cited a conference offered at the Franciscan College of Rome, the Antonianum, by Professor Piero Chiminelli.<sup>6</sup> The title of the address was "The Holy Year and Franciscanism." Chiminelli believed that St. Francis and his movement had prepared the climate of penance and pardon that allowed for the calling of the first Christian Jubilee in 1300. The *Osservatore Romano* confirmed that many articles from its own publication recounted recent studies that clearly pointed to Friar Andrew as the inspirer of the Great Jubilee. Chiminelli was also proud to point out that the three popes in the first half of the twentieth century who celebrated jubilees also happened to be Secular Franciscans: Leo XIII in 1900, Pius XI in 1925, and Pius XII in 1950.

### Blessed Andrew of the Counts of Segni

Born at Anagni, a short distance from Rome, Friar Andrew was blood related to several medieval popes who were closely associated with the Franciscan movement. Innocent III and Gregory IX were his ancestors from a century earlier. He himself was the nephew of Alexander IV and the uncle of Boniface VIII. And further down the family tree, in the early eighteenth century, another son of this noble family, Pope Innocent XIII, solemnly confirmed the uninterrupted devotion of the faithful toward this grand uncle of his.

Though raised in a family which was busy about the business of the world, Andrew instead sought the life of a poor and obscure friar. But solitude was not his for long. When his uncle assumed the papal throne as Alexander IV, Andrew was offered the cardinal's hat, which he refused. Later, however, Andrew's nephew, Pope Boniface VIII, would not take "no" for an answer. Andrew probably never wore the princely robes. Boniface, deeply edified by his uncle's humility, stated that if Andrew should die during his pontificate, he would personally canonize him as an example to other prelates.<sup>7</sup>

Preferring a hermit's cave to the trappings of court life, Andrew tried to remain far from Rome. But his desire for obscurity soon gave way to the demands of the human family. Andrew was summoned to Rome to help advise the pope about what to do with the pilgrims who were suddenly pouring into the city. The threat of the Final Judgment loomed once again as the century drew to a close. In 1299 there was particular unrest. People came from all over begging the pope to give them a blessing before the end of the century. Boniface did not know what to do with the crowds.

While he too stood on the threshold of the End Time, Friar Andrew was mindful of his own failings as part of sinful humanity. He searched the Scriptures for a precedent. He came upon the practice of the sabbatical and jubilee years of ancient Israel. According to the law as prescribed in Leviticus and Deuteronomy, these years were associated with liberation and pardon. Arthur

Waskow writes:

Among all biblical traditions, Leviticus 25:8-23 is perhaps the most remarkable programmatic assertion of empathy for both the earth and all human beings. The passage describes three crucial intertwined expressions of love: the redistribution of wealth, the protection of the earth, and the celebration of community.<sup>8</sup>

### Love and Forgiveness

While Andrew groped for a means of universal release from the bondage of guilt and sin, he also turned to the New Testament. In the Middle Ages the highest aspiration of civilized people was the pursuit of love, or at least the ideal of love as mirrored in the mystery of Christ's spousal relationship with the Church. Christ, however, is often depicted as a rejected lover, bent low by suffering and by humanity's infidelity. Feeling himself undeserving of kindness, love, or pity, Andrew could not comprehend Christ's extravagant response of unmerited forgiveness. Eventually he could only stand quietly in awe of Christ, the faithful bridegroom. He realized that Christ's pardon from the cross was the authentic and extreme way of expressing the lengths to which Divine Love will go in seeking even the most unworthy paramour. No doubt Andrew would have agreed with his contemporary, the friar and poet, Jacopone da Todi, that truly "God is crazy with love for the human person."<sup>9</sup>

No historian would deny that Pope Boniface VIII had his ups and downs with the intrigue of the noble families of Rome, not to mention the Franciscan Spirituals who accused him of usurping the throne of Pope Celestine V. But this fearful time, the turn of the century when Divine Judgment felt imminent, was a moment of grace for Boniface. The eyes and hearts of the entire Christian world turned toward Rome and to the occupant of Peter's chair. And so, on February 22, 1300, after two months of deliberations and organizing, Boniface, having been influenced in this decision by Friar Andrew, proclaimed the first Christian Jubilee.

Friar Andrew was a practitioner of what he initiated, and thus he gifts us across the centuries with his model life. He was a man of penance who finally found peace in the Great Pardon. Once he had experienced the joy and gratitude that come from being eternally released from the debt of sin, Friar Andrew could once more respond to God with the sentiments of his confrere, Jacopone da Todi: "[Christ is] love beyond all telling, Goodness beyond imagining, Light of infinite intensity, [Christ] glows in my heart."<sup>10</sup>

Friar Andrew di Segni died on February 1, 1302. The faithful venerated his memory immediately as "Blessed" without any need for formal pronouncement.

- <sup>1</sup>Richard Erdoes, "The Year 1000," *Psychology Today* (May 1999): 45.
- <sup>2</sup>G. K. Chesterton, *Saint Francis of Assisi* (New York: Image Books, 1957), 82.
- <sup>3</sup>"Beyond the Year 2000," *Time*, special edition (Fall 1992): 25. The remaining four influential people were: Martin Luther, William Shakespeare, Thomas Jefferson, and Albert Einstein.
- <sup>4</sup>Angelus La Fleur, OFMConv., "Franciscans on Stamps," *Topical Time* (Jan-Feb, 1963): 35.
- <sup>5</sup>PierMaurizio della Porta, "Il Giubileo, il Perdono e i Souvenir," *Assisi Mia*, n.18 (1999): 41.
- <sup>6</sup>"Alla Cattedra Franciscana," (no author), *Osservatore Romano* (Dec. 31, 1949): 3.
- <sup>7</sup>Marion Habig, OFM, *Franciscan Book of Saints* (Chicago: Franciscan Herald Press, 1979), 124.
- <sup>8</sup>Arthur Waskow, "Proclaim Jubilee!" *The Other Side* (Sept., 1998): n. p. (pamphlet).
- <sup>9</sup>Alvaro Caciotti, OFM, "The Cross: Where According to Jacopone da Todi, God and Humanity are Defined," trans., Miceal O'Neill, *Greyfriars Review*, 9.2 (1995): 220.
- <sup>10</sup>Caciotti, 193. (Jacopone da Todi, 91:1-4).

## New Bona Magazine Published

Periodical, Scheduled To Appear Monthly, Reviews Franciscan Spirituality.

The first number of a new Franciscan magazine, *The Cord*, has made its initial bow on the campus of St. Bonaventure University, according to an announcement today by the Rev. Irenaeus Herscher, O.F.M., U-brarian.

Scheduled to appear monthly, the periodical is published at St. Bonaventure by the Franciscan Institute, under auspices of the Franciscan Educational Conference.

Under editorship of the Rev. Philotheus Boehner, O.F.M., and with the assistance of Sister M. Frances, S.M.I.C., of Paterson, N.J., the new magazine is expected to fill a long-felt need for a review that would be devoted exclusively to Franciscan spirituality.

According to Fr. Irenaeus, "Each number of *The Cord* will contain: a monthly conference on a spiritual subject; a biography of some Franciscan Saint; and explanation of the rule of St. Francis."

A brief translation from the works of select Franciscan spiritual writers; an occasional book review, and a department devoted to 'Franciscan Briefs' or items of interest to followers and friends of St. Francis."

Although designed exclusively for members of the Franciscan family, which numbers into the thousands in the United States alone, the new magazine is being published "to aid in effecting among the children and friends of the Proverbia of Assisi a deeper knowledge of, and more ardent love for the Franciscan Way of Life." In a word, *The Cord* hopes to present Franciscan spirituality, as explained by experts, in simple easy-day language.

## New Magazine Issued At St. Bonaventure

St. Bonaventure, Nov. 23.—The first number of a new Franciscan magazine entitled *The Cord*, has made its bow on the campus of St. Bonaventure University, according to an announcement made by Father Irenaeus Herscher, OFM, librarian.

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**BUFFALO COURIER-EXPRESS**  
NOV 24 1950

**Buffalo Courier Express**  
Nov. 24, 1950

## The Cord is born!

November, 1950

## A Biographical Profile

### Waldemar Augustin Roebuck, SFO

Few Catholic laypersons have worked as diligently in the cause of justice and peace as Waldemar Augustin Roebuck has done during the past five decades. Born on January 30, 1913, in Christiansted, St. Croix, the Virgin Islands, Wally, as he was affectionately known, attended the local St. Mary's Parochial School where he was an altar server until his graduation. When he was fifteen, his mother sent him to New York City to continue his education. He attended the Harlem Evening High School for Men but, because of the hard times of the depression, was unable to attend either Fordham University or Columbia University. Fortunately, he obtained a position with the United States Post Office. With this security, he was able to marry and start a family. In spite of his personal responsibilities, Wally immediately began his career of service to humanity and the Church. Beginning in All Saints Parish during the 1940s, he became involved with Friendship House, the Christian Family Movement, and the Catholic Interracial Council. He served as President of the parish Holy Name Society and St. Vincent de Paul Society.

During the 1950s he organized the first Boy Scout Troop in the parish. He also organized a day of Prayer, Church Unity, and Social Justice which attracted more than a thousand participants of all faiths, and a one-day seminar, Fifty Years of Catholic Education in Harlem, for all the parishes and their teaching staffs. On the latter occasion, his research revealed that the seven Harlem parochial schools had educated more than fifty thousand children during the fifty years being celebrated.

Wally began his association with the Franciscans by serving the daily 8:00 a.m. Mass at the Capuchin Franciscan Church near the Main Post Office. He deepened this association in 1951 by joining the Third Order of St. Francis (now the Secular Franciscan Order) at St. Francis of Assisi Church on West 31st Street. He was Prefect of his fraternity and a representative to the North American Federation of the Order. In 1967 he was elected President of the Federation. His duties involved travel to Rome, where he had an audience with Pope Paul VI, and to First and Third Order Franciscan communities throughout the world as the Third Order revised its Rule and constitutions. In

recent years he was an active member and formation director of the St. Stephen of Hungary Fraternity of the Secular Franciscans. In 1988, Wally was received as an affiliate member of Holy Name Province of the Friars Minor, an honor which he cherished above all his other achievements.

Imbued with Franciscan ideals of humble justice, communal peace, and divine joy, Wally energetically set out on the path of interracial understanding and peace. He served as a delegate to the National Conference of Race and Religion. In this capacity, he traveled throughout the United States speaking to Catholic groups about racism and the effect it had on the Church. During the riots in Harlem, Wally organized a group to distribute the Peace Prayer of St. Francis on the streets and in the churches. As a representative to the Third Order North American Federation in 1963, he arranged for the Annual Peace Award of the Third Order to be conferred on Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. In his acceptance speech, Dr. King observed that the Award was the first time he had been honored by the Catholic Church. However, because of racism, the Archdiocese of New York did not recognize this event.

As a member of the Catholic Interracial Council, Wally had the pleasure of working closely with Rev. John LaFarge, S.J. The Council later generated the Office of Black Ministry for the Archdiocese of New York. At the time of his death, Wally had served several years as the Director of the Pierre Toussaint Guild which John Cardinal O'Connor had established to support the canonization cause of the now Venerable Pierre Toussaint and to promote the unity of the Harlem and Bronx Catholic Communities. A highly successful Gospel music concert was a recent major accomplishment of Wally as Director of the Guild. He also served on the Board of Directors of the oldest retreat house in the United States, Mount Manresa, where he personally participated in thirty retreats over the past forty years. The Mount awarded him two honorary citations for his committed service.

In the public sector, Wally worked with Rev. Henry Brown, former pastor of St. Gregory the Great Parish, where Wally had been a lector. Together they joined the struggle to have the Stryckers Bay Apartments built. Upon their completion, Wally became a resident and served as the apartments' first President. Wally worked with the New York State Commission on Human Rights to set up the first and only conference on race relations and Catholic education on Staten Island. Among the many honors given in recognition of Wally's untiring service were: the St. Bonaventure University Tertiary Achievement Award, the Pierre Toussaint Medallion, the Archdiocese of New York Busiest Layman Citation, and a Doctor of Humane Letters from St. Francis College in Biddeford, Maine. He was a member of the Board of Trustees of St. Bonaventure University from 1991 to 1992. In 1994, the Vatican conferred on him the Pontifical Order of a Knight of St. Gregory the Great, and in 1998,

awarded him the Ecclesiastical Order of a Knight of the Equestrian Order of the Holy Sepulchre of Jerusalem.

After a lingering illness, Wally passed away on All Saints' Day, November 1, 1999. Wally is survived by his wife, Dolores; his sons, Waldemar and Gerard; his daughter, Patricia; six grandchildren and three great-grandchildren.

Well done, Wally, you have been a good and faithful servant of the Lord!

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## Contributors

**Anthony Carrozzo, OFM**, is a friar of Holy Name Province, New York. He served as provincial for nine years and is now Vice-President for the Franciscan Charism at St. Bonaventure University, New York. He teaches courses in the School of Franciscan Studies and has published *Refounding in the Franciscan Tradition*, essays on the province's refounding experience (The Franciscan Institute, 1994). He has recently edited *In Solitude and Dialogue: Contemporary Franciscans Theologize* (The Franciscan Institute, 2000).

**Joseph Chinnici, OFM**, is a friar of the St. Barbara Province, Oakland, California. He earned his D.Phil. in ecclesiastical history from Oxford University and presently teaches history at the Franciscan School of Theology in Berkeley. He is author of *Living Stones: the History and Structure of Catholic Spiritual Life in the United States* (Macmillan, 1988). He also teaches occasionally at the Franciscan Institute and is a popular lecturer on the Franciscan tradition.

**Anthony LoGalbo, OFM**, is a friar of Holy Name Province, New York. He served for a number of years as librarian and Assistant Director of Post-novitiate Formation at Holy Name College in Washington, DC, after which he worked as a pastoral minister in Brazil (1983-1986). He has been librarian for the Franciscan Institute collection at St. Bonaventure University since 1988 and teaches courses in spiritual direction and research methodology.

**Thomas Merton, OCSO**, taught English at St. Bonaventure University, New York, from 1939-1941, when he became a Trappist monk at Gethsemani, Kentucky. He had earned both a B.A. and M.A. in English at Columbia University. As a monk, he was a prolific writer, producing over fifty books and dozens of articles and poems. In 1965 he retired to a hermitage at Gethsemani and died in 1968 during a trip to Bangkok, Thailand, at the age of fifty-three.

**Joseph Wood, OFM Conv.**, is a friar of the St. Anthony Province. He ministered in Italy from 1990-1998, serving as a retreat and vocation director at the Basilica of St. Francis in Assisi and as archivist at the General Curia in Rome. He is presently a team member for the Franciscan Pilgrimage Program and an editorial board member for *The Cord*. He is stationed at Marytown in Libertyville, Illinois, a Marian shrine and retreat center.

## Book Reviews

Charles Carpenter. *Theology as the Road to Holiness in St. Bonaventure*. New York: Paulist Press, 1999. 222pp.

Recently there has been a plethora of worthy books published on St. Bonaventure. For me none quite matches the well-documented and quite disturbing *Theology as the Road to Holiness in St. Bonaventure* by Charles Carpenter. Every page is filled with footnotes that point to Bonaventure's writings in defense of Carpenter's thesis. It is disturbing, not because of the way in which Carpenter handles the material but because of the questions that are raised by his thesis in the areas of Franciscan formation, the study of theology by Franciscans, and the meaning of a Franciscan education.

Three intrinsically united and well-established premises support the work's thesis that the study of theology is a road to holiness for St. Bonaventure. First, there is a fundamental relationship between holiness and wisdom. This is true primarily because Christ, after whom all that exists is patterned, is the Wisdom of God. The more one conforms to Christ Jesus, the more one possesses wisdom, which is a gift of the Holy Spirit. To be Christlike is to be wise. So St. Francis, while unlearned, was filled with that

Wisdom itself which surpasses both knowledge and understanding. Carpenter makes his point through a judicious use of texts from the *Hexameron* and *De Reductione Artium ad Theologiam*.

Having firmly established this point, Carpenter moves to his second premise which argues that "theology 'properly and principally is wisdom'" (p. 73). Brilliantly using the *Itinerarium Mentis in Deum*, he provides ample evidence that Bonaventure is concerned with presenting "a perfect six-step approach that would be a privileged spiritual way to God" (pp. 71-72). Interestingly enough, Hayes chooses the *Itinerarium* for the structure of his book, indicating that "in the remarkable text of *The Journey of the Soul into God* we find the most synthetic statement of the Seraphic Doctor's program. It involves both the pursuit of the mind and the pursuit of the heart, both knowledge and wisdom, both the life of the intellect and the life of the mystic" (pp. 42-43). A reader interested in further pursuing the *Itinerarium*, might profit from Denis Turner's "Hierarchy Interiorized: Bonaventure's *Itinerarium Mentis in Deum*" in *The Darkness of God* (Cambridge University Press, 1995). This engaging study supports Carpenter's premise.

Carpenter's final premise to illustrate his thesis is that "Bonaventure has made of theology a paradigm of the illuminative way" (p. 126). He further comments that "even though theology is not the exclusive context in which the gifts of the Holy Spirit operate, Saint Bonaventure could esteem theology as the most excellent way in which to live under the illumination of these gifts" (p. 127). These gifts "predominate in the illuminative way" (p. 131). Carpenter rightly cautions that the three ways of Bonaventure should be seen as "parallel" ways. While teaching a course on *De Triplice Via*, one of my students used the image of a three-lane highway to describe Bonaventure's concept. It is a solid image, for one can cautiously yet quickly change lanes, continuing to journey along the same road in the same direction.

Having set forth his thesis and premises carefully and exhaustively, Carpenter concludes that "Bonaventure's particular contribution is to make of theological study a spiritual life, by considering theology as that particular operation of the gift of wisdom which raises man's study to the level of contemplation" (pp. 172 - 173).

Carpenter's work deals with the Bonaventurian vision, but not with the repercussions or contemporary implications of such a vision. However, the author does suggest three areas for considering such repercussions. First, he suggests that theological study must be seen as an experience of Scripture. Such an observation is certainly in line with the thinking of St. Francis of Assisi who opens the Rule of 1223 with the words: "The life and rule of the friars minor is this: to live the holy Gospel." The study of the Gospel, which is both intellectual and affective, assists a person in developing a personal relationship with the Word Himself. Secondly, Carpenter deals with the need for prayer while studying theology. His observations are sane and sensible. It seems to me that it is impossible to study Christology within this Bonaventurian perspective without prayerfully grappling with the christological question: "Who do people say that I am?" along with the more personal "And you, who do you say that I am?" Studying Christology with such a contemplative consciousness will indeed make one wise. Lastly, Carpenter, utilizing the masterpiece *Leisure: the Basis of Culture*, argues that "knowledge without leisure cannot escape the fate of all reasoning without contemplation—rationalism, utilitarianism, and even skepticism—traits that enervate intellectual development" (p. 188). While reading this section, I was reminded of the wonderful words of William Kennedy on the occasion of the dedication of the new library at Siena College: "Robert Louis Stevenson said that mankind was never so happily inspired as when it made a cathedral, but I would add the library to that thought; for the cathedral is encompassed in the library, if in the beginning was the word, and the word was with God, then doesn't it follow that, long before the first cathedral, God owned the first library card?"

I closed the book exhilarated and saddened. Exhilarated because Carpenter presents an engaging and challenging perspective of the role of theology in the spiritual development of the person, particularly the Franciscan person; saddened because I wonder if this vision can be implemented or even discussed in our times. Theology today has become rationalistic and pragmatic. Pope John Paul II's recent encyclical *Faith and Reason* has even contributed to this, as did Leo XIII's *Aeterni Patris* at the end of the last century. We are no longer concerned about faith seeking understanding but rather about faith seeking reason. In the academic world it would be tantamount to heresy even to suggest Bonaventure's vision. And in the Franciscan world, theology is often seen as a distraction to Franciscan formation rather than an asset to it. We fail to perceive the formative value of theology. Worse still, we act upon this failure so that in some provinces today theological studies are put off until after initial Franciscan formation.

Carpenter issues a challenge: "After studying Bonaventure's approach I can only conjecture what this may imply in a contemporary setting, but would suggest that others, through their own experiences, make up for the deficiencies I meet with in speaking of something so enveloped in mystery" (p. 176). I would like to accept, partially and briefly, that challenge here by an appeal not only to my experience but also to an insight provided by Louis Mackey in "Redemptive Subversions: the Christian Discourse of St. Bonaventure," *Peregrinations of the Word* (University of Michigan Press, 1997). Mackey appeals to a triple way of mythologizing, demythologizing, and remythologizing in his investigation of the theological approach of St. Bonaventure, observing that "Bonaventure determined to reverse . . . the movement from myth (Scripture) to ironic rationality (Philosophy): remythologizing *reductio* that would counter the demythologizing reduction of the philosophers" (p. 135).

The Franciscan heritage is a story tradition. Franciscan narratives are written from a variety of perspectives with an even greater variety of emphases and polemics. In spite of their diversity, they unite the Franciscan family and bind it together. It is a common communal experience that usually begins with "Remember when . . ." and leads to "No, that's not how it happened. . . ." So we have different accounts of the same story. Eventually, through argument and interpretation, we arrive at the kernel of truth in the story, no matter the differences in the recounting of the narrative. This is the process of demythologization—the accounts are interpreted, the truth is evident and is expressed in rules and doctrine. However, rules and doctrine do not motivate so the stories now need to be retold in new and vibrant ways that appeal to contemporary people.

This is an appropriate approach to Franciscan formation and education. The stories must be passed on, the kernel of truth must be discovered, and

new renditions must be presented to motivate us. Yet a contemporary Franciscan problem is that, while we do well in recounting the stories and are superb at explaining them rationally, we rarely even try to remythologize. We need, then, to turn to artists, poets, novelists, and filmmakers to help us in this process of retrieving and expressing anew the beauty of the truth discovered. Permit me to use an example.

Recently I was fortunate to see the screening of a forthcoming film *The Big Kahuna* which is based on Roger Rueff's play *The Hospitality Suite*. The story is fairly simple and straightforward. Three salesmen Phil (Danny DeVito), Larry (Kevin Spacey) and Bob (Peter Facinelli) rent a hotel suite where they will host a reception for prospective customers. Bob, the youngest of the group and the newest salesman, deals with life by recounting Jesus stories and quoting St. Paul. Larry is the pragmatist who wants to catch "the big kahuna," cashing in on a major sales. And Phil is the aging salesman who is asking God questions in a much deeper and more introspective way than Bob. What slowly becomes apparent is that these are not three men at all but they represent three stages in life's journey: telling someone else's stories, analyzing the accounts to attain results, and finally struggling to regain life's myths. The result, as Phil very eloquently and passionately recounts near the end of the film, is *character*, that is, a wisdom that comes through making these stories, lessons, and experiences part of one's identity. This film suggests how the Franciscan formative, theological process might be remythologized, might speak to us, enlighten our experience, and motivate us to search our hearts for the answers that reside deeply within us. It is this process that Carpenter eruditely explains in his book.

At times Carpenter reveals a more conservative agenda than I am comfortable with. He often uses non-inclusive language. And he has a curious use of the word "pretends." But, these concerns aside, I believe that Franciscan formators, theologians, and educators would do well to read, study, and discuss this book and its implications for formation, theology, and education in a Franciscan setting. Carpenter has made an extraordinary contribution to Franciscan life. I hope we will not ignore it.

Anthony M. Carrozzo, OFM

"May our Holy Father Francis obtain for us the grace always to live in his spirit, so that the *Vita Evangelii*, the life of the Holy Gospel, may never cease to be our ideal, that we may be always youthful and radical like him in the pursuit of this idea, that daily we may start anew, as he himself did and exhorted his brethren to do: 'Brothers, let us start today, for up to now we have made but little progress.'"

From the first "Monthly Conference" by Philotheus Boehner, OFM, *The Cord* (November, 1950): 7.

Robson, Michael. *St. Francis of Assisi: The Legend and the Life*. London: Geoffrey Chapman, 1997. 294 pp.

The bibliography of books on Francis of Assisi is quite large and each year seems to produce numerous reflections and meditations from the scholarly to the popular about the saint. Robson's biography follows a more thematic rather than chronological approach. Here, the Poverello's life unfolds primarily through the major personages and ideals which figured prominently in his life. In the Introduction, Robson delineates his approach: "The chapters on the key people in Francis's life point to the different dimensions of his personality and teaching revealing the influences on his life and fraternity." The book is composed of nine chapters, with the first seven devoted to Peter Bernardone, Bishop Guido, Pope Innocent III, Cardinal Ugolino (later Pope Gregory IX), Lady Poverty, St. Anthony of Padua and St. Clare. The last two chapters deal topically with the public ministry of Francis and the early friars, and the death, canonization, and legacy of Francis.

Robson carefully and objectively constructs his narrative solidly based on the early classical Franciscan sources. His secondary sources reveal a concentration upon mostly Anglo-American scholars and a few standard Italian sources. He elaborates with great care the solicitude of the institutional Church in the persons of Guido, Innocent III, and Ugolino toward Francis and his friars, even though, at times, they misunderstood the desires of Francis. Without lengthy excursions into the various controversies surrounding Francis and the early Franciscan movement, the author alludes to differing and opposing interpretations of the observance of poverty, the role of studies in the Order, the internal struggles within the fraternity, and the external tensions with other mendicants and clergy.

Each chapter concludes with a concise summary of the major points treated in that chapter. The book includes a rather extensive bibliography of primary and secondary sources. Bibliographical citations are sometimes incomplete, often lacking publishers' names.

Robson's tone is scholarly without being pedantic, reverent without being pietistic or romantic. He tries to give equal consideration to various viewpoints without any particular axe to grind or specific agenda to promote.

This work would appeal to those who have passed the introductory stage and are looking for something more substantial with a view to seeing how Francis gradually developed his vision within the milieu of his time. Professional Franciscan scholars and those who manage to keep abreast of things Franciscan may not find too much of concern or interest to them. I would recommend this book as suitable for any library collection, especially since books in this middle range are scarce.

Anthony J. LoGalbo, OFM

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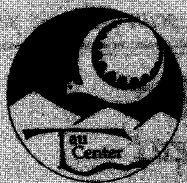
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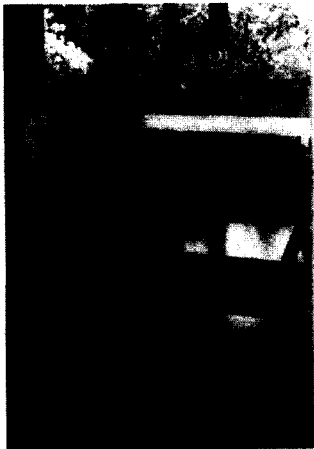
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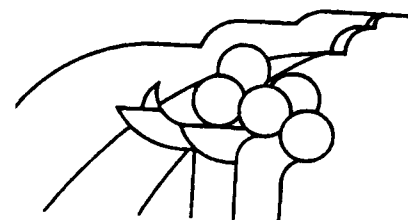
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## THE FRANCISCAN CENTER



### of the WASHINGTON THEOLOGICAL UNION

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## Francis and Clare: New Evidence and New Images

A teaching symposium that will explore Francis and Clare based on new research. Primary emphasis will be given to the first volume of the new *Omnibus: Francis of Assisi: Early Documents*

### May 27 - 28, 2000

Speakers include:

Wayne Hellman, OFM Conv; Dominic Monti, OFM;  
Ingrid Peterson, OSF; Bill Short, OFM

Registration fee: \$25.00

Conference fee: \$75.00

(Registration forms will be available in spring semester, 2000)

*The Franciscan Center at W.T.U. was created over ten years ago to enrich our gospel ministries with contemporary studies in the Franciscan charism.*

For more information write:

The Franciscan Center of the  
Washington Theological Union  
6896 Laurel Street, NW  
Washington, DC 20012

# *The Strategy That Saved Assisi*

## **The Real "Assisi Underground" During World War II**

Francesco Santucci, historical documentation  
Aldo Brunacci, preface and appendix  
Josef Raischl, SFO, editor  
Nancy Celaschi, OSF, translator

To satisfy people's legitimate desire to know the truth about what was described by Alessandro Ramati in his book and movie, *The Assisi Underground*, Don Aldo Brunacci claims "it is truly a wonderful work of fiction, but pure fiction, because it distorts the historical truth."

The historical research of Professor Santucci brings to light the data about how the city of Assisi was saved from destruction in 1944 and how many refugees, especially Jews, found a safe haven there.

The most important part in this strategy for saving the city was played by the local Bishop, Giuseppe Nicolini, and the German commander, Dr. Valentin Mueller.

This volume combines within 78 pages detailed historical documentation, personal memories of the Mueller family, reflections and memories of Don Aldo Brunacci, eye witness.

Published in Assisi by Editrice Minerva

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## **Franciscan Spiritual Center**

Summer Retreat Offerings 2000

### **Preached Retreat: The Mysteries of the Rosary - The Mysteries of Life**

May 26-June 2

Presenter: Rev. Paul G. Mast

Registration Deadline: May 1 \$310 (\$50 deposit)

### **Directed Retreat July 5-12**

Directors: Clare A. D'Auria, OSF, Frank Doyle, OSA,  
Kathleen Gannon, OSF, Julie McCole, OSF

Registration Deadline: June 15 \$350 (\$50 deposit)

### **Guided Retreat: Jesus' Beatitudes and Our Response July 16-23**

Presenter: Michael Crosby, OFM Cap.

Registration Deadline: June 22 \$325 (\$50 deposit)

### **T'ai Chi Chih Retreat: A Moving Meditation August 2-9**

Presenters: Antonia Cooper, OSF, and Celeste Crine, OSF

Registration Deadline: June 30 \$300 (\$50 deposit)

### **Praying with the Feminine Face of God September 6-13**

Director: Kathryn O'Connell Cleary

Registration Deadline: August 6 \$300 (\$50 deposit)

### **Directed Retreat September 6-13**

Directors: Clare A. D'Auria, OSF, Ellen Duffy, OSF, Beth Flannery, RSM

Registration Deadline: August 6 \$300 (\$50 deposit)

The Franciscan Spiritual Center is situated in the southeast wing of Our Lady of Angels Convent, the motherhouse of the Sisters of St. Francis of Philadelphia. Located about 20 miles south of Philadelphia and just north of the Delaware state line, the Center consists of 21 bedrooms with private bath, 10 bedrooms sharing a common bath, lounge, kitchenette, large meeting space, spiritual direction rooms, prayer room, and a ground-level multipurpose space which houses a second lounge as well as library, listening center, arts and crafts area, and exercise corner. There is an elevator to all levels but a few additional stairs to the multipurpose space and some spiritual direction rooms. The Center is fully climate controlled and handicapped accessible from the outside. Quiet, shaded grounds provide ample space for walking and solitude. Reservations are requested.

For more information on these or other programs or to register, contact:

### **Franciscan Spiritual Center**

609 S. Convent Road  
Aston, PA 19014

Phone: 610-558-6152; Fax: 612-558-6122; E-mail: fsc@osfphila.org

## On the Franciscan Circuit Coming Events, 2000

### Monday, January 24-Monday, April 24

Sabbatical for Contemporary Franciscans. At Tau Center. (See ad p. 46)

### Sunday, January 30-Friday, February 4

Franciscan Gathering XX: The Gospel Path: Overcoming Our Tolerance. With Rose Margaret Delaney, SFP and Wayne Hellman, OFMConv. Contact Franciscan Center, 3010 Perry Ave., Tampa FL 33603; ph. 813-229-2695; fax 813-228-0748; email: francnt@aol.com.

### Friday, February 18-Saturday, February 19

Introduction to the Enneagram. With JoAnne Haney, OSF and Ramona Miller, OSF. At Tau Center, 511 Hilbert St., Winona, MN 55987; ph. 507-454-2993; fax: 507-453-0910.

### Friday, February 18-Monday, February 21

Franciscan Hermitage Experience. With Helen Budzik, OSF and Ellen Duffy, OSF. Contact Franciscan Spiritual Center, 609 S. Convent Road, Aston, PA 19014; ph. 610-558-6152.

### Friday, February 11-Thursday, February 18

Directed Retreat. With Thomas Hartle, OFM and visiting directors. \$270. At Franciscan Center, 49 Jackson Avenue, Hastings-on-Hudson, NY 10706; ph. 914-478-3696.

### Sunday, February 20-Friday, February 25

Conference Retreat for Sisters. With James Gavin, OFMConv. At Franciscan Center, Hastings-on-Hudson (see above).

### Friday, March 3-Saturday, March 4

Seventh Annual Central NY Franciscan Experience. With Murray Bodo, OFM. Syracuse, NY. (See ad p. 47)

### Friday, March 3-Sunday, March 5

Francis of Assisi: Early Documents. With Regis Armstrong, OFMConv. At Tau Center. (See ad p. 46)

### Thursday, April 13-Sunday, April 16

Franciscan Solitude. With André Cirino, OFM; based on his book. At Spirit and Life Center. (See ad p. 52)

### Saturday, April 15-Sunday, April 23

Holy Week Retreat and Easter Triduum. With Tod Lavery, OFM, and Tau staff. Tau Center, 511 Hilbert St., Winona, MN 55987; ph. 507-454-2993; fax 507-453-0910.

### Saturday, April 1

Rebirth of a Charism, at Friars' Spiritual Retreat Center, Graymoor, NY. Contact the Franciscan Federation, P.O. Box 29080, Washington, DC 20017; Ph. 202-529-2334 Fax: 202-529-7016

### Thursday, April 20-Sunday, April 23

Triduum Retreat. With J. Lora Dambroski, OSF, and Bernard Tickerhoof, TOR. At Spirit and Life Center. (See ad p. 52)

## Writings of Saint Francis

Adm	Admonitions	ExpPat	Prayer Inspired by the Our Father
BenLeo	Blessing for Brother Leo	FormViv	Form of Life for St. Clare
BenBern	Blessing for Brother Bernard	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
1EpCust	First Letter to the Custodians	OffPass	Office of the Passion
2EpCust	Second Letter to the Custodians	OrCruc	Prayer before the Crucifix
1EpFid	First Letter to the Faithful	RegB	Later Rule
2EpFid	Second Letter to the Faithful	RegNB	Earlier Rule
EpLeo	Letter to Brother Leo	RegEr	Rule for Hermitages
EpMin	Letter to a Minister	SalBMV	Salutation of the Blessed Virgin Mary
EpOrd	Letter to the Entire Order	SalVirt	Salutation of the Virtues
EpRect	Letter to the Rulers of the Peoples	Test	Testament
ExhLD	Exhortation to the Praise of God	TestS	Testament written in Siena
ExhPD	Exhortation to Poor Ladies	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
TestCl	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 Jacques 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