

School of Franciscan Studies
St. Bonaventure University
Fall Schedule 2002

MA and Certificate Courses

Introduction to Franciscan and Medieval Studies - Anthony LoGalbo, OFM
Early Franciscan Movement - Michael Cusato, OFM
Clare and Franciscan Women - Margaret Carney, OSF
Foundations of Franciscan Spirituality - Michael Blastic, OFM Conv.
Franciscan Hagiography - Michael Blastic, OFM Conv.
Franciscan Movement II - Michael Cusato, OFM
Ministry and Mission in the Franciscan Tradition - Michael Cusato, OFM

Special Topics:

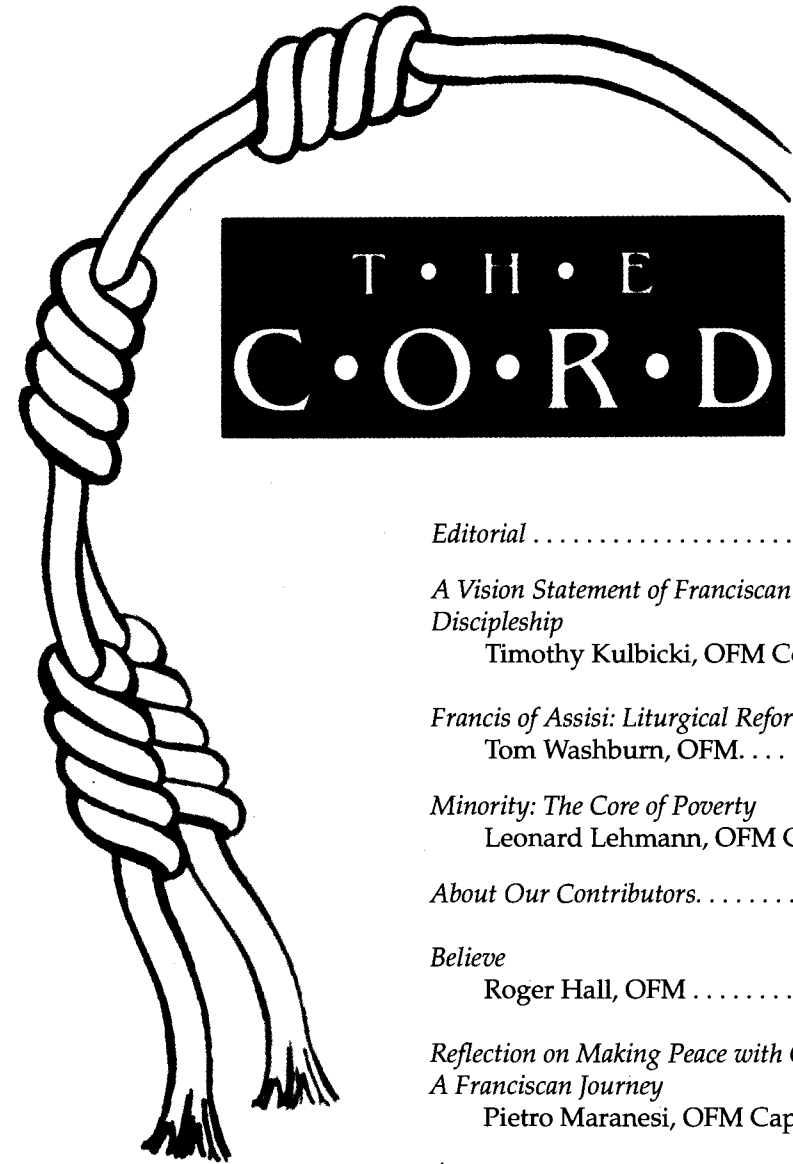
Contemplation and Compassion in the Franciscan Tradition
Michael Blastic, OFM Conv

Integration Seminar

Sabbatical Program

For further information
and for application
materials contact:

The Franciscan Institute
St. Bonaventure University
St. Bonaventure, NY 14778
Phone: 716-375-2105
Fax: 716-375-2156



T · H · E
C · O · R · D

<i>Editorial</i>	189
<i>A Vision Statement of Franciscan Discipleship</i> Timothy Kulbicki, OFM Conv.	190
<i>Francis of Assisi: Liturgical Reformer</i> Tom Washburn, OFM.	197
<i>Minority: The Core of Poverty</i> Leonard Lehmann, OFM Cap.	207
<i>About Our Contributors</i>	219
<i>Believe</i> Roger Hall, OFM	220
<i>Reflection on Making Peace with Cancer: A Franciscan Journey</i> Pietro Maranesi, OFM Cap.	221
<i>Announcements</i>	224
<i>On the Franciscan Circuit</i>	232

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

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

Attention Postal Service:

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

THE CORD
A Franciscan Spiritual Review

Publisher: Margaret Carney, OSF
Editor: Roberta A. McKelvie, OSF

Poetry Editor: Frances Ann Thom, OSF
Distribution Manager: Noel Riggs

Editorial Board: Mary C. Gurley, OSF, Robert Karris, OFM,
Beth Lynn, OSC, Margaret McGrath, FMSJ, Richard Morton, SFO,
Bernard Tickerhoof, TOR, Joseph Wood, OFM Conv.

No material from this periodical may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, without permission in writing from the editor.

The Cord (ISSN 0010-8685 USPS 563-640) is published bi-monthly by the Franciscan Institute at St. Bonaventure University, St. Bonaventure, NY 14778. (716.375.2160)

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

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

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

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

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

ADVERTISING: Ads should be sent to the editor at the above address. Cost: full page, \$50.00; half page, \$25.00. Ad deadline: first day of the month preceding month of publication (e.g., April 1 for the May/June issue).

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

The Cord, 52.5 (2002)

Editorial

Not too many years ago I attended a province Chapter for my congregation during which we were challenged to look at things in light of one question: "What would Francis do?" At the time, the focal point of the question was to invite us to examine how we intended share ourselves—time, talent, financial resources and property—with those outside our membership who stood in need. We were asked to use Francis of Assisi, the prodigally generous son and brother, as our touchstone. It was an effective question which produced some amazing answers.

That same question keeps coming back to me in light of the events of last September, the current financial debacles in the business world and the clergy scandals within the American church. What *would* Francis do?

We think we know the answer, at least in broad terms: Francis would open the book of the Gospel and try to follow the example and teaching of Jesus. But, what this would mean in specific or concrete terms, we might be less certain. What ought we do when faced with questions of patriotism and peace? How do we reconcile issues of justice and integrity?

As we pass the first anniversary of the terrorist attacks and move once again toward two major feasts for the Franciscan family, the feast of the Stigmata and the feast of Francis's passing over into eternal life, our pursuit of insight and understanding takes on more importance than ever. The materials selected for this issue of *The Cord* will, it is hoped, stimulate each reader's search for truly Franciscan answers.

We publish here articles from two Friars Minor, one Friar Minor Conventual, and two Capuchin Friars Minor—in itself a statement of unity and brotherhood. The authors offer us their insight into the post-conciliar world in which Francis lived, recall us to the dream of minority and poverty that he so deeply embraced, present a vision statement for our own discipleship (no matter which branch of the family we call our own), and remind us that, in the end, we will all be called home to the loving embrace of the God who loved us into being in the first place and will certainly love us throughout eternity.

Roberta A. McKelvie, OSF

A Vision Statement of Franciscan Discipleship

Timothy Kulbicki, O.F.M. Conv.

At the Second Vatican Council, the decree on religious life asked all religious institutes to pursue "suitable renewal" which involved a two-fold task of "a return to their original inspiration" and an "adaptation to the changed conditions of our times."¹ The 1992 Extraordinary General Chapter of the Conventual Franciscan Friars (held in Mexico City) particularly enjoined all jurisdictions of the Order to address such renewal by specific planning in three categories: formation, leadership, and mission. Acting on a dually-sponsored resolution of the then St. Anthony of Padua (USA) Province Spiritual Life and Continuing Education Commissions, the 1994 Provincial Chapter created the Franciscan Discipleship Commission. The Chapter entrusted to it the ambitious task of "facilitating the formulation of a Province plan to promote systematically the growth of the spiritual, fraternal, personal, and ministerial life of the friars."² Development and growth refer to the task of continuing formation, and continuing formation in the contemporary world involves *Perfectae Caritatis'* call to return to original inspiration and adapt to changing conditions. This vision statement, slightly adapted for publication, enunciates that task in those areas.

Return to Original Sources

In terms of growth and development, returning to the sources invites us to return to the vision of Francis of Assisi. "The primary objective of the Order is to rediscover and repropose the spirit of our Seraphic Father."³ As we know, Francis' vision was thoroughly Christocentric: he wanted the friars "to follow the poor and humble Christ," becoming so identified with Him, and Him Crucified, so as to become "a new man."⁴ To become a "new man" for Francis of Assisi involved "belonging to the community, the experience of prayer, growth in asceticism, and apostolic commitment."⁵ Thus, a return to Francis' vision was precisely the task which the Province entrusted to the Franciscan Discipleship Commission: promote the growth of the fraternal life of the friars (belonging to the community); promote the growth of the spiri-

tual life of the friars (the experience of prayer); promote the growth of the personal life of the friars (growth in asceticism); and promote the growth of the ministerial life of the friars (apostolic commitment), so that each of us can become the "new man" of the Gospel.

Yet Francis realized that for himself and for anyone wishing to follow in his footsteps, as he sought to follow in the footsteps of Christ, this process of becoming "a new man" had to involve the process of becoming "new men."

The Franciscan Gospel fraternity is the fundamental value to be lived out and to repropose to the Church as the "mystery of communion" and to the world as a valid alternative to fragmentation. Fraternity, therefore, is understood as the specific contribution of the Franciscan.⁶

For Francis, and therefore for us as well, personal development is dependent upon and coexistent with fraternal development. Since the development of the capacity to live the gospel life personally and fraternally is the core of our apostolate, such development is dependent upon and coexistent with ministerial development. To "have the Spirit of the Lord and His holy behavior" and "intimately connect prayer with work"⁷ is incumbent upon all religious and friars; thus, the other three areas of development are dependent upon and coexistent with spiritual development.

The integral notion of what it takes to live the full gospel led Francis to envision a new community. The *novitas Francescana* involved for Francis a new environment, a new possibility that did not seem feasible in any other form of life. Thus, when Pope Innocent III in 1209 originally suggested to Francis that he find his place in one of the already-established forms of living the Gospel, Francis graciously yet forcefully declined. Francis recognized that in himself and in his followers something unique, something different, a new charism, was being given to the Church, a notion eventually assented to by Innocent III orally and Honorius III juridically.

The recognition of the *novitas Francescana* was also a recognition that contemporary religious life at the time of Francis was not meeting the needs of a rapidly changing Christendom, for 13th century Europe was changing dramatically. The political changes from weak but centralized imperial authority to local autonomy; the economic change from feudalism to mercantile economy; the social change from landed aristocracy to aristocracy of wealth; the intellectual change of scholasticism; the beginnings of humanist spirituality: all these changes precipitated for Francis a recognition that adaptation to changes in society were fundamental to what it means to be Franciscan. Thus the Church's call to "read the signs of the times" and adapt to them is exactly in line with the historic bases of Franciscanism. Adapting to change is part and parcel of what it means to be Franciscan.

Adaptation to the Changed Conditions of Our Time

Some of the changed conditions of our times are global and transnational in scope. These include the ever-increasing secularization and consumerization of the post-modern Western world; the rapidly changing conditions of post-Cold War Eastern Europe; and the global injustice and social crises affecting much of Latin America, Africa and a large part of Asia, not to mention whole segments of our own American society.⁸ These changes affect the way the world is, and ultimately affect the way we are.

More immediate to us are the changes that affect us more directly as American Catholics. The period following World War II saw the gradual eroding of a distinctively immigrant Catholic culture in America. Fueled by the educational opportunities offered by the GI Bill and increasing post-war prosperity, American Catholics went to college for the first time in massive numbers, and decided to leave their ethnic urban enclaves for the greener grass of the suburbs. There, American Catholics became less distinctively Catholic and more homogeneously American in attitude, for better or worse. The *aggiornamento* ushered in by Vatican II simply added to that change, and, coupled with all the social changes that can be summed up in the phrase "the '60's," has left us an inheritance of a rapidly changed and continually changing environment.

How did American Franciscan religious life change in those same post-war years? Many communities sensed early on that the various immigrant cultures in which many of the individual members and the communities themselves had been born and raised were diminishing both in size and in vitality. Many communities responded to those early signs of change by daring expansion projects in the 1940s and '50s, reaching out in apostolic ventures somewhat different than original ones, expanding their geographical bases of operation, and opening foreign and domestic missions. Such daring initiative and expansion occurred in most communities straight through the early 1970s.

But signs of further change were already in the winds. The past quarter-century has been marked by sometimes slow and occasionally sudden diminishment, as evidenced by withdrawal from numerous traditional places of ministry. In addition, the commonly-accepted manner in which ministry is done has been challenged by the continually changing social conditions around us, calling into question many traditional forms, yet opening up new ones. The diminishing numbers of those seeking to join Franciscan communities, plus a slow but steady defection of already professed members, changed not only the manner in which young religious are initially formed, but also the way in which community life is lived and experienced. These "quantity" changes, in both numbers of religious, numbers of communities and places of ministry, leave their impact upon all those aging religious who remain. More subtle, and perhaps more incisive, are the changes in "quality" that have affected American

Franciscan religious life. Quality in this sense does not mean grading or evaluation of better or worse; rather, it means that the qualities or the ways in which American Franciscan religious live and work with each other have changed rapidly, unevenly, and in different ways. What are some of the qualities that have changed in individuals and around Franciscan communities?

Experience

At one time most American Franciscan religious shared commonly held experiences and rituals that bound them together. Most members were drawn from similar socio-economic and cultural groups; many members had been molded into the life of the religious communities by extensive contact prior to joining; most American Franciscan religious had common formation experiences in well-established motherhouses and seminaries. Most American religious lived in local communities in which everyone shared the same ministry. However, today the fewer numbers who join come from widely diverse socio-economic and cultural backgrounds. Not many of these come to our communities after a long pre-entrance exposure to religious in ministry, because there are fewer corporate ministries and fewer religious ministering in them. The common bond of shared formation has been stretched to include religious formation with other religious congregations in mixed novitiates, as well as uneven needs for professional formation due to the wide variety of pre-entrance experience. Many American Franciscan religious are engaged in forms of ministry either personal by nature or outside the corporate context, leading to naturally diverse notions and experiences of work and community interaction.

Spirituality

Similarly, in the past American Franciscan religious shared common notions of the meaning of Church, prayer, holiness, and religious life. Increasingly, ideological debates in the Church are finding adherents within local communities, and ecclesiological orientations are dictating where and with whom we are comfortable working. Common ideas concerning what prayer is have given way to honest disagreements concerning obligation vs. desire, shared and spontaneous vs. formalized, highly vertical vs. highly horizontal, scriptural vs. devotional. Holiness, once viewed as an ascetical detachment from the world, has been challenged by ideas of holiness involving a deeper incarnation into world(ly) situations. Religious life as a juridical concept set apart from others has been challenged to be alternatively more commonly baptismal, more prophetic and countercultural, or more eschatological and witnessing.

Personal Responsibility

Earlier commonly-held ideas about obedience fostered a good deal of personal responsibility being shifted to whoever was another step above the individual, from local superior straight up to Pope. The daily horarium and periodic mandated events such as retreats, workshops, and chapters asked for mere attendance as a level of responsibility. Religious life as a total environment, in sociological terms, took care of all physical, social, relational, spiritual, and affiliative needs. In recent years, however, the Roman Catholic ethical principle of subsidiarity is shifting responsibility downward rather than upward. Attendance at events is no longer enough: active participation, a principle drawn from liturgical renewal, as well as cognitive and behavioral change in response to new experiences and educational opportunities, have become the measure of the responsible religious. Engagement in different ministries, commitments to different groups and circles, and greater acknowledgment of individual needs and desires have all contributed to the breakdown of the total system of religious life, as individual religious now have multiple and at times conflicting sets of personal responsibilities.

The Challenges That Face Us

Ultimately, the challenge that faces each American Franciscan religious individually and corporately is the challenge of relationship with Jesus Christ and the need for continual conversion and growth in grace. All of us need to regularly and continually turn away from sin and be faithful to the Gospel, for the Reign of God is really at hand. Each of us and all of us have to battle those aspects of our lives that prefer darkness to light, death to life, apparent yet unfulfilled satisfaction to transforming and transformed fulfillment.

What are some of these challenges? Among them are the following:

1. Change is an inevitable factor of everything, and rapid change marks all contemporary experience. The Church, the Franciscan charism, and ultimately Christ is calling American Franciscan religious to change. Many American Franciscans of many congregations may not be moving and developing at the rate at which the Church needs.
2. Part of the resistance to change among many religious is the high priority of personal comfort levels, whether psychological, physical, social, or economic, over any and all other values. American Franciscan religious need to more urgently shift priorities from internal comfort to effectiveness in building the Reign of God. An unwillingness to get beyond our own comfort and in-house issues is a lack of faith, a betrayal of the Gospel, and an

obstacle to the entire community's deeper conversion to Franciscan living. Personal responsibility for growing in fraternal, spiritual, personal and ministerial effectiveness is a recognition of the call of the Holy Spirit, not merely a management technique.

3. Change is painfully slow. Learning is the sustained effort to change towards the good. Nothing changes without effort. Active or passive resistance to learning can no longer be acceptable to our community, to the People of God, or ultimately to God.
4. American Franciscan religious are diverse, opinions are diverse, ideas are diverse, experiences are diverse. Communities need to abandon the vain desire for uniformity, identify those things that still bond them, and learn appropriate skills that help them live with a reasonable pluralism.

*Adapting to change is part
and parcel of what it
means to be Franciscan.*

5. Relationship is one of the hallmarks of contemporary life: relationship with God in prayer, helping relationships in ministry, or the necessity for healthy and life-giving relationships for personal growth and development. Openness to building relational skills is imperative for all American Franciscan religious.
6. The integral nature of the Franciscan calling referred to above impels American Franciscan religious to deeper conversion and continuing formation in all aspects of life: community, spirituality, ministry, and personal issues. There can be no hierarchy or timetable for this; paraphrasing Francis on the virtues, it must be understood that whoever works on one and does not offend the others, works on all, but whoever neglects one, does not work on any and offends all. Consequently, continuing formation needs be both individual and communal, involve life and work, and remain both broad and constant. This is indispensable.
7. The *novitas Franciscana*, with its spiritual and theological response to the changing situations of the world, has to color the efforts of American Franciscans. Continuing formation without sustained and theologically responsible reflection on both individual experience and the conditions of the surrounding world would be unfaithful to the incarnational insights so dear to Francis. Continuing formation cannot be merely a mirror to look at ourselves, but it must also be a window to look at the world with theological/spiritual glasses.

8. The experience of diminishment of the last several decades has left many American Franciscans at times feeling apathetic, misunderstood, angry, sad or detached. While human feelings are real and valid, they must not become solely determinative about how individuals choose to respond anew to God's call. American Franciscans have other choices, options, and hopes.
9. Some internal strife in Franciscan communities is not merely a struggle with diversity but is an effect of sin and the effects of an obtuse spirit within. To not state this as true would be dishonest and spiritually immature.
10. Finally, while the social sciences have much to teach, American Franciscans must continue to return to our spiritual and theological Franciscan roots. We commit to Franciscan discipleship and continuing formation because we are created good and graced, yet marked by sin, and struggling to grow is a response to grace. We commit to Franciscan discipleship and continuing formation because the Word of God took flesh and struggled with human existence, and to do less dishonors Jesus Christ. We commit to Franciscan discipleship and continuing formation because of the eschatological promise of Christ, in which we continue to hope and which gives us the strength to persevere.

Endnotes

¹*Perfectae Caritatis*, 2.

²1997-2000 Province Planning Document (Ellicott City, MD: St. Anthony of Padua Province), # 12.

³"Toward the Year 2000," in *Friars Minor Conventual: Documents of the Extraordinary General Chapter in Mexico City, August 20-September 15, 1992* (Rome: General Curia O.F.M. Conv.), 1.1

⁴*Ibid.*, #9.

⁵*Ibid.*, #10

⁶*Ibid.*, #2.1

⁷General Constitutions of the Order of Friars Minor Conventual (Rome: General Curia O.F.M. Conv.), #68.1.

⁸"Toward the Year 2000," Introduction.



Francis of Assisi: Liturgical Reformer

Tom Washburn, O.F.M.

To poor priests [St. Francis] also provided help, reverently and piously, especially in the appointments of the altar, and, in this way, he became both a participant in the divine worship and provided assistance for the need of its celebrants (LMj 1:6).

Our own Francis of Assisi has been called many things: founder of a new way of religious life, herald of the Gospel, mirror of Christ, prophet, savior of the Church in conflict. The list could be extended on and on, but I would be willing to guess that Liturgical Reformer is not one of the titles that usually is attached to Francis. Those who work within liturgy circles don't often espouse the reforms supported by this Poor Man of Assisi. But a close scrutiny of the times and the writings of Francis, especially in relation to the Fourth Lateran Council, reveals a different picture. This shows us a Francis who so dearly loved the sacred rituals of the Church that he took to heart the liturgical reforms of the day and became a primary promulgator of them wherever he went and to whomever he wrote. This type of liturgical reform, led by the sons and daughters of Francis, is something that the Church could use today.

Thirteenth-century medieval Italy was a place of religious conflict. The ideas of Joachim of Fiore, Peter Lombard and the Albigensian heresy swirled about. In the midst of this, two great events took place that forever changed the Church. The first occurred in 1209, when an unknown poor man from the imperial city of Assisi visited Rome along with eleven companions, seeking approval from Pope Innocent III who, "when he saw in the man of God such remarkable purity and simplicity of heart, such firmness of purpose and such fiery ardor of will, . . . was inclined to give his assent to the request"¹ to live the gospel way of life, thus beginning one of the greatest religious developments in the history of the Church. By 1226, the year the saint died, his Order had grown from that small band of men to an organization numbering in the tens of thousands throughout Christendom.

The second great event of that time came in 1215, when the fathers of the Church gathered at the Church of St. John Lateran in Rome for what would be the fourth Ecumenical Council held at that site. That Council was best known for its support of the human and divine natures in Christ, in response to the Albigensian heresy's claim that all matter was evil, so Jesus could not have been human. The Council also made the profound profession of the Church's Trinitarian faith that was meant to end the dispute between the writings of Joachim of Fiore and Peter Lombard over the nature of the Trinity.

This was the world of Francis of Assisi, one in which the Church was not only involved in theological dispute but also faced sociological and spiritual flux as well. The state of the Catholic Church had declined to a point where there was real need for reform. Francis would be the man to spearhead that reform through his actions, his simple way of life, and his absolute adherence to the Gospel. St. Bonaventure reports on what happened when Francis approached Pope Innocent III, seeking approval for his way of life:

There was among the cardinals a most venerable man, John of Sabina . . . he said to the Supreme Pontiff and his brother cardinals: "If we refuse the request of this poor man as novel or too difficult, when all he asks is to be allowed to lead the Gospel life, we must be on guard lest we commit an offence against Christ's Gospel. For if anyone says that there is something novel or irrational or impossible to observe in this man's desire to live according to the perfection of the Gospel, he is guilty of blasphemy against Christ, the author of the Gospel." (LMj 3:9)

Such were the crucial elements that would guide Francis in his way of life: he was profoundly dedicated to the Gospel of Christ; he held dear the teaching that emanated from the Fourth Lateran Council; and in his own spirituality he was deeply moved by the humanity of Christ. His prayer and his actions witness to this awareness of Christ's human nature. In opposition to the Albigensian heresy, Franciscan spirituality has always been very deeply connected to the Word made *Flesh*.

These guiding principles led Francis to become a liturgical reformer in the thirteenth-century Church. To be fair, Francis is not often thought of as a liturgist or a liturgical reformer. But often overshadowed by the great Trinitarian statements of the Fourth Lateran Council are the canons that dealt with liturgical practice and sought to restore dignity to liturgical celebration. The writings of Francis show that he was devoted to the promotion of these canons, decrees perhaps even more than the others that came from the Council. We don't often rank the Fourth Lateran Council as one of the great liturgical councils. Instead, we usually mark Trent, which set the Roman liturgy in an

unchanged cast for 500 years until the Second Vatican Council melted that away and brought about the current era of liturgical renewal. But, for their time and circumstance, the changes initiated by the Fourth Lateran Council were profoundly felt on a very popular level. The canons of the Council brought about reform in areas that anyone in the Church would have immediately noticed. St. Francis and St. Clare both took up these canons in their ministry and helped to effect the changes that the Council envisioned.

The Fourth Lateran Council and Liturgy

The Council's liturgical canons give us insight into the practice of liturgy at the time. Canons were passed to forbid clerics from drunken displays and from hunting; clerics were forbidden from pronouncing or executing a death sentence against someone; they were forbidden from holding secular offices or engaging in dishonest pursuits; and clerics were reminded to live chaste and virtuous lives. It is difficult to envision the state of affairs that would lead the Council to state:

Their garments must be worn clasped at the top and neither too short nor too long. They are not to use red or green garments or curiously sewed together gloves, or beak-shaped shoes or gilded bridles, saddles, pectoral ornaments (for horses), spurs, or anything else indicative of superfluity. At the Divine Office in the church they are not to wear *cappas* with long sleeves, and priests and dignitaries may not wear them elsewhere except in case of danger when circumstances should require a change of outer garments. Buckles may under no condition be worn, nor sashes having ornaments of gold or silver, nor rings, unless it be in keeping with the dignity of their office. All bishops must use in public and in the church outer garments made of linen, except those who are monks, in which case they must wear the habit of their order; in public they must not appear with open mantles, but these must be clasped either on the back of the neck or on the bosom.²

The Council also made several proclamations about sacred liturgy which were intended to restore dignity to liturgical celebrations. Canon 17, regarding the Divine Office, reads:

It is a matter for regret that there are some minor clerics and even prelates who spend half of the night in banqueting and in unlawful gossip, not to mention other abuses, and in giving the remainder to sleep. They are scarcely awakened by the diurnal concerts of the birds. Then they hasten through matins in a hurried and careless

manner. There are others who say mass scarcely four times a year and, what is worse, do not even attend mass, and when they are present they are engaged outside in conversation with lay people to escape the silence of the choir; so that, while they readily lend their ears to unbecoming talk, they regard with utter indifference things that are divine. These and all similar things, therefore, we absolutely forbid under penalty of suspension, and strictly command in virtue of obedience that they celebrate diligently and devoutly the diurnal and nocturnal offices so far as God gives them strength.

The phrase, "that they celebrate diligently and devoutly" has the ring of a liturgical battle cry much like "full, conscious and active participation" from the Second Vatican Council. Similarly, regarding sacred space, the Council addressed the issue of the care of the Church and its liturgical vessels:

We do not wish to leave uncorrected the practice of certain clerics who convert the churches into storehouses for their own household goods and also for those of others, so that the churches have the appearance of the houses of lay people rather than of the house of God. . . . There are also others who not only neglect to keep the churches clean but also leave the vessels, vestments, palls, and corporals so unclean that sometimes they are a source of aversion. . . . We strictly forbid that household goods be placed in the churches, unless by reason of hostile invasion, sudden fire, or other urgent reasons it should become necessary to store them there. . . . We command also that the aforesaid churches, vessels, corporals, and vestments be kept clean and bright. For it is absurd to tolerate in sacred things a filthiness that is unbecoming even in profane things (Canon 19).

These canons demonstrate that there was a clear lack of care for the liturgy: "It is absurd to tolerate in sacred things a filthiness that is unbecoming even profane things." An image emerges of a clergy with little concern for their own spiritual life or that of their flock, with little care for their churches, vestments, vessels, and likewise little care for the proper celebration of the Church's rituals. In this milieu, it shouldn't be surprising that the Council also states in Canon 20: "We decree that in all churches the chrism and the Eucharist be kept in properly protected places provided with locks and keys, that they may not be reached by rash and indiscreet persons and used for impious and blasphemous purposes." And for the faithful, we see the beginning of what will become the Easter Duty: ". . . receiving reverently at least at Easter the sacrament of the Eucharist" (Canon 21). Canon 27 reflected these issues in its call for better training of priests:

We strictly command that bishops . . . diligently prepare and instruct those to be elevated to the priesthood in the divine offices and in the proper administration of the sacraments of the Church. If in the future they presume to ordain ignorant and unformed men (a defect that can easily be discovered), we decree that both those ordaining and those ordained be subject to severe punishment. In the ordination of priests especially, it is better to have a few good ministers than many who are no good, for if the blind lead the blind both will fall into the pit (Mt. 15:14).

Canon 33 called upon the bishops to strongly promote these reforms in their churches: "Those conducting the visitation shall not seek their own interests, but those of Jesus Christ, devoting themselves to preaching, exhortation, correction, and reform, that they may bring back fruit that perishes not." Francis heeded this command and strongly promoted these reforms concerning the Eucharist, the Word of God, the dignity of the priesthood and the dignity of the celebration of sacred liturgy and the sacred vessels used during the celebration of liturgy.

Francis: Liturgical Reformer

The Council's Canon 21 stated "Let this salutary decree be published frequently in the churches, that no one may find in the plea of ignorance a shadow of excuse." Francis was in attendance for at least part of the Council, and both his writings and writings about him show that he took this call to heart and incorporated it into his mission in a way that constantly uplifted both the dignity of those who are ordained and the task to which they have been called.

It is stunning to see the frequency with which Francis strikes these themes in his writings. In his Second Letter to the Custodians Francis makes it clear that not only does he desire to spread the word about the Council's concerns, but he wants the rest of the Order to do the same. Francis exhorted the *custodes*:

I beg you, as much as I can, to give to bishops and other members of the clergy those letters treating of the most holy Body and Blood of our Lord. . . . Make many copies of the other letter I am sending you . . . and distribute them with great zeal to those to whom they should be given (LtCus2: 4-7).

Francis wrote letters to many groups: to the clergy, to custodians, to rulers of the people, to a minister, to the entire order, and to others. In them, he

repeatedly called for greater reverence of Jesus, of the Eucharist, of churches, God's Word and priests.

In the Letter to the Entire Order, care of the Eucharist was the first substantive issue Francis spoke of: "I also beg in the Lord all my brothers who are priests, or who will be, or who wish to be priests of the Most High that whenever they wish to celebrate Mass, being pure, they offer the true Sacrifice of the most holy Body and Blood of our Lord Jesus Christ with purity and reverence, with a holy and unblemished intention" (LtOrd 14-16). Francis was encouraging friar-priests to a higher holiness than apparently was evident at the time. He continued, "See your dignity, my priest brothers, and be holy because He is holy. As the Lord God has honored you above all others because of this ministry, for your part, love, revere and honor Him above all others It is a great misery and a miserable weakness that when you have Him present in this way, you are concerned with anything else in this whole world!" (LtOrd 23-25) It is also in this letter that Francis gave his great hymn to the Eucharistic celebration:

Let everyone be struck with fear,
Let the whole world tremble,
And let the heavens exult
When Christ, the Son of the living God,
Is present on the altar in the hands of a priest!
O wonderful loftiness and stupendous dignity!
O sublime humility!
O humble sublimity!
The Lord of the universe,
God and the Son of God
So humbles Himself
That for our salvation
He hides Himself
Under an ordinary piece of bread!
Brothers, look at the humility of God,
And pour out your hearts before Him!
Humble yourselves
That you may be exalted by Him!
Hold back nothing of yourselves for yourselves,
That He Who gives Himself totally to you
May receive you totally! (LtOrd 26-29)

Francis, in this Letter to the Entire Order, wrote that those who are involved in liturgical life must "also care for the vessels and other liturgical

objects that contain His holy words in order to impress on ourselves the sublimity of our Creator and our subjection to Him" (LtOrd 34). Speaking of pages on which the Word was written, he continued, "If they are not well kept or are carelessly thrown around in some place, let them gather them up and preserve them, inasmuch as it concerns them, honoring in the words the Lord who spoke them" (LtOrd 36). Similarly, Francis pulled together different liturgical formulations from the service of Good Friday and the feast of the Exaltation of the Cross and commanded the friars to pray the following prayer every time they entered or passed a church: "We adore You, Lord Jesus Christ, in all Your churches throughout the whole world and we bless You because by Your holy cross You have redeemed the world" (Test 5).

Perhaps Francis was so beloved in the Church because through his simple preaching and constant calling people to holiness he was able to begin to effect real reform in the church around the issues raised at the Council. Again, his Testament states: "Afterwards the Lord gave me, and gives me still, such faith in priests who live according to the rite of the holy Roman Church . . . and I desire to respect, love and honor them" (Test 6-7). This regard for the dignity of priests is deeply connected to the Eucharist, as Francis explained: "I act in this way because, in this world, I see nothing corporally of the most high Son of God except His most holy Body and Blood which they (priests) receive and they alone administer to others" (Test 10). Similarly, for the sacred vessels used at liturgy, he wrote, "I want to have these most holy mysteries honored and venerated above all things and I want to reserve them in precious places" (Test 11).

In his Letter to Clergy, Francis excoriated his brother clerics and exalted the dignity of liturgy:

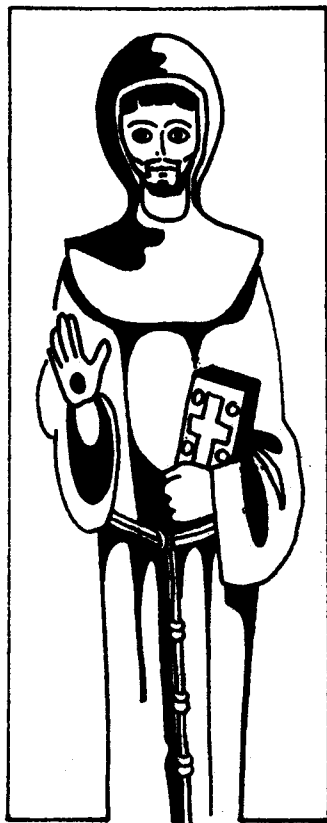
Let all those who administer such most holy mysteries . . . consider how very dirty are the chalices, corporals and altar-linens upon which his Body and Blood are sacrificed. It [the Eucharist] is placed and left in many dirty places, carried about unbecomingly, received unworthily, and administered to others without discernment. Even His written names and words are at times left to be trampled under foot. . . . Let us, therefore, amend our ways quickly. . . . Wherever the most holy Body and Blood of our Lord Jesus Christ has been illicitly placed and left, let it be moved from there, placed in a precious place and locked up. . . . Let those who make copies of this writing in order that it might be better observed, know they have been blessed by the Lord God (LtCl 4-15).

Francis clearly called for renewal with authority and asked clerics not only to elevate their own celebration of liturgy, but also to spread the word.

Francis did the same in his Letter to the Rulers of Nations and his Admonitions. It is clear that Francis addressed these conciliar concerns at every level: to all people, to all the members of the Franciscan Order, to the Minister General of the Order, to all secular rulers, to all the clergy. And these themes are not absent from the Rule that Francis wrote for the community. In both the Earlier Rule and the Later Rule Francis addresses the same themes for the brothers: the proper reverence for the Eucharist, for the Word of God, for a desire for good preaching, for a devout spirit of worship both at the Liturgy of the Hours and Liturgy of the Eucharist.

Writings About Francis

Francis' biographers were also aware of his passion in this regard. For example in his *Life of Francis*, St. Bonaventure mentioned the work of Francis in traveling far and wide, never missing an opportunity to spread greater devotion to liturgical celebrations. Bonaventure is not alone in noting Francis' devotion in this area. Thomas of Celano, in his second biography, *The Remembrance of the Desire of a Soul*, writes, "He frequently received Holy Communion" (2C 201). The Lateran Council had decreed the Easter duty of reception of Holy Communion at least once a year precisely because reception by the faithful was infrequent, if not non-existent. Francis, by example, led the way to greater reception of the Eucharist. Thomas of Celano goes on, "Francis wished at one time to send his brothers through the world with precious pyxes, so that wherever they should see the price of our redemption kept in an unbecoming manner, they should place it in the very best place. He wanted great reverence shown to the hands of priests, for to these has been given authority from God over the consecrated bread and wine" (2C 201). The *Legend of Perugia* also reports:



Blessed Francis had a great deal of respect and devotion for the Body of Christ. He wanted it written in the rule that in the provinces where they lived, the brothers were also to devote much care and regard for It, to exhort and encourage clerics and priests to reserve

the Body of Christ in a decent and fitting place and, if the clerics did not do so, to attend to it themselves (LP 80).

This source adds that Francis "likewise decided to send brothers into all the provinces with beautiful and good bread irons" (LP 80). Examples like these are plentiful in writings about Francis, showing that Francis made liturgical reform tangible, in word and in action, commanding that all who would listen should do these things.

St. Clare and her sisters also took up this mission, becoming devoted to the making of worthy altar linens, spreading the work of reform among all the members of the Franciscan family.

Call To Reform Today

These may seem like minor points to focus on as major actions of liturgical reform in light of our current era. Certainly the reforms of Trent or our contemporary reforms after the Second Vatican Council seem more in-depth and far-ranging, at the heart of liturgical theology and spirituality. But I would argue that, for their day, the liturgical canons of the Fourth Lateran Council were profound. Just as the decrees of the Second Vatican Council affected the celebration of liturgy on the core local level, so, too, Lateran IV made changes that would be immediately recognized by those in the congregation. The faithful would have noticed immediately the changes being effected in the lives of the clergy, the emphasis on liturgical dignity, the more frequent reception of Eucharist by a community that didn't usually partake of the Bread of life. In the midst of this, Francis, perhaps more than any other, took up this charge, made it a part of his preaching and ministry and was a crucial element in restoring the honor, sanctity and solemnity to the Church's liturgies and rituals.

These reforms are poignant today because the Church once again needs a renewal of the liturgy's dignity. We need another Francis to spearhead greater devotion to the Church's worship. More to the point, the sons and daughters of Francis today must take up this charge to hold high the sanctity of worship.

The complaints of the thirteenth century find echoes today. People aren't happy with the level of preaching—in fact, this is the most common complaint about Catholic celebrations. In too many places a spirit of liturgical minimalism leaves the celebration of the sacraments somehow empty on an emotive level. There are increasing calls for a greater focus on the Eucharist because people's understanding of and reverence toward the Eucharist have dwindled in the years since the Second Vatican Council. Too many people say, "I'm not being fed by liturgy." And yet where liturgy is vibrant and engaging and beautiful, the presence of God and the gift of grace are tangible. Celebrations are excit-

ing, worship succeeds in lifting the heart, mind and soul to God, and strengthens the faithful for the journey and for mission. The problem is not, as some claim, that we no longer pray in Latin or that priests face the people. The problem is that the rituals that we have are too often not done well, with the dignity and beauty that can (and should) be present in them. There is in too many places a basic failure to simply pray the liturgy of the Church with purpose, with care, with grace, with beauty.

This should be a continuing Franciscan mission. We need to be ones who lead first by the example of our own holy and pious experience of God's grace in sacred liturgy. We must be the ones who uphold the dignity of liturgy through our own liturgical practice, through our concern for inspiring preaching, through our own reverence for God's Word and for the Body and Blood of Jesus. We must be the ones who will show the sacredness of prayer in ways that can't help but invite people into the mystery that is God. Once we lead by example, then we must also spread the word. Our holy father Francis did this before us, and we must follow his lead.

Francis preached seemingly simple things—clean up the churches, use nice vessels and linens, be conscious of the presence of Christ's Body and Blood, hold dear the Words of God, recognize the dignity of the ministry of the priest. These simple things, however, had profound results. Today too, more than a need to rework or reorder our liturgies, our churches, the clergy and those involved in planning and implementing liturgy must be concerned with its sacred character and seek ways to emphasize the wonder and mystery of the moments of grace we celebrate. Perhaps there is no greater example to look toward for this type of liturgical renewal than the poor man of Assisi:

And whoever observes these things, let him be blessed in heaven with the blessing of the Most High Father, and on earth with the blessing of His Beloved Son with the Most Holy Spirit, the Paraclete, and all the powers of heaven and with all the saints And, as far as I can, I, little brother Francis, your servant, confirm for you, both within and without, this most holy blessing" (Test 40-41).

Endnotes

¹St. Bonaventure, "Life of St. Francis," 3:9, in *Francis of Assisi Early Documents*, vol. 1, eds. Regis J. Armstrong, O.F.M. Cap., J.A. Wayne Hellmann, O.F.M. Conv., William J. Short, O.F.M. (NY: New City Press, 1999).

²Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils, ed. Norman P. Tanner (Washington, DC: Georgetown University Press, 1990), canon 16. All canon cited in this article are based upon this text.

Minority: The Core of Poverty

Leonard Lehmann, O.F.M. Cap.

The Choice of a Name

Minority is an essential element of evangelical poverty, for it is impossible to be poor in spirit (see Mt. 3:5) without humility. To defend poverty in order to take pride in it or exalt ourselves would be contrary to minority, an original value that identifies the Franciscan movement. The two terms "poverty" and "humility," found so often in the writings of St. Francis, are expressed in minority. This gospel attitude means that we do not occupy the first places, we are not over others, and we do not impose ourselves on anyone. We are the servants of all, ever ready to do good, with no claim to recompense, thanks, honor, or glory. Although the term "minority" is not well known or understood outside Franciscan circles, it clearly touches the core of our life. Indeed, we call ourselves Friars Minor. The added term "Franciscan" or "Conventual" or "Capuchin" is secondary, seeing that Francis wanted his companions and followers to be called "lesser brothers."

According to the Legend of the Three Companions, the first converts to Francis's ideal presented themselves as "penitents originally from the city of Assisi" (L3C 37).¹ Later they chose the name "Poor Minors," but finally they changed it, this time definitively, to "Friars Minor" (*Fratres Minores*)-in the new edition of the *Early Documents* translated as "Lesser Brothers":

But the subject at hand is primarily the Order that he accepted and retained as much out of love as out of profession. What was that Order? He himself originally planted the Order of Lesser Brothers and on the occasion of its founding gave it this name. For when it was written in the Rule, "Let them be lesser . . ." at the uttering of this statement, at the same moment he said, "I want this fraternity to be called the Order of Lesser Brothers (*Ordo fratrum minorum*)" (1C 38).

Celano is not the only one who tells of Francis's explicit desire to call his group the Order of Friars Minor. We also have the interesting testimony of a man from outside the emerging Order, the chronicler Burchard of Ursberg

(d. 1230). He carefully situates the primitive Franciscan core group in its historical context, speaking of other pauperist movements that had arisen in central and northern Italy. He tells us that in 1210 he saw “some followers of the sect of the Poor of Lyon who were presenting themselves to the Apostolic See under the leadership of a certain Bernard, their master.” Their purpose was to ask Pope Innocent III to approve their way of life through a privilege. Burchard continues:

But during that audience the Lord Pope rebuked them for some of their superstitious practices. . . . Instead the Pope approved other religious who arose in their place and called themselves *Poor Minors*. On the one hand, they rejected all the aforementioned false and superstitious practices; on the other hand, they went about barefoot in both summer and winter. They accepted neither money nor anything else, only food and clothing when they were in extreme need and if someone offered it spontaneously. Later, reflecting that taking cover behind a name that is too modest can often lead to vainglory, and that, using the name of poverty as their shield, many who bear it fraudulently use it as an excuse for proud boasting in the sight of God, they preferred to call themselves *Friars Minor* instead of *Poor Minors*, and they were submissive in all things to the Apostolic See.²

Burchard, a Premonstratensian and a qualified chronicler, gives a good description of the characteristics of the new order. He also notes the danger of glorying in one’s own poverty. Francis repeatedly warns against this danger in his writings. Instead of “Poor Minors,” the name used at first, Francis chose the name “Friars Minor” to avoid the danger of a poverty that was proud, fanatical, and lacking in charity. This new formula would also serve to place the profession of poverty on two essential foundations: *fraternity* and *minority*.

Minority as a Gospel Value

Maiores – minores – minimi

It is now taken for granted that at the time of Francis there were in Assisi, as in many other cities, *maiores* and *minores*. The *maiores* were the feudal lords, also called *boni homines*, “good people;” the *minores* were representatives of the people who were trying to gain their freedom from feudal service. When the people of Assisi attacked the stronghold (*Rocca Maggiore*) in 1198 and destroyed it completely, the feudal lords—among whom were Clare’s relatives—had to flee to Perugia. This caused an increase in the tension that had always existed between the two cities. It reached its climax in the battle of Collestrada in 1202, in which Francis participated and was taken prisoner. Gradually the nobles

returned to Assisi and at a certain point, in 1203 signed a peace treaty (*Carta pacis*) with the representatives of the people to provide a reinforcement in the face of external threats. This accord must not have been very successful, since in 1210 the *maiores* and *minores* had to sign a new treaty, the *Carta franchitatis*, the “Charter of freedom.” In it the two social groups that were struggling for power agreed to do away with feudal service and to build the *commune* together.

It was not, therefore, a rebellion of the little people against the nobles and the rich. The *minores* were also owners, even though less powerful; as such they aspired, through the new means of money and labor, to a higher social standing similar to that of the *maiores*.

There was also a third class not mentioned in the two charters (*carte*). The Franciscan sources speak about “people considered of little value and looked down upon, the poor and the powerless, the sick and the lepers and the beggars by the wayside” (ER 9:2). It is these with whom the Friars Minor wish to stand; not with the *minores* of the city who represented the active political force, but with the people of the countryside, the poor and poverty-stricken of the city, and the lepers abandoned on the plain below Assisi. We might call these non-citizens, with neither a voice nor access to the freedom that came from work; this kind of people are the *minimi*, the last ones.

Servants in order to serve . . .

While admitting that socio-political realities exercised a certain influence on the choice of the name of Lesser Brothers (Friars Minor), it must be noted that for Francis this was not a choice of class (for then he would have been associated with the party of the *minores*, who were powerful!). It was a gospel choice! His name was motivated by the Bible, as is clear from the various passages found in his writings. Looking at the Earlier Rule (the *Regula non bullata*), which preserves the original inspiration and fundamental intuitions, we see that minority is motivated by the Gospel and based on it.

A key and revealing text was Mt. 20: 20-28 (see also Lk. 22: 24-27). Jesus responds to Zebedee’s sons by declaring the overthrow of the canons of human judgment:

You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and the great ones make their authority over them felt. But it shall not be so among you. Rather, whoever wishes to be great among you shall be your servant (Mt. 20: 25-26).

This gospel text is repeated in chapter five of the Earlier Rule, which deals with relationships among the brothers, especially among those whom we incor-

rectly call “superiors” and “subjects.” Jesus’ description of himself in the conclusion of the passage has a profound repercussion in the writings of Francis: “The Son of Man did not come to be served but to serve and to give his life . . .” (Mt. 20:28).

This principle is applied to the ministers in order that they might exercise their office in a spirit of service. But an attitude of service does not exclude a heavy responsibility for the salvation of souls. The Rule links minority with responsibility when it says:

Let the ministers and servants remember what the Lord says: I have not come to be served but to serve; and because the care of the brothers’ souls has been entrusted to them, if anything is lost on account of their fault or bad example, they will have to *render an account* before the Lord Jesus Christ *on the day of judgment* (ER 4:6).

Another recurrent saying is the golden rule, expressed both positively and negatively: “Do to others whatever you would have them do to you” (Mt. 7:12) and “Do not do to another what you would not have done to you” (ER 4:4).

All the provisions in the “fraternity statute,” as Chapters 4-11 of the Earlier Rule may be described, speak of fraternal service, love for the sick, humility, submission. These attitudes are suggested by the love that makes us regard others as higher and more worthy, neither flattering them nor tearing them down. It is the behavior of one who wishes to imitate the poor and humble Christ: renunciation of the “I” after renunciation of the “mine.” The minority the Rule demands of the lesser brothers is condensed and summarized in the twelfth Admonition:

A servant of God can be known to have the Spirit of the Lord in this way: if, when the Lord performs some good thing through him, his flesh does not therefore exalt itself because it is always opposed to every good. Instead he regards himself the more worthless and esteems himself less than all the others (Adm 12).

... *after the example of Jesus who is among us as the one who serves* (Lk. 22:27)

The figure of Jesus the servant is the theological basis of minority as chosen by Francis. Although he was in a position to become great, Francis chose instead the way of littleness in order to answer the call of Jesus and bear free witness to the mystery of the Kingdom. His meditation is always filled with the image of God who humbled himself by becoming one of us (Bethlehem-Greccio) and by accepting the cross (Golgotha-LaVerna), humbling himself

in the washing of the feet (Jn. 13) and in his daily coming “upon the altar in the hands of the priest” (Adm 1:18).

Francis’s writings are full of recollections of the Gospel of minority and service. It is impossible to mention them all here. However, for individual and community reflection we might turn to the psalms of the Servant of Yahweh (Pss. 22; 56; 68; 70; 85-87 etc.) used by Francis in his Office of the Passion (Pss. 1-7); to St. Paul’s splendid hymn on the kenosis of God (Phil. 2:5-11); to the teachings of Jesus (Mt. 20:26-28; Mt. 25:4; Mk. 9:35-37; Lk. 12:32 and 22:26); and especially his example in washing the feet of his apostles (in Jn. 13:1-17). These passages constitute the framework of the Rule and Life of the Friars Minor.

Minority before God

Poverty-minority is primarily a way of situating ourselves before God, the Most High Lord to whom belongs all good. It is no accident that Francis begins his prayers with the address: “Most High, glorious God, enlighten the darkness of my heart . . .” (PrCr). Exaltation of God by assuming our proper place before him characterizes all Francis’s prayers, from the first to the last:

Most High, all-powerful good Lord,
Yours are the praises, the glory, the honor, and all blessing,
To you alone, Most High, do they belong,
and no one is worthy to mention your name
(CtC 1-2).

Between God and us there is an impassible abyss on our side. The grace of God and his humility have crossed the abyss and drawn us. This view of God and ourselves is clearly evident in the great Chapter 23 of the Earlier Rule, which has been called a Franciscan preface, because the refrain, “We thank you” recurs five times. The chapter begins with the invocation, “All-powerful, most holy, most high and supreme God,” and goes on to sing the history of salvation from creation to the parousia. The first strophe of the preface reads:

All-powerful, most holy, most high and supreme God, holy and just Father, Lord, King of heaven and earth we thank you for yourself for by your holy will and by your only Son with the Holy Spirit you have created all things spiritual and corporal and, after making us in your own image and likeness, you placed us in paradise. Through our own fault we fell (ER 23:1-2).

In the fifth strophe Francis continues:

Because all of us, wretches and sinners, are not worthy to pronounce your name, we humbly ask our Lord Jesus Christ, your beloved Son . . . to give you thanks, for everything as it pleases you and him, who always satisfies you in everything, through whom you have done so much for us. Alleluia! (ER 23:5).

Because of our misery, frailty and corruptibility, our sin and our rebellion, we cannot help but feel humble (close to the *humus*, the earth), transitory, lesser. By recognizing our situation, by accepting the fact that we are in need of redemption, the door to salvation is opened. But if we are closed in our pride and self-sufficiency, if we do not accept the fact that we are lesser and poor before God, we risk losing the eternal salvations won for us by Christ.

Minority, then, is part of being a creature. And it seems that the holier we are, the more we feel sinful, little, lesser. That was certainly the case with Francis and with many of our canonized brothers and sisters.

Francis - Lesser Servant

Francis adopted the attitude of a servant as the most suitable way to follow Christ. He even describes himself in his writings as "little brother Francis, your servant" (Test 41). His life was a singular example of minority, as is shown by many episodes recounted in the biographies. Instead of these, I would prefer to offer some passages from his letters. They show, in all their authenticity, how he internalized the humble life of Jesus without falling into self-hatred.

In the Letter to the Faithful he presents himself as "the servant of all," who wishes "to serve all" (v. 2). He ends his long letter with this insistent statement:

I, brother Francis, your lesser servant, beg and implore you in the love that is God, and with a wish to kiss your feet, to receive, to put into practice, and to observe, as you should, these words and the others of our Lord Jesus Christ with humility and love (2 LtF 87)

Undaunted and persuaded of a universal mission, he writes "to all mayors and consuls, magistrates and rulers throughout the world." The sender of this political address is the humble "Brother Francis, your little and looked-down-upon servant in the Lord God, who wishes all of you health and peace" (LtR 1).

In his letters to the friars, we notice that Francis never calls them servants but always brothers. Among brothers there can be no minors, for this would

to the very identity of the fraternal group. But Francis describes himself as a servant in relation to God and to his brothers. In his Letter to the Custodians Francis introduces himself as "your servant and little one in the Lord God" (LtCus1:1). In the long and last Letter to the Entire Order he introduces himself as "Brother Francis, a worthless and weak man, your very little servant," and takes his leave as "a useless man and an unworthy creature of the Lord God" (LtOrd 3:4). When he calls the brothers to something that is especially dear to his heart, he likes to place himself "at the feet" of all. Thus at the end of the Rule:

And, kissing their feet, I implore everyone to love, keep, and treasure them [the things written in the Rule] greatly (ER 24: 3).

Francis's asceticism is not one of self-sufficiency or extremism. He is not a fanatic. He acknowledges that he is limited, weak, little, at the mercy of his moods. It is a humble yet optimistic spirituality; it is generous because, despite the reality of its own limits, it is able to see the other reality of the riches and goodness of God. Nothing is more eloquent in this regard than his *confiteor* in the middle of his letter to all the friars, "from first to the last," and consequently also to us today, no matter if in India or in Italy:

I have offended the Lord in many ways by my serious faults especially in not observing the Rule that I have promised him and in not saying the Office as the Rule prescribes either out of negligence or by reason of my weakness or because I am ignorant and stupid (LtOrd 39).

Minority "*ad intra*"

Following the command of Jesus that none of his disciples should lord it over the others, but that "whoever wishes to be great among you shall be your servant" (Mt. 20:27), Francis always refers to those responsible for his fraternity as "ministers and servants" (ER 4:6; 5:3, 7, 11). He says: "Do not call yourselves masters, you have but one Master in heaven" (ER 22:35). We notice that minority even enters into the name of the offices: instead of *mag-ister* Francis chooses *min-ister*, the one who usually serves the greater, the master. By combining the two synonyms "minister and servant" he wishes to prevent the title "minister" from becoming a mere formality, thus losing all its expressiveness or control in this instance, especially power. Francis distinguishes between "ministers and servants" and brothers who are "subject to the ministers and servants" (ER 5:3), but "through the charity of the Spirit, all should serve."

Overturning the ideas that dominated the political and religious (Benedictine) world, the Rule lays down that "no one is to be called prior, but

let everyone in general be called a lesser brother. Let one wash the feet of the other" (Jn. 13:14; ER 6:3). This inner attitude of minority is reasserted in the fourth Admonition, in which (not accidentally) the two gospel passages Matthew 20:28 and John 13:14 occur:

"I did not come to be served, but to serve," says the Lord. Let those who are placed over others boast about that position as much as they would if they were assigned the duty of washing the feet of their brothers. And if they are more upset at having their place over others taken away from them than at losing their position at their feet, the more they store up a *money bag* to the peril of their soul (Adm 4).

Other profound descriptions of Franciscan minority are provided by the Franciscan Beatitudes, that is, those Admonitions that begin with the words, "Blessed is the servant who . . ." (Adm 17-28). The most eloquent is that on the humble servant of God:

Blessed is the servant who does not consider himself any better when he is praised and exalted by people than when he is considered worthless, simple and despised, for what a person is before God that he is and no more.

Woe to that religious who has been placed in a high position by others and does not want to come down by his own will.

Blessed is that servant who is not placed in a high position by his own will and always desires to be under the feet of others (Adm 19).

Minority "*ad extra*"

To serve and to work in dependence on others . . .

Interior humility and mutual service within the fraternity is expressed "*ad extra*" in specific attitudes. Chapter seven of the *Earlier Rule* is relevant in this regard:

None of the brothers may be treasurers or overseers in any of those places where they may be staying to serve or work among others. They may not be in charge in the houses in which they serve; nor may they accept any office which would generate scandal or be harmful to their souls. Let them, instead, be the lesser ones and be subject to all in the same house (ER 7:1-2).

This chapter sheds light on the beginnings of the Order, when the brothers were accustomed to working among the people, outside their own dwell-

ings. Later, such an arrangement was no longer understood, and copyists changed some of the readings, adapting them to developments in the Order: for example, the *cancellarius* or clerk in public offices becomes the *cellarius* who cleans the friary cells. The text of the Earlier Rule has its own very concrete *Sitz im Leben*. Different variants cannot be understood and properly evaluated except in light of the primitive history of the Order, on the one hand, but also, on the other hand, in light of its later history. Thus the position of the Friars Minor in society was well defined. By their own free choice they accepted only positions of work in the service of others, not as overseers but as subjects. The more the brothers were seen as capable and honest workers, the more they would yield to the temptation to accept positions as overseers and administrators. They would become organizers of good works, promoters of charitable associations (e.g. the *Montes pietatis*, a kind of co-operative bank), contractors who employed other people dependent on them. Here we note how the option for minority involves a choice of social position. For Francis, the motives for being minor were Christological, but their application was sociological.

Minority was and is not only an interior virtue; it is a social status, the refusal to accept higher positions, the renunciation of a career, the rejection of being a manager. Here lies the greatest challenge for us today. The kind of work we do, our position in society, and the means we use ought to coincide with our being lesser brothers.

The social component of the gospel vocation to minority is also very clear from a well-known sentence in the Earlier Rule. But we must cite it with the motivation that precedes it, which links the evangelical-theological and social motives:

Let all the brothers strive to follow the humility and poverty of our Lord Jesus Christ and remember that we should have nothing else in the whole world except, as the Apostle says: having food and clothing, we are content with these (cf. 1 Tim 6:8).

They must rejoice when they live among people considered of little value and looked down upon, among the poor and the powerless, the sick and the lepers, and the beggars by the wayside (ER 9:1-2).

It is a choice of preference for those who are socially uprooted and condemned to remain on the margins of society: victims of famine, sickness, injustice. The Rule and Constitutions (60:5-6) ask us to take a clear stand in favor of the lower social classes, without closing ourselves to the upper classes or being opposed to them. "Sincerely choosing the last place, we are called by vocation to find Jesus Christ in the total emptying of his Incarnation and of his Passion. Consistent with Franciscan minority, this choice opens us to be neighbors to all in a spirit of fraternity and joy" (V PCO 36c).

Aid to the Clergy

The choice of minority involves assuming a position within the Church. Francis was not opposed to the fact that priests were entering the fraternity, but he himself remained a deacon. Out of humility he refused to be ordained a priest. On his deathbed he reasserted his firm intention to be always subject to Catholic priests, even if they persecuted him:

If I had as much wisdom as Solomon and found impoverished priests of this world, I would not preach in their parishes against their will. I desire to respect, love and honor them and all others as my lords (Test 7-9).

As long as the preaching of friars consisted of exhortations to penance (*laus et exhortatio*), it was not incompatible with the lifestyle of minority. But once the fraternity started to move in the direction of a permanent and official apostolate, the office of preaching (*praedicatio*) became a problem for Francis. He warned against appropriating the office of preaching received from the minister general (ER 9:3), and he admonished the brothers not to change it into a personal right they were no longer willing to renounce (ER 17:4; Adm. 19). The other side of the problem of preachers was their tendency to become autonomous in the apostolate, obtaining privileges from the Roman curia so as to be able to exercise the apostolate with greater freedom, even to the point of building their own churches (see Test 28-29). Even though it might lend apostolic distinction to the Order, the race to exemption, by now begun, was a danger to the fraternity's attitude of minority. Francis, as his Testament proves, wished to submit unconditionally to the immediate and concrete church authorities—priests and bishops—no matter how much they restricted his freedom. He used to say to the brothers:

We have been sent to help the clergy toward the salvation of souls. . . and it can be better obtained by peace with clerics than by disagreements with them. . . . Therefore, be subject to prelates, so that, in so far as you can help it, no jealousy will spring up. If you will be sons of peace, you will win the clergy and the people for the Lord, and the Lord judges this more acceptable than to win the people but scandalize the clergy (2C 146).³

Submissive to all . . .

In his Testament Francis recalls this essential rule of minorite life: "We were simple and subject to all" (Test 19). Although there were some clerics and

educated people in the first fraternity, Francis says of himself and the others that they were unlettered (*idiotae*). This means that the humble following of Jesus had led them to renounce their learning as a means of work or apostolate, insofar as the latter presupposed a certain level of prestige and power. In an atmosphere where knowledge and learning were concentrated in the monasteries and cathedrals, the Friars Minor preferred to use the lower and more popular culture to communicate their experience of the gospel.

To be a *minor* is a status that must not be betrayed even among non-Christians. In fact, it is the first duty of those who by divine inspiration go among non-Christians:

Let them not engage in arguments or disputes but be subject to every human creature for God's sake and acknowledge that they are Christians (ER 16:6).

Francis sets no limits on who may be his brother or sister; his true self-expropriation makes him submissive to all. In his Salutation of the Virtues he broadens and radicalizes the concept of subjection, saying that in holy obedience the true Friar Minor

is subject and submissive to everyone in the world, not only to people but to every beast and wild animal as well that they may do whatever they want with him insofar as it has been given to them from above by the Lord (SalV 14).

Here we reach the height of minority, whose ultimate limit is the gift of oneself in death. Those who give themselves completely to God are ready to suffer martyrdom not only at the hands of others, but even if inflicted by beasts and wild animals through the circumstances of life. Francis sees martyrdom as the proof of minority. This is illustrated by the fact that when he heard the news of the martyrdom of the first brothers who had gone to Morocco, he joyfully exclaimed:

"Now I can truly say that I have five Friars Minor!" But it is significant that he destroyed the first account of their martyrdom so that it would not be a source of vainglory for the brothers.³

These examples make it clear that submission also means readiness to expose oneself to failure, persecution, martyrdom. Under no condition must the Friars Minor have recourse to letters or protection or recommendation, nor

to apostolic privileges with which to disarm the bishops, even under pretext of greater service to the people of God (see Test 25-26).

More than anything else, Francis sees faithful submission "to the prelates and all clerics of holy mother Church" (Testament of Siena, left out in ED I) as the guarantee of minority. He wishes the Rule approved by Pope Honorius III to be observed

so that, being always submissive and subject at the feet of the same Holy Church and steadfast in the Catholic faith, we may observe poverty, humility and the Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ as we have firmly promised (LR 12:4).

But submission to the Church does not mean yielding to every wish of the hierarchy. To Cardinal Hugolino, who wanted to use the Friars Minor as bishops, Francis replied:

Lord, my brothers are called "lesser" (*minores*) precisely so they will not presume to become "greater" (*maiores*). They have been called this to teach them to stay down to earth, and to follow the footsteps of the humble Christ, which in the end will exalt them above others in the sight of the saints. If you want them to bear fruit in the Church of God, keep them in the status in which they were called, and hold them to it. Bring them back down to ground level even against their will. And so I beg you, Father, never allow them to rise to become prelates, otherwise they will just be prouder because they are poorer, and treat the others arrogantly (2C 148).

Conclusion

Just as the gospels do not speak of poverty even once but mention the poor ninety-five times, so Francis in his writings never speaks of *minoritas* but mentions the *minores* nine times. It is not a question of an abstract ideal for which to strive, but of concrete ways to express our following of Christ, who, although he was rich, became poor.

To place oneself at the service of others is a free choice, a mission, a charism. It demands a solid inner identity rooted in the person of Christ, since in our society minority is not a value but a gospel challenge. That is why only faith and love can give a liberating meaning to minority, which is so hard to understand and which we must live and renew in all our relationships: familial, fraternal, professional and social.

In our form of life minority must be practiced more or less on two fronts: to be itinerant in the apostolate or in seeking work means to depend on the hospitality of others and to be submissive to them; to extend welcome and hospitality in our friaries (houses of prayer) and in our churches (*i.e.* confessions) and to assist the marginalized (soup kitchens, caring for the handicapped) means to place ourselves at the service of others. Thus minority has many applications and nuances. Like the yeast that permeates the dough, minority is the note or mark that characterizes the being and activity of the lesser brother, and his poverty as well.

Endnotes

¹*Francis of Assisi Early Documents*, 3 vols. Regis J. Armstrong, O.F.M. Cap., J.A. Wayne Hellman, O.F.M. Conv., and William J. Short, O.F.M., eds. (NY: New City Press, 1999-2001). All citations from the writings of St. Francis are taken from these volumes.

²See *Testimonia minora*, 17-18; cf. the Italian *Fonti Francescane*, pp. 2244-46.

³A sincere return to Francis led the Capuchins to be once again subject to the bishops, renouncing their exemption (Constitutions of 1536, n. 7-8). This lasted only until the Constitutions of 1552, when the paragraph about renunciation of exemption was suppressed.

⁴See Jordan of Giano, *Chronicle of the Arrival of the Friars in Germany*, nos. 7-8.

About Our Contributors

Roger Hall, O.F.M. is a Friar Minor of the Immaculate Conception Province in the U.S. He currently is a theology student at the Pontifical College of St. Bede, in Rome. This is his first appearance in *The Cord*.

Thomas Kulbicki, O.F.M. Conv., is a member of the Conventional province of St. Anthony of Padua. He currently serves as the Dean of the School of Theology and Associate Professor of Church History at St. Mary's Seminary and University in Baltimore, MD. He was chair of the commission that drafted the article which appears in this issue.

Leonard Lehmann, O.F.M. Cap., is the editor of the *Collectanea Franciscana*, published in Rome. He also serves as a faculty member of the Institute of Franciscan Spirituality at the Pontifical Atheneum Antonianum.

Pietro Maranesi, O.F.M. Cap. is a Capuchin friar from the province of the Marches in Italy. Pietro enjoyed a close personal friendship with Bob Stewart, developed from the time Bob stayed with the Capuchin Friars at the Historical Institute as he researched and wrote his own dissertation.

Tom Washburn, O.F.M. is a friar of the Immaculate Conception province. He is trained as a liturgist and serves on the Liturgical Commission for the diocese of Manchester. Tom also serves in youth ministry at St. Thomas Aquinas parish in Derry, New Hampshire.

Believe

Roger Hall, O.F.M.

Great in kindness
Constant care
Ever present
I Am
Here
Burning with desire
So much so, afire
To light the night of your darkness
May you see and believe.
In your believing
Come to be
as
I Am
In love with you
In love with all
This is a very great love in deed
Constant in caring
Never sparing
Life in mercy and charity
That you might come to see
And in your seeing
Come to believe.

A Reflection on Making Peace with Cancer: A Franciscan Journey

Pietro Maranesi, O.F.M. Cap.

One remains disconcerted by the simple and serene account that the Friar Minor Robert Stewart, to his friends Bob, gives in this book, an account of his final years of living before "Brother Cancer" introduced him to Sister Death in September, 2001. And his words have much more strength and truth for those who had the good fortune of sharing long and intense years of friendship with him.

How were you able to make peace with cancer Bob? You were so full of life, a successful teacher of theology at St. Bonaventure University in New York, endowed by nature with an athletic body, with a joyful nature and so full of enthusiasm for life. How were you able to accept in faith and peace the unexpected and devastating intrusion of the tumor that first appeared in 1996, and that within five years obliged you to undergo three serious and painful surgeries? How did you arrive at the point of handing yourself over to a death that, from the beginning, you knew was inevitable? Finding a response to questions like these, raised by a friend, caused Bob, about a year before his death, to write these pages.

The brief text is not an autobiography, but a turning back to his own story into order to recount it to his friend in bits and pieces and at times out of sequence, in order to retrace the central moments of his last years, signed as they were by sickness, and through this to express his new and profound experience of God and his love. Bob tells his story to his friend, helped by a central figure in both his Christian and human existence: Francis of Assisi. Even though he did his doctoral dissertation on one aspect of the life of the *Poverello* (*De illis qui faciunt poenitentiam: The Rule of the Secular Franciscans*), teaching in the Franciscan Institute of St. Bonaventure University before joining the faculty of Theology, and even though he knew Assisi well from his enthusiastic visits every summer-despite all this, it was only through his sickness that he fully discovered the figure of Francis as the point of reference in order to understand himself and what God was doing with the tumor. The seven chapters of

his text are each introduced by passages taken from the Major Legend of Bonaventure, in which, retracing the principal steps of the life of Francis, Bob comprehends his existence and his sickness as a journey to the Lord, or better, like the process of an artist commissioned to depict his design not on a canvas, but in his body. And so in seven chapters Bob describes his human journey like the progress of an artist who begins with a formative period, that of an apprentice his youth up to adulthood, who encounters masters as he encounters significant persons in his life and arrives at the choice of religious life and only truly begins his work as an artist with the arrival of cancer. All the rest of his life had been a preparation for that moment, compressed in a few years, during which he had to sketch out the design to paint when the tumor presented itself, and having to embrace it as Francis embraced the leper, needing to choose the colors of humility and joy so as to paint the new image that God wanted to impress on him like Francis on LaVerna, to the point of the transformation of the image itself. At the end, he ceded absolute space to God's artistry and accepted the fact that the artistic image he began would not be completed until his final meeting with God beyond death.

To repeat, his text is not an autobiography—he does not give details (mentioning only those which refer to Francis and the events of his life that Bob blended with his own), nor precise chronological references that would help the reader locate the stages of his existence and of his sickness. He does not want so much to recount an event—the facts relative to a sickness—as much as he



wants to recount an experience and the feelings that emerged from his encounter with "Brother Cancer."

These are pages full of light and serenity, full of life and faith, full of a humanity transformed by the love of God. An expression returns frequently in these pages, synthesizing well this Franciscan climate of suffering and dying in peace and reconciliation: "I am very blessed." Even though destroying a part of his body, the irruption of cancer in his life gave him a fuller and deeper share of existence, expressed in the intimacy of many brothers and above all

with God. Accepted and seen with the eyes of faith, the cancer was transformed by Bob into a brother who, with gentleness and patience, led him to a new vision of himself, of life, and of God; and to a richness and depth of experience that he did not want to lose. In this context there are discomfiting and moving pages dedicated to the possibility of a miracle; there are others on the relationship of God to his suffering, where there emerges with total clarity his Christian vision of life in which God is not the great insurer or magician that resolves problems with a magic wand, but the loving Father impotent in the face of the suffering of his son. There are words that simultaneously recall the reader to an authentic Christian and Franciscan vision of existence and away from one often disguised by an infantile and miracle-dependent faith. Reading Bob's gift of these pages will surely help the reader to hear the exhortation of Francis that constituted for Bob a constant point of reference in the last years of his life: "I have done my part, may the Lord teach you what is yours to do." Everyone has a part in the great story of the love of God, a particular design to realize, and everyone must find colors to give it life. For Bob this part was shown to him by brother cancer; he accepted it with serenity and joy:

I see more clearly now what is mine to do—not to finish these pages, but to complete my painting without canvas. My part involves walking with Brother Cancer, living what he has taught me, following faithfully in the footprints of our Lord Jesus Christ, admitting my sinfulness and weakness, seeking to love and to serve, becoming vulnerable before my God, living and loving, painting my life until that final brush stroke, living even my death so that I may welcome the sister who beckons me, not to death but to the fullness of life.

+++++

Editor's Note: This article was originally submitted as a book review. We decided, however, to publish it as a memorial in the issue which marks the first anniversary of Bob's Stewart's death. Therefore, all chapter and page number references have been removed. The art piece is an adaptation of the illustration by Attilio Razzolini, found in *I Fioretti di S. Francesco* (Florence: Casa Editrice S. Lapi, 1908), 259.



THE FRANCISCAN WAY

The Franciscan Way is an innovative adult education program that concentrates on the history, spirituality, and theology of Sts. Francis and Clare of Assisi. We hope you will join us for our new Winter programs.

December 6-12, 2002

Advent Retreat "Bringing Forth Christ"

André Cirino, O.F.M., author, contemporary Franciscan itinerant preacher, *Franciscan Pilgrimage Program* guide, and lecturer present the theme of the retreat, "Spiritual Motherhood," by inviting us to discover how we could spiritually conceive the Son of God, give birth to him, name him, seek and adore him with the Magi and family, and finally, present him to God in the Temple.

January 19-22, 2003

POVERTY AND JOY -THE FRANCISCAN TRADITION

Bill Short, O.F.M., author of *The Franciscans' Poverty and Joy*, *Joe Schwab, O.F.M.*, Executive Director of the *Franciscan Renewal Center* and *Ramona Miller, O.S.F.*, Director of *Spiritual Formation at the Franciscan School of Theology, Berkeley*, will discuss how Francis and Clare of Assisi discovered poverty, chosen for the sake of love, as the key to joy and freedom in following Christ. They will explore what it means for these saints and for us to live "without anything as my own." How does such a way of living reflect the God who is All Good? What is the connection between generosity and asceticism? How can Francis speak of God's poverty?

Come Retreat With Us...



THE FRANCISCAN RENEWAL CENTER

5802 E. Lincoln Dr., Scottsdale, AZ 85253

Toll free: 1-800-356-3247 E-mail: Casa@TheCasa.org

Call (480) 948-7460 for information/reservations



THE 40 DAY FRANCISCAN HERMITAGE RETREAT

2002

NOVEMBER 9-DECEMBER 22

2003

MARCH 1-APRIL 11 JUNE 14-JULY 25

NOVEMBER 8-DECEMBER 19

2004

FEBRUARY 28-APRIL 8

NOVEMBER 13-DECEMBER 23

The **PORTIUNCOLA Center for Prayer**, in collaboration with **Mary Elizabeth Imler, osf**, is pleased to add additional opportunities to experience the uniquely Franciscan way of being with God in solitude and in community.

Using **Mary Elizabeth's** text, **A Franciscan Solitude Experience: The Pilgrim's Journal**, this retreat is based on and uses selections from the Third Order Rule, the writings of Francis and Clare, and readings from our rich Franciscan heritage. This experience is formatted in a way faithful to that of the Rule for Hermitages, providing a time and way for solitude as modeled by Francis, in his imitation of the 40 days Jesus spent in the wilderness.

Participants are invited into the freedom to simply be, using the journal as a guide, with a theme reflection every ten days and opportunities to be accompanied by a spiritual director as one wishes.

Hermitages and single rooms available on a first-come basis. We are located on 50 acres of trees and fields, bordered by centuries-old Hickory Creek. For more information and brochure packet, contact **Kathleen Anne Copp, osf** (815)-464-3850 Email SKACOPP@aol.com Fax (815)-469-4880

Portiuncula Center for Prayer

9263 W. St. Francis Rd. Frankfort, IL 60423-8330

A Franciscan Place of Peace

INSTITUTE FOR
CONTEMPORARY
FRANCISCAN LIFE

A distance learning program
responding to the desire of Secular Franciscans
to learn more about their unique identity as Franciscans
in the contemporary world.

offered through:



OFFICE OF CONTINUING EDUCATION

currently offering:

- FRAN 201 Franciscan Gospel Living in the Contemporary World
FRAN 202 The Franciscans: A Family History
FRAN 204 Franciscan Spirituality
FRAN 400 Franciscan Servant Leadership

Currently in preparation:

Clare of Assisi: Her Life and Writings
The Franciscan Sources

proposed courses include:

Christian and Franciscan Tradition
Writings of Francis of Assisi
Franciscan Ministry: Challenge and Response
Integrative Project

For more information contact:

Saint Francis University Office of Continuing Education
Loretto, PA 15940-0600 ~ phone: (814) 472-3219 ~ e-mail: ICFL@francis.edu

Little Portion Retreat & Training Center

171 Hummingbird Lane Eureka Springs AR 72632

(479) 253-7379

www.JohnMichaelTalbot.com

e-mail: retreats@LittlePortion.org

Atop an Ozark Mountain where the view is endless and seasons parade their colors across earth and sky, a place of peace, renewal and refreshment awaits. Owned and operated by the Brothers and Sisters of Charity, the Little Portion Retreat and Training Center provides a place of "returning and rest" for Christians of all denominations.

Make a private pilgrimage in solitude and silence, or attend one of the challenging retreats offered by the Center, or even be part of a group renting the Center for your own spiritual program.

2002 RETREATS

- March 15-17th Come to the Quiet-Christian Meditation
Director: John Michael Talbot
- April 12-14th Charismatic Retreat *Director: Fr. Jim Mancini*
April 26-28th The Joy of Music Ministry *Director: John Michael Talbot*
May 3-5th and The Lessons of St. Francis
August 16-18th *Director: John Michael Talbot*
May 24-16th The Jewish Roots of Catholicism
Director: Bob Fishman
- June 7-9th Troubadour for the Lord *Director: John Michael Talbot*
June 20-23rd Simple Living Retreat
Director: John Michael Talbot and community
- June 28th-30th The Power of His Presence
Director: Monsignor Frank E. Chiodo
- July 12-14th Catholic, Evangelical and Eucharistic
Director: Dr. Scott Hahn
- July 19-21st Mary, Our Jewish Mother *Director: Bob Fishman*
August 26-28th Togetherness: A Weekend for Married Couples
Director: Fr. Martin Wolter, OFM
- August 9-11th Healing the Wounds of Life *Director: Tonti Curtis*
August 23-25th Christ and the Creative Process
Director: Michael Card
- Sept. 6-8th Are You Ready for A Miracle?
Director: Sr. Francis Clare, SSND
- Sept 27-29th Gospel Life in the Domestic Church
Director: Fr. Bob Dombrowski
- October 11-13th Men's Charismatic Retreat *Director: Dr. Dennis Holt*
October 18-20th St. Therese of Lisieux *Director: Maureen O'Riordan*

Junípero Serra Retreat

A Franciscan Renewal Center

Malibu, California

Established in 1942 by the Franciscan Friars of California, Serra Retreat is nestled between the ocean and the mountains in serene Malibu, conveniently accessible from LAX and Burbank airports.

- Private retreats
- Married couples
- Recovery retreats
- Days of Recollection
- Specialized retreats
- High school and college groups
- Women's and men's weekends
- Conferences

With a maximum occupancy of 100 guests, Serra Retreat provides a chapel with a panoramic view, large and small conference rooms, a fully staffed dining room, and grounds for walking and silent reflection.

Fr. Warren Rouse, OFM
Director

Fr. Michael Doherty, OFM
Retreat Master

Sr. Susan Blomstad, OSF
Retreat Team

For further information:



Serra Retreat
A Franciscan Retreat Center

Serra Retreat
3401 Serra Road
Malibu, CA 90265
Ph: 310-456-6631 (Reservations)
Fax: 310-456-9417
srmalibu@aol.com
www: sbfranciscans.org or
globalretreats.com

Franciscan Spiritual Center

609 S. Convent Road
Aston PA 19014
www.fscaston.org

Fall / Winter Programs

Franciscan Solitude Experience at Clare House

October 11-14, 2002 and February 14-17, 2003

Presenter: Helen Budzik OSF and Jean Ustasiewski OSF

Registration Deadline: 2 weeks before experience \$125 (\$30 deposit)

Build With Living Stones October 25-27, 2002

Presenter: Anthony Carrozzo OFM

Registration Deadline: October 11, 2002 \$140 (\$30 deposit)

Patrons and Protectors: Saints As Companions on the Journey

November 1-3, 2002

Presenter: Michael O'Neill McGrath OSFS

Registration Deadline: October 18, 2002 \$140 (\$30 deposit)

Meeting the Sacred in Everyday Living November 22-24, 2002

Presenter: Lynn Patrice Lavin OSF

Registration Deadline: November 8, 2002 \$140 (\$30 deposit)

The Birth of God in the Soul: Clare, Mary and the Incarnate God December 6-8, 2002

Presenter: Ingrid Peterson OSF

Registration Deadline: November 22, 2002 \$140 (\$30 deposit)

Set Your Heart on Fire: Love in the Writings of Bonaventure

January 24-26, 2003

Presenter: Ilia Delio OSF

Registration Deadline: January 10, 2003 \$140 (\$30 deposit)

For more information on these or other programs or to register, write to the above address, call (610) 558-6152, e-mail "fsc@osfphila.org" or visit our website: www.fscaston.org

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 is handicapped accessible from the outside. Quiet, shaded grounds provide ample space for walking and solitude. Reservations are requested.



38th Franciscan Federation

Conference

Theme:

*Harmony of Goodness:
Reconciliation as*

Franciscan Pilgrims and Strangers

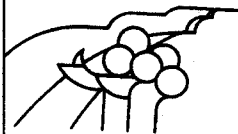
Presenter: Mary Beth Ingham, CSJ
(John Duns Scotus scholar)
and Franciscan men and women Reflectors
Place: Marriott Renaissance Hotel
Detroit, Michigan
August 18-21-2003

FRANCISCAN INTERNSHIP PROGRAM

in
SPIRITUAL DIRECTION and DIRECTED RETREATS

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

For further information contact:



David Connolly, ofm Cap.
Mt Alverno Retreat Centre
20704 Heart Lake Rd.
Caledon, Ont. L0N 1C0, Canada
Email: david_cap@hotmail.com

New from The Franciscan Institute

Franciscans in Urban Ministry

With an Introduction by Ken Himes, OFM
and
Edited by Roberta A. McKelvie, OSF

Since the dawn of the Franciscan movement in the early part of the 13th century, Franciscans have found themselves living and ministering in significant ways in the context of cities. This work explores some salient features of the Franciscan story and considers contemporary challenges to life and ministry in the city today.

Seven essays provide an overview of a Franciscan approach to urban life and ministry.

Authors include
Joe Chinnici, OFM; Dominic Monti, OFM;
Beverly A. Carroll, Paticia Keefe, OSF;
Herbert A. Johnson & James A. Wallace, CSsR

\$14.95



The Franciscan Institute
St. Bonaventure University
St. Bonaventure, NY 14778
Phone: 716-375-2105
Fax: 716-375-2156
1-800-541-2525

On the Franciscan Circuit Coming Events 2002

Friday, September 27- Sunday, September 29, 2002.

Franciscan Retreat Weekend. With Father James Gavin, OFM Cap. At the Franciscan Center, 49 Jackson Avenue, Hastings on Hudson, NY. Contact Sr. Marie Patrice, OSF, at 914-478-3696 or 914-478-3930, ext. 121.

Thursday, October 10 - Sunday, October 13, 2002

The Franciscan Connection. With Elizabeth Imler, OSF and Diane Jamison, OSF. Sponsored by the Franciscan Federation, Regions 4 & 5. At Sisters of St. Francis of Mary Immaculate, Joliet, IL. Contact Sr. Margaret Kelly, OSF at 309-829-0455.

Friday, October 20 - Friday, October 27, 2002

Franciscan Pilgrimage to the California Missions. The mission sites of central California are the focus of this pilgrimage. Contact Franciscan Pilgrimage Programs, P.O. Box 321490, Franklin, WI. Call 414-427-0570 or visit www.FranciscanPilgrimages.org

Thursday, November 9 - Friday, December 22, 2002

The Forty Day Franciscan Hermitage Retreat. Experience God in solitude and community in a format faithful to Francis's Rule for Hermitages. For information, contact Kathleen Ann Copp, OSF, at 815-464-3850 (ph.), 815-469-4880 (fax) or email SKACOPP@aol.com.

Friday, December 13 - Sunday, December 15, 2002.

Advent Retreat. With Father James Gavin, OFM Cap. At the Franciscan Center, 49 Jackson Avenue, Hastings on Hudson, NY. Contact Sr. Marie Patrice, OSF, at 914-478-3696 or 914-478-3930, ext. 121.

Tuesday, December 31, 2002.

End of the Year Retreat. With Sr. Lorraine Campanelli, OSF. At The Franciscan Center, 49 Jackson Avenue, Hastings on Hudson, NY. Contact Sr. Marie Patrice, OSF, at 914-478-3696 or 914-478-3930, ext. 121.

Abbreviations

<i>Writings of Saint. Francis</i>		<i>Franciscan Sources</i>	
Adm	The Admonitions	1C	The Life of Saint Francis by Thomas of Celano
BIL	A Blessing for Brother Leo	2C	The Remembrance of the Desire of a Soul
Ctc	The Canticle of the Creatures	3C	The Treatise on the Miracles by Thomas of Celano
CtExh	The Canticle of Exhortation	LCh	The Legend for Use in the Choir
1Frg	Fragments of Worchester Manuscript	Off	The Divine Office of St. Francis by Julian of Speyer
2Frg	Fragments of Thomas of Celano	LJS	The Life of St. Francis by Julian of Speyer
3Frg	Fragments of Hugh of Digne	VL	The Versified Life of St. Francis by Henri d'Avranches
LtAnt	A Letter to Br. Anthony of Padua	1-3JT	The Praises by Jacopone da Todi
1LtCl	First Letter to the Clergy (Earlier Edition)	DCom	The Divine Comedy by Dante Aliegheri
2LtCl	Second Letter to the Clergy (Later Edition)	TL	Tree of Life by Ubertino da Casale
1LtCus	The First Letter to the Custodians	1MP	The Mirror of Perfection, Smaller Version
2LtCus	The Second Letter to the Custodians	2MP	The Mirror of Perfection, Larger Version
1LtF	The First Letter to the Faithful	HTrb	The History of the Seven Tribulations by Angelo of Clareno
2LtF	The Second Letter to the Faithful	ScEx	The Sacred Exchange between St. Francis and Lady Poverty
LtL	A Letter to Brother Leo	AP	The Anonymous of Perugia
LtMin	A Letter to a Minister	L3C	The Legend of the Three Companions
LtOrd	A Letter to the Entire Order	AC	The Assisi Compilation
LtR	A Letter to the Rulers of the People	1-4Srm	The Sermons of Bonaventure
ExhP	Exhortation o the Praise of God	LMj	The Major Legend by Bonaventure
PrOF	A Prayer Inspired by the Our Father	LMn	The Minor Legend by Bonaventure
PrsG	The Praises of God	BPr	The Book of Praises by Bernard of Besse
OFp	The Office of the Passion	ABF	The Deeds of St. Francis and His Companions
PrCr	The Prayer before the Crucifix	LFI	The Little Flowers of Saint Francis
ER	The Earlier Rule (<i>Regula non bullata</i>)	KnSF	The Knowing of Saint Francis
LR	The Later Rule (<i>Regula bullata</i>)	ChrTE	The Chronicle of Thomas of Eccleston
RH	A Rule for Hermitages	ChrJG	The Chronicle of Jordan of Giano
SalBVM	A Salutation of the Blessed Virgin Mary		
SalV	A Salutation of Virtues		
Test	The Testament		
TPJ	True and Perfect Joy		
<i>Writings of Saint Clare</i>			
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		

On the Franciscan Circuit Coming Events 2002

Friday, September 27- Sunday, September 29, 2002.

Franciscan Retreat Weekend. With Father James Gavin, OFM Cap. At the Franciscan Center, 49 Jackson Avenue, Hastings on Hudson, NY. Contact Sr. Marie Patrice, OSF, at 914-478-3696 or 914-478-3930, ext. 121.

Thursday, October 10 - Sunday, October 13, 2002

The Franciscan Connection. With Elizabeth Imler, OSF and Diane Jamison, OSF. Sponsored by the Franciscan Federation, Regions 4 & 5. At Sisters of St. Francis of Mary Immaculate, Joliet, IL. Contact Sr. Margaret Kelly, OSF at 309-829-0455.

Friday, October 20 - Friday, October 27, 2002

Franciscan Pilgrimage to the California Missions. The mission sites of central California are the focus of this pilgrimage. Contact Franciscan Pilgrimage Programs, P.O. Box 321490, Franklin, WI. Call 414-427-0570 or visit www.FranciscanPilgrimages.org

Thursday, November 9 - Friday, December 22, 2002

The Forty Day Franciscan Hermitage Retreat. Experience God in solitude and community in a format faithful to Francis's Rule for Hermitages. For information, contact Kathleen Ann Copp, OSF, at 815-464-3850 (ph.), 815-469-4880 (fax) or email SKACOPP@aol.com.

Friday, December 13 - Sunday, December 15, 2002.

Advent Retreat. With Father James Gavin, OFM Cap. At the Franciscan Center, 49 Jackson Avenue, Hastings on Hudson, NY. Contact Sr. Marie Patrice, OSF, at 914-478-3696 or 914-478-3930, ext. 121.

Tuesday, December 31, 2002.

End of the Year Retreat. With Sr. Lorraine Campanelli, OSF. At The Franciscan Center, 49 Jackson Avenue, Hastings on Hudson, NY. Contact Sr. Marie Patrice, OSF, at 914-478-3696 or 914-478-3930, ext. 121.

Abbreviations

Writings of Saint Francis

Adm	The Admonitions
BIL	A Blessing for Brother Leo
Ctc	The Canticle of the Creatures
CtExh	The Canticle of Exhortation
1Frg	Fragments of Worchester Manuscript
2Frg	Fragments of Thomas of Celano
3Frg	Fragments of Hugh of Digne
LtAnt	A Letter to Br. Anthony of Padua
1LtCl	First Letter to the Clergy (Earlier Edition)
2LtCl	Second Letter to the Clergy (Later Edition)
1LtCus	The First Letter to the Custodians
2LtCus	The Second Letter to the Custodians
1LtF	The First Letter to the Faithful
2LtF	The Second Letter to the Faithful
LtL	A Letter to Brother Leo
LtMin	A Letter to a Minister
LtOrd	A Letter to the Entire Order
LtR	A Letter to the Rulers of the People
ExhP	Exhortation o the Praise of God
PrOF	A Prayer Inspired by the Our Father
PrsG	The Praises of God
OP	The Office of the Passion
PrCr	The Prayer before the Crucifix
ER	The Earlier Rule (<i>Regula non bullata</i>)
LR	The Later Rule (<i>Regula bullata</i>)
RH	A Rule for Hermitages
SalBVM	A Salutation of the Blessed Virgin Mary
SalV	A Salutation of Virtues
Test	The Testament
TPJ	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

Franciscan Sources

1C	The Life of Saint Francis by Thomas of Celano
2C	The Remembrance of the Desire of a Soul
3C	The Treatise on the Miracles by Thomas of Celano
LCh	The Legend for Use in the Choir
Off	The Divine Office of St. Francis by Julian of Speyer
LJS	The Life of St. Francis by Julian of Speyer
VL	The Versified Life of St. Francis by Henri d'Avranches
1-3JT	The Praises by Jacopone da Todi
DCom	The Divine Comedy by Dante Aliegheri
TL	Tree of Life by Ubertino da Casale
1MP	The Mirror of Perfection, Smaller Version
2MP	The Mirror of Perfection, Larger Version
HTrb	The History of the Seven Tribulations by Angelo of Clareno
ScEx	The Sacred Exchange between St. Francis and Lady Poverty
AP	The Anonymous of Perugia
L3C	The Legend of the Three Companions
AC	The Assisi Compilation
1-4Srm	The Sermons of Bonaventure
LMj	The Major Legend by Bonaventure
LMn	The Minor Legend by Bonaventure
BPr	The Book of Praises by Bernard of Besse
ABF	The Deeds of St. Francis and His Companions
LFI	The Little Flowers of Saint Francis
KnSF	The Knowing of Saint Francis
ChrTE	The Chronicle of Thomas of Eccleston
ChrJG	The Chronicle of Jordan of Giano