

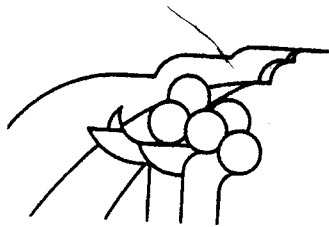
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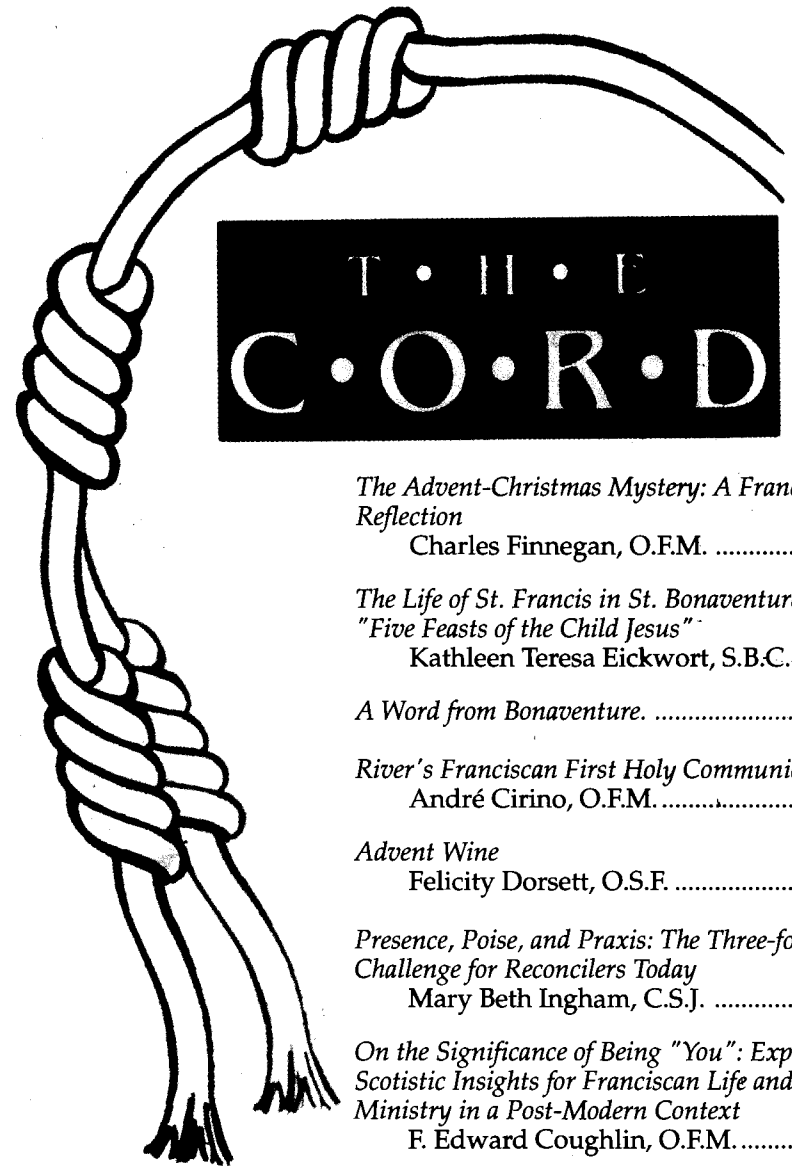


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**T · H · E
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The Advent-Christmas Mystery: A Franciscan Reflection
Charles Finnegan, O.F.M. 286

The Life of St. Francis in St. Bonaventure's "Five Feasts of the Child Jesus"
Kathleen Teresa Eickwort, S.B.C. 293

A Word from Bonaventure. 299

River's Franciscan First Holy Communion
André Cirino, O.F.M. 300

Advent Wine
Felicity Dorsett, O.S.F. 302

Presence, Poise, and Praxis: The Three-fold Challenge for Reconcilers Today
Mary Beth Ingham, C.S.J. 303

On the Significance of Being "You": Exploring Scotistic Insights for Franciscan Life and Ministry in a Post-Modern Context
F. Edward Coughlin, O.F.M. 315

Book Reviews 329

About Our Contributors 332

Announcements 333

Index for 2003 342

THE CORD
A Franciscan Spiritual Review

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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*, 14th ed., is to be consulted on general questions of style.
3. Titles of books and periodicals should be italicized or, in typed manuscripts, underlined.
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(1Cor. 13:6). (2Cel 5:8).
(RegNB 23:2). (4LAg 2:13).

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

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The Cord, 53.6 (2003)

Editorial

The seasons have changed once again, and we are in the transition from autumn to winter, and, in the life of Christians, from so-called ordinary time to Advent and Christmas. Which is more important to us? How do we focus on the meaning of the gift of the Incarnation in the midst of preparations for Thanksgiving and the rush of shopping during the holiday season? How do we distinguish the things of time from the things of eternity? Is it possible to make ourselves slow down and be more reflective when we live in a culture that becomes more frenetic and consumeristic at this time of year?

Perhaps this issue of *The Cord* might help. Certainly Father Charles Finnegan offers us a point of entry into thinking about "Cur Deus homo?" – why God assumed a human nature. At the very least, we can find food for meditation on "the human face of God and the divine face of being human." Kathleen Eickwort takes us into the thought of St. Bonaventure and his desire to help all conceive and bring forth Christ in real ways in our world—not a simple thing, most of us would admit. Yet, the very next piece, the dialogue of André Cirino and his grandnephew River, belies our tendency to say "This is too complex for me to understand" when speaking of the gift of the Incarnation!

Having said that, we also include for consideration the profound wisdom of John Duns Scotus as found in the presentations of Mary Beth Ingham and Ed Coughlin given at the Franciscan Federation annual conference held in Detroit in August. Both articles allow us to deepen our appreciation of the beauty of Scotus's philosophical theology, if we are willing to enter into that area of Franciscan thought. Whether we are caught up by the concepts of presence, poise, praxis, or the insights from the characters in *Harold and Maude*, we will find much to challenge us at the deepest level of our personal journeys. For those readers who wish some refreshment of a different kind, we offer the poem "Advent Wine" and two book reviews, which invite us to a sense of reflection and might, perhaps, lead us into additional reading. Lastly, this issue includes the annual index of articles and subjects published in 2003. It has been a very full year for *The Cord*, indeed.

May the coming weeks of Advent and the immensely wonderful season of Christmas bring each of us and all the world into deeper love of God and each other!

Roberta A. McKelvie, OSF.

The Advent-Christmas Mystery: A Franciscan Reflection¹

Charles Finnegan, O.F.M.

Dear Friends:

I am very grateful for the opportunity of sharing with you a Franciscan reflection on the grace-filled Advent and Christmas season that was so dear to St. Francis and St. Clare. If it is true that Easter is the greatest of all Christian Feasts, Christmas is "the dearest." More than any other season, Christmas reveals the "gentle, human touch" of God. Clarence Jordan, who founded the racially mixed Koinonia Community in Georgia in 1942, and wrote the "Cotton Patch Version of the Gospel" liked to say, when speaking of the Incarnation, "God moved in with us."

Advent/Christmas, surely the most poetic of the liturgical seasons, is not a time of make-believe. We do not pretend that Christ has not yet come, or that on the Feast of Christmas we receive Him as a Child. We do not want to trivialize Christmas by over-sentimentalizing it. The event of Jesus' birth from the Virgin Mary in a stable in Bethlehem is, as are all the events in the life of Christ, unrepeated and unrepeatable. It is on the level of "mystery" that the Christmas liturgy makes that great salvific event present to us, making available the saving power of the Lord's birth "for us and for our salvation." In Christ, God has fully entered into human history, has fully taken on our weak human nature, has become like us in everything, sin alone excepted. "The Word became flesh" and the human condition received for all time a new definition, renewed from within by the heartbeat of God. The claim is so daring that it seemed to many of those who first heard it a scandal, a blasphemy even.

From earliest times Christian teachers have struggled to express, however imperfectly, this saving action of God that is inexpressible in its awesomeness. Consider, for example, the teaching of St. Gregory Nazianzen, Bishop of Constantinople in the 4th century, and known in the East as "the Theologian":

This is why God became human: to raise up our flesh, to re-create humankind, so that all of us might become one in Christ who perfectly became in us everything that He is in Himself. The very Son of God, the perfect likeness, the definition and word of the Father: He it is who comes to His own image and takes our nature for the good of our nature to purify like by like. He takes on the poverty of my flesh, that I may gain the riches of His divinity. He who is full is made empty that I may share in His fullness.

In a similar vein St. Augustine says:

Men and women, awake! For your sake God has become human. You would have suffered eternal death had He not been born in time. Never would you have been freed from sinful flesh, had He not taken on Himself the likeness of sinful flesh. You would have suffered everlasting unhappiness, had it not been for this mercy. You would have been lost if He had not hastened to your aid. You would have perished had He not come.

Of his own will He was born for us today, in time, so that He could lead us to his Father's eternity. God became human, so humans might become God. The Lord of angels became human today so humans could eat the bread of angels. The Lord who had created all things is Himself now created, so that he who was lost would be found. Humans sinned and became guilty; God is born a human to free them from their guilt. Humans fell but God descended; humans fell miserably, but God descended mercifully; humans fell through pride but God descended with his grace. Brothers and sisters, what prodigies! What miracles! Ask if this were merited; ask for its reason, and see whether you will find any other answer but sheer grace.

Texts like these help us understand something of the awesome mystery we celebrate at Christmas. The Liturgy calls this mystery a "marvelous exchange." We give the Son of God a share in our human nature, and in exchange He gives us a share in His divine nature. He becomes what we are to make us what He is.

The Incarnation reveals both the human face of God and the divine face of being human. We become "sons and daughters in the Son" (*fili in Filio*) to use St. Augustine's perceptive phrase. The Lord of the whole universe "empties Himself" and takes the form of a slave, to enrich us by His poverty. Jesus takes on our humanity so He can die for us, and in exchange He gives us a share in His divinity so we can live forever. A "marvelous exchange" it is indeed!

All this is, of course, sheer grace, free gift—undeserved and undeservable—from God Who is Love.

The Example of St. Francis

St. Francis's love of the Christmas mystery is among the most obvious of his traits. He called Christmas "the feast of feasts" (2Cel 199). His first biographer tells us that "the humility of the Incarnation and the charity of the Passion occupied his memory to such an extent that he hardly wanted to think of anything else" (1Cel 84). On Christmas day he suggested that the rich "invite all the poor to a lavish meal," and he wanted people to throw wheat on the roads "every year on the day of the Nativity of the Lord, so that on this great solemnity the birds would have food" (AC 14). Christmas was to be a day of great rejoicing for all creation.

Chapter XXIII of the Rule of 1221 is sometimes called "the Franciscan Preface." In this beautiful "Prayer and Thanksgiving" Francis recalls the mysteries of our redemption, and pours out his soul in praise for the gift of the Incarnation:

All-powerful, most holy, most high and supreme God . . . We thank you for as through Your Son You created us, so also, through Your holy love, with which You loved us You brought about His birth as true God and true man by the glorious, ever-virgin, most blessed, holy Mary.

If, as is well known, Francis was a lover of "Lady Poverty," one of the main reasons for this choice can be found in his contemplation of the mystery of Bethlehem:

Through his angel, St. Gabriel, the most high Father in heaven announced this Word of the Father—so worthy, so holy and glorious—in the womb of the holy and glorious Virgin Mary, from which He received the flesh of humanity and our frailty. Though He was rich beyond all things (2 Cor 8:9), in this world He, together with the most blessed Virgin, His mother, willed to choose poverty" (2LtF 4f).

It was the Christmas mystery that confirmed St. Clare too in her unconquerable commitment to "most holy poverty." She wanted her sisters to use poor clothing "for love of the most holy Baby, laid in a manger and dressed in swaddling clothes, and of his most holy Mother" (Rule of St. Clare II, 25). Awestruck as she contemplates the Christmas mystery, Clare writes: "O marvelous humility, O astonishing poverty! The King of the angels, the Lord of heaven and earth, is laid in a manger!" (4 LAg 20f)

The Absolute and Unconditional Primacy of Christ

In the Mystery of Christ the whole of creation takes on new meaning: "All things came into being through Him, and without Him not one thing came into being" (Jn 1:3). All creation is centered on Christ and oriented to Christ. In the momentous teaching of Colossians:

"Christ is the image of the invisible God, the first-born of all creatures. In Him everything in heaven and on earth was created, things visible and invisible; all were created through Him and for Him. He is before all else that is. In Him everything continues in being." (1:15ff)

Based on this Pauline teaching, the Franciscan School of Theology, under the leadership of Blessed John Duns Scotus (1266-1308), proclaims the absolute and unconditional Primacy of Christ, the Incarnate Word. In God's eternal plan for creation Christ came first: everything exists "through Him and for Him." Everything holds together in Him; without Him everything falls apart. Christ did not come because of Adam; Adam came because of Christ! Christ, not Adam, is "the first-born of all creatures." Adam, like everything else in heaven and on earth, exists "through Christ and for Christ. Christ is before all else that is." In the gospel of John (8:57), Jesus declares: "Before Abraham came to be, I am." He could just as well have said: "Before Adam came to be, I am," not only because He is the Eternal Word, but also because as the Incarnate Word He comes first in God's plan. Very perceptively Thomas Merton wrote: "without Christ Adam has no function or meaning in Scripture. Without Jesus, Adam is merely the beginning of a story that wanders off inconclusively into nothing" (*The New Man*, p. 32).

As Vatican II taught: Christ is the "goal of human history, the focal point of the desires of history and civilization, the center of mankind, the joy of all hearts and the fulfillment of all aspirations" (*Gaudium et Spes*, 45). He is "the key, the center and the purpose of the whole of human history" (GS,10). THE WORD INCARNATE IS GOD'S ABSOLUTE MASTERPIECE!

Greccio, the "Franciscan Bethlehem"

The friary at Greccio, a town about 45 miles south of Assisi, was one of St. Francis's preferred places. He considered that town to be "rich by reason of its poverty" (2Cel 35). Three years before his death Francis decided to celebrate Christmas there in a new and dramatic way. So new was it that he obtained special permission from the Pope so as not to be considered an innovator. (LMj X:7). It grieved Francis that people had lost their sense of wonder at the

awesomeness of the Christmas mystery. Fifteen days before the great Feast, Francis asked a close friend, a converted Knight called John of Greccio, to prepare a setting that would “recall to memory the little Child who was born in Bethlehem and set before our bodily eyes in some way the inconveniences of His infant needs, how He lay in a manger, how, with an ox and an ass standing by, He lay upon the hay where He had been placed” (1Cel 84).

When the holy night of Christmas arrived, John carried out Francis’s wishes to the letter. As the time for Mass approached, Francis with his brothers, together with the townsfolk, made their way to the site. A manger had been prepared, hay brought in, an ox and ass led in. People were “filled with new joy over the new mystery” (1Cel 85). Candles and torches lit up that holy night. The simple country folk joined Francis and his brothers in singing God’s praises. The manger served as the altar for the Mass, and Francis, as Deacon, sang the Gospel and preached. St. Bonaventure describes the scene: “The saint stood before the crib and his heart overflowed with tender compassion; bathed in tears, Francis was overcome with joy” (LMj X:7).

“The woods rang with the voices of the crowd. The brothers sang, paying their debt of praise to the Lord and the whole night resounded with their rejoicing.” Francis had turned Greccio into a “new Bethlehem”! (1Cel 85)

The “Novelty” of Greccio

St. Francis is often credited with giving us “the first Christmas Crib.” While his devotion to the Christmas mystery no doubt influenced our modern custom of arranging Nativity scenes in our churches and homes at Christmas, what Francis did at Greccio was different. Early Franciscan sources make no mention of statues or images there, not even of Mary, Joseph or the Babe. Only the manger, hay, the ox and ass are mentioned.

The originality introduced by Francis at Greccio was the close bond between manger and altar. In the perceptive phrase of the Dizionario Francese (n.1072) what Francis “invented” at Greccio was the “Eucharistic manger.” At Greccio, not the image of the Infant but the Eucharistic species themselves were placed over the manger—the manger was the altar. The two great mysteries, the Incarnation and Eucharist, were shown visibly to be intimately connected. Francis notes the close association of the two mysteries in his writings also:

“See, daily He humbles Himself as when He came from the royal throne into the womb of the Virgin; daily He comes to us in humble form; daily He comes down from the bosom of the Father upon the altar in the hands of the priest.” (1st Adm.)

We may continue this comparison. Just as shepherds brought gifts to the manger, so the faithful bring their gifts to the altar, the most important being the gift of themselves: “Hold back nothing of yourselves for yourselves, so that He Who gives Himself totally to you may receive you totally” (LtOrd 29). Just as “by the Incarnation Christ has in a certain way joined Himself to every human being” (GS 22), in the Eucharist He comes to His faithful so that they might “remain in Him and He in them” (Jn 6:56).

The English word Christmas comes from two Anglo-Saxon words “Cristes maesse” meaning “Christ’s Mass,” that is, the Mass celebrating Christ’s birth. The very word “Christmas” reminds us that the great Christmas celebration is the Eucharistic liturgy that celebrates the Lord’s birth, makes that event present to us in mystery, filling those who celebrate it in faith with “saving and amazing grace.” Celebrating “Christ’s Mass” in “Spirit and in truth” as the heart of the whole Christmas season is the best defense against the trivialization and commercialization of Christmas.

The word “Bethlehem” means “House of Bread” and for Francis Christmas is above all else the coming of Him Who is the “Bread of Life” and “the living bread come down from heaven.” Francis marveled at the poverty of the Babe, and he never ceased to be amazed at the “humility of God” in the Eucharist:

Let the whole of mankind tremble, the whole world shake when Christ the Son of the living God is present on the altar. O sublime humility! O humble sublimity! That the Lord of the universe, God and the Son of God so humbles Himself that for our salvation He hides Himself under the little form of bread! Look, Brothers, at the humility of God and pour out your hearts before Him. Humble yourselves as well that you may be exalted by Him. (LtOrd 26 ff)

Being a “little one” himself, Francis knew well that Christmas is for children. At Greccio Francis “became a child with the Child” (2Cel 35). To the greedy, to the arrogant and haughty, Christmas must seem the ultimate absurdity. Only the little ones can come before the Crib, full of reverent awe and simple joy, “lost, all lost in wonder” at the marvel of it all. Only the little ones can celebrate with purity of heart the Feast of the littleness of God. Only the humble can recognize the awesome power of this littleness: “By His birth, we are reborn” (Sunday Preface IV). This conviction was beautifully expressed by El Salvador’s martyred Archbishop, Oscar Romero, in his 1978 Christmas homily:

No one can celebrate a genuine Christmas without being truly poor. The self-sufficient, the proud, those who, because they have everything, look down on others, those who have no need even of

God—for them there will be no Christmas. Only the poor, the hungry, those who need someone to come on their behalf, will have that someone. That someone is God, Emmanuel, God-with-us. Without poverty of spirit there can be no abundance of God.

The Lord's first coming in poverty and littleness is the promise of His second coming in glory, a glory He wants to share with us. While we wait "in joyful hope" for that time of perfect fulfillment we do well to follow St. Augustine's advice: "We are not yet ready for the banquet of our Father, so let us contemplate the manger of our Lord Jesus Christ." The "Good News" of Christmas, which we need to hear and proclaim over and over, is unchanging: "a Savior has been born to you" (Lk 2:11). "To all who receive Him he gives power to become children of God" (Jn 1:12). To all who receive Him! Or, as St. Francis succinctly put it: "Since our Lord has been born for us, it is for us to accept salvation" (2MP 114). A marvelous exchange indeed!

May your Christmas be filled with peace, as you experience at the core of your being the grace of His coming.

Endnotes

¹This article is the first publication of a reflection given during Advent, 2002. The citation for the quotes from the Church Fathers are not included.



Parrendo

The Cord, 53.6 (2003)

The Life of St. Francis in St. Bonaventure's *Five Feasts of the Child Jesus*

Kathleen Teresa Eickwort, S.B.C.

"In God's church there are holy men and women who have been enlightened more profoundly than others by the divine radiance and inflamed more ardently by inspiration from on high . . ."

—St Bonaventure, Prologue to *"The Five Feasts of the Child Jesus."*

"I have done what was mine to do. May Christ teach you what is yours to do . . ."

—St Francis of Assisi, on his deathbed (2C214)

Introduction

*The Five Feasts of the Child Jesus*² is a short series of meditations written by Bonaventure of Bagnoregio, who at that time was Minister General of the Franciscan Order. It is a profoundly inspiring reflection on the theme of "spiritual motherhood," of Christ's conception and birth within the soul of the believer, and the bringing forth of Christ into the world. Bonaventure traces this theme by comparison with the Blessed Virgin's conception, giving birth, and naming of the Divine Child, the Adoration of the Magi, and the Presentation in the Temple.

It is notable, indeed striking under the circumstances, that St. Francis of Assisi is never mentioned in this text. All the focus is on the Incarnate Word, Jesus. In the Prologue, the author points to meditation on Jesus as the privileged path to mystical consolations:

. . . through meditation upon Jesus and reverent contemplation of the Incarnate Word, a faithful soul can experience a delight far sweeter, a pleasure more thrilling and a consolation more perfect than from honey and fragrant perfumes.³

However, Francis's life could not have been far from the consciousness and memory of this man who was the head of the Franciscan Order, and who

later became his biographer. The thesis of this article is that the life of St. Francis and the birth of the Franciscan Order is intentionally implicit, although not explicit, in Bonaventure's exposition of these "*Five Feasts of the Child Jesus.*"

Parallels in the *Five Feasts* with the Life of St. Francis

In "The First Feast: How Christ Jesus, the Son of God, may be Conceived Spiritually by a Devout Soul," the comparison is made between the experience of the Blessed Virgin Mary, and the conversion of a "devout soul" to God. Although the "First Feast" should be the Annunciation, the account of the Visitation of Mary to Elizabeth is also included in this Feast.

The principal object of this Feast is clearly to encourage the reader to be open to, and to recognize and cooperate with, the action of God in the soul, by the reception of God's mercy and grace. This disposes the soul for the "spiritual conception." But someone who is familiar with the story of the early conversion of St. Francis must be struck by the parallels with his experience; how in his illness after the war with Perugia, he was touched with weariness and distaste for the worldly life he had previously led; and how he "rejected and despised previous imperfections and former desires for worldly things"⁴ (cf. 1CII). Just as medical scientists speculate that a woman within the first trimester of pregnancy has changes in her appetite to protect the delicate embryo from toxic substances, and provide it with essential nutrients, the soul newly pregnant with grace requires some protection from the world, and is inspired to withdraw from its former ways and companions.

This would also explain the emphasis in this Feast on Mary's haste to go up to the hill country. Francis, in drawing aside to pray in the cave with his companion to guard the entrance, probably, like Mary, "begins to climb the hill country."⁵ The most likely place for his "treasure hunting" in the cave is some unknown location on Mt. Subasio (1CIII), or even to the area of the Carceri, where later tradition says he prayed with his earliest brothers.

Bonaventure's focus on withdrawing from the company of worldly people and on one's friendship with the good, although it applies to Mary's visit to Elizabeth, surely also alludes to St. Francis's withdrawal from his previous party-going companions, and his seeking of the company of the priest of San Damiano (1C9, LC3:16-17).

Although we know that Mary, after her virginal conception, was in danger from the law of her people, we do not know very much about what she actually had to suffer after Joseph was inspired to protect her and her reputation. The description by Bonaventure of the assaults of the wicked and their insidious, toxic counsel, the discouragement offered by the seemingly good, and the culture of spiritual abortion that would "seek to kill the Son of God conceived in them by the Holy Spirit,"⁶ more clearly fits Francis's experience and that of

the earliest brothers. Pietro de Bernadone's attacks on his son, and the misunderstanding, ridicule and abuse showered on St. Francis and his companions by the people of Assisi, were very close to the pattern described by Bonaventure (1C V, VI, VII; AP19-20 and other accounts).

In "The Second Feast: How the Son of God is Born Spiritually in a Devout Soul," Bonaventure describes how, after "good advice, due thought, and prayer for God's protection . . . the soul begins to do that which it long had in mind."⁷ Here again one may see allusions to events in St. Francis's life after he began to live as God had inspired him. In peace of conscience, because he is now living a radical life of grace, he still weeps for "time lost," and is constantly edifying



others by his words and actions and exhorting them to a life of penance (1C103). There may also be an allusion to the struggle and discernment whether he was called to prayer only or to an active contemplative life, preaching as well as spending time in solitude (LM 12:1-2). And surely no Franciscan can hear Bonaventure exhorting us to:

nourish [the newborn Child] with our prayers, bathe him in the waters of our warm and loving tears, wrap him in the spotless swaddling clothes of our desires, carry him in an embrace of holy love, kiss him over and over again with heartfelt longings and cherish him in the bosom of our inmost heart,⁸

without remembering the accounts of Francis at Christmas in Greccio (1C 85-86).

"The Third Feast: How the Infant Jesus is Named Spiritually by a Devout Soul," is a song of praise to the power of the Name of Jesus. But Bonaventure also says, "To the little Infant begotten in you spiritually, give the name Jesus which means: Saviour, amidst the miseries of this life."⁹ St. Francis's "spiritual child" was the Order of Friars Minor, and the name of this Order was very important in protecting its members from the temptations to wealth, prestige, and power, as well as from individualism which would destroy fraternity. The Founder was very conscious of this, which is the reason he changed the name from the original appellation "Poor Men of Assisi."¹⁰ It is also important, Bonaventure implies, that each soul touched by grace name those graces so that it can receive them with a proper gratitude, awareness of the gift, and devotion.¹¹

“The Fourth Feast: How the Son of God is Sought and Adored Spiritually with the Magi, by the Devout Soul,” describes how the three kings, “resolve to go in search of the Child, already revealed to them in the royal city, that is, in the structure of the created universe.”¹² For the Magi of St. Matthew, the “royal city” in this first paragraph would presumably have been Babylon (cf. Dan. 2:45b-48).¹³ But for Bonaventure it was the structure of the created universe, as well as prophetic revelation, which had revealed to Francis and his brothers the providence of God in their poverty, and the radical gospel life to which they were called. Yet just as the Magi were drawn by the star to Jerusalem, and following proper royal protocol, they consult with King Herod, even so Francis goes—to Rome.

The new Order must be submitted to the proper Church authorities, because knowing the providence of God, Francis knows also that no authority exists that is not of God (Romans 13:1). But Herod in the Bible (possibly along with the Pharisees) exemplifies the culture of spiritual abortion that is warned against in the *First Feast*. This is very jarring after the devotional sweetness expressed by Bonaventure in adoration of the Child being sought:

We have heard His voice and it is soft and tender; we have tasted His sweetness and it is delightful; we have caught His fragrance and it is alluring; we have felt His embrace and it is irresistible. . . . Now Herod [!], give us the answer, tell us where the Beloved is to be found, show us the little Child we are yearning to see. He is the one we seek and long for.¹⁴

In the biblical account, Herod, at least through his chief priests and scholars, *does* have accurate information about where the Child is, because he has access to the tradition and the scriptures (Mt 2:3-6): “in Bethlehem of Judea.” But Herod’s spirit and his will is not turned toward devotion and worship, despite his words to the Magi (Mt 2:8). If we consider here a rather daring parallel between the institution of the Church and King Herod, we see the point: this is a time of crisis and danger for the newly born Order. The danger is not only of rejection by the Church authorities but also of compromise. The spiritual identity of the Order may be lost in the writing, and re-writing, and acceptance of the Rule. If this happens, even if the Order should continue, the Infant, the spiritual Child that was conceived and named and brought forth, whose name is Jesus, is lost. The founder, Francis, must use all three powers of the soul (the “Magi,” or kings, as Bonaventure calls them), will, memory and intellect to write a Rule, not once, but several times; to submit it to God and to the Church, and to continually pray for guidance and inspiration in all of this.¹⁵ Clare also seeks to protect the inspiration of the Order and its charism of holy poverty, all the way to the day of her death.¹⁶

“The Fifth Feast: How the Son of God is Spiritually Presented in the Temple by a Devout Soul” is an exhortation to present back to God the Father, from whom comes every good and perfect gift, the Child that has now been conceived, delivered, named, and adored by the Magi. The worship of God in thanksgiving and adoration for the fruitfulness that the divine inspiration has brought forth, and entrusting that Child back to the Father in prayer, is a fit culmination to the meditations on the Feast. Both Francis and Bonaventure, as the current head of the Order, would have known their utter dependence on God to carry out their vocations. St. Francis was certainly aware of his inadequacies to the point of resigning his position as head of the Order (2C143; see also his dream of the hen and chicks in 2C23-24). So this Fifth Feast acknowledges powerlessness without the continual grace of God, and focuses on gratitude and the praise, worship and adoration of God.

Conclusion: Why would St. Bonaventure Leave This Theme Implicit?

“Look at the Good Shepherd, my brothers. To save his sheep He endured the agony of the cross. They followed Him in trials and persecutions, in ignominy, hunger and thirst, in humiliations and temptations, and so on. And for this God rewarded them with eternal life. We ought to be ashamed of ourselves; the saints endured all that, but we who are servants of God try to win glory and honor by recounting and making known what they have done.” (Adm VI)

If we accept the possibility that Bonaventure indeed had in mind the life of St. Francis and the founding of the Order in writing about these *Five Feasts of the Child Jesus*, why didn’t he say so? I believe there may be several reasons. The first is mentioned in the Prologue, “Because I thought out this little work with humility. . . .” Any comparison between the Blessed Virgin and St. Francis, coming from the Order’s Minister General, might have been seen as prideful, and, moreover, of a kind of vicarious pride that was explicitly forbidden by the founder himself (Adm VI).

The second might be that the allusions in the Fourth Feast, in particular, would be politically dangerous and seem subversive to Church authority. Since he was himself a leader, as General Minister of the Franciscan Order, Bonaventure would have had no desire to foment or legitimize rebellion. However, he must have been constantly aware of the creative tension between the powerful, fresh dynamism and gospel charism of the Order, and the needs and condition of the institutional Church of his time. For Francis’s calling to “rebuild My Church” to be accomplished, that dynamism had to remain in relationship and dialogue with Church authority, so that the Rule of the Order

would be accepted and the ministry of Franciscans within the Church validated.

But primarily, I believe that Bonaventure did not want to encourage religion as a "spectator sport."¹⁷ The purpose of this work was to encourage the friars, and all his readers, to conceive and bring forth Christ in their own world and their own time, as God inspired them. Too much focus on Francis might hinder that purpose; but the implicit parallels rather serve to validate the readers' experience as being like that both of St. Francis and of the Blessed Virgin Mary. May Christ teach us what is ours to do, as St. Francis prayed, and give us the grace to do it. Amen.

Endnotes

¹Bonaventure, *Five Feasts of the Child Jesus*, from the English translation by Eric Doyle, "Bringing Forth Christ: Five Feasts of the Child Jesus," 1984, SLG Press, Convent of the Incarnation, Fairacres, Oxford OX4 1TB England, p. 1.

²Doyle, tr., *op.cit.*, p. iv, says that the original Latin text of this work is found in Tome VIII of St Bonaventure's *Opera Omnia*, which was published at Quaracchi near Florence in 1891. I have been unable to obtain this work, entitled *De quinque festivitatibus Pueri Jesu*, and so my comments are based solely on the English translation.

³Ibid, p. 1.

⁴Ibid, p. 3.

⁵Ibid, p. 3.

⁶Ibid, p. 5.

⁷Ibid, p. 7.

⁸Ibid, p. 8.

⁹Ibid, p. 9.

¹⁰See the discussion of the naming of the Order in Leonard Lehmann, O.F.M. Cap, 2002, "Minority: The Core of Poverty," *The Cord*, 52.5, pp. 207-208.

¹¹I am indebted to Fr André Cirino, O.F.M., for the interpretation of the "Naming of the Child" in this Feast as the naming of the graces, gifts and ministries that are brought to birth in us, all of which are aspects of the Divine Child. Fr. Cirino led a six-day retreat on the *Five Feasts* of St Bonaventure which I attended in December, 2002, and he also encouraged me to write this article.

¹²Doyle, tr., *op.cit.*, p. 11.

¹³This records the Hebrew prophet Daniel being put in charge of the wise men of Nebuchadnezzar's court, after the king falls down and worships him, and orders sacrifice and incense to be offered to Daniel, who has survived his night in the lion's den.

¹⁴Doyle, tr., *op.cit.*, p. 11.

¹⁵Cf. Bonaventure's description of Francis's use of the powers of his soul to write the Rule in "The Morning Sermon on St Francis, Preached at Parish, October 4, 1255," in *Francis of Assisi: Early Documents, Vol. II: The Founder*, Regis Armstrong, O.F.M. Cap, J.A. Wayne Hellmann, O.F.M. Conv., and William J. Short, O.F.M., 2000, pp. 508-516. Bonaventure in this sermon states that the stigmata were God's seal and stamp of approval on the revelation to Francis, and hence also God's seal on the Franciscan Rule.

¹⁶Edith A. Van den Goorbergh, O.S.C., and Theodore H. Zweerman, O.F.M., 2000, *Light Shining through a Veil: On Saint Clare's Letters to Saint Agnes of Prague*, Peeters,

Leuven, Netherlands, pp. 19-20. Clare was the first woman in history to compose a rule that was confirmed by papal authority.

¹⁷Richard Rohr, in *Hope Against Darkness: The Transforming Vision of St. Francis in an Age of Anxiety*, 2001, St. Anthony Messenger Press, p. 12 writes: "The Bible seems to always be saying that this journey is indeed a journey, a journey always initiated and concluded by God, and a journey of transformation much more than mere education about anything. We would sooner have textbooks, I think. Then the journey would remain a *spectator sport* [emphasis mine], as much religion often seems to be. The education model elicits a low level of commitment and investment, even if it keeps people obedient and orthodox. The transformation model risks people knowing and sharing "the One Spirit that was given us all to drink" (1 Corinthians 12:13). So sad that we have preferred conformity and group loyalty over real change!" Bonaventure, in leaving the life of Francis implicit, opts for the model of transformation, where we all may receive and be made fruitful by the Spirit of God.

A WORD FROM BONAVENTURE

. . . the Archangel Gabriel was sent to the Virgin. When she gave her consent to him, the Holy Spirit came upon her like a divine fire inflaming her soul and sanctifying her flesh in perfect purity. . . . Oh, if you could feel in some way the quality and intensity of that fire sent from heaven, the refreshing coolness that accompanied it, the consolation it imparted; if you could realize the great exaltation of the Virgin Mother, the ennobling of the human race, the condescension of the divine majesty; . . . then I am sure you would sing in sweet tones with the Blessed Virgin that sacred hymn: My soul magnifies the Lord



Lynne Anne, O.S.F.

. . . .

(Tree of Life, First Fruit: 3)

River's Franciscan First Holy Communion

André Cirino, O.F.M.

On Christmas Eve morning, I was peeling shrimp in preparation for our festive Italian supper. My grandnephew River, who was to make his First Holy Communion at home during our Christmas Eve Eucharist, sat down at the table and asked:

River: Uncle, tell me something about tonight when I receive Jesus.

André: River, who is Jesus to you?

River: Jesus is our Savior.

André: Do you know what that means?

River: Yes, he saved us from our sins, but I'm not into this sin stuff!

André stops peeling shrimp, seizing the chance to expound to this eight-year-old some Bonaventurian/Scotistic theology.

André: River, one of my favorite names for God is Good. And God-Father shares this Good with God-Son who both share this Good with God-Spirit. Does that make sense to you?

River: Yes!

André: *Amazed, continues:* The Bible says this Good God created the universe, stars, moon, sun, planets, plants and animals calling all of them good. Then God made the first human beings and called them very good.

River: Uh huh!

André: So just as God-Father shares all good with God-Son and both share all good with God-Spirit, it just overflows from one to the other.

River: I see, they keep sharing it, receiving and returning it to each other.

André: Correct, and this sharing is always going on. And when they shared all goodness with creation, they wanted creation to share it back with them just as they share with each other, fully completely perfectly.

River: So we give all our good back to God?

André: We do, but can we humans give good back to God fully completely perfectly?

River: Not perfectly . . .

André: Right! So they knew that someone like themselves would have to become human in order to give it back fully completely perfectly. And they decided that one of them would become one of us to make this return of all good to the Good God fully completely perfectly.

River: And that's Jesus, right?

André: Yes! Now let me ask you this, are the stuffed Christmas stockings our complete celebration of Christmas?

River: No! We have a Christmas tree with gifts, a Christmas supper, a Christmas mass, visits from our family and more.

André: So the Christmas celebration is greater than just opening the Christmas stockings?

River: Uh huh!

André: So saying that Jesus came to save us from our sins is like saying that a stuffed Christmas stocking is our celebration of Christmas. Just like the celebration of Christmas is greater than just Christmas stockings, so too, Jesus came for a greater reason. Jesus came so that all good can be given back to God fully completely perfectly. So this is the Jesus you will receive tonight when you make your First Holy Communion. You will touch Jesus tonight when you eat the bread and drink the wine. Does this make sense to you?

River: Yes, but . . . *pausing to think* . . . where is Jesus after mass, when I go home, when I'm in school or on the playground or with my friends?

André: An excellent question! Is Jesus Good?

River: Yes!

André: Is God Good?

River: Yes!

André: So every time you meet good, you meet Jesus, you meet God!

River: Uh huh!

André: When you were playing checkers with Uncle Ralph before, how did you feel?

River: Good!

André: That good was Jesus, that good was God!

River: – astonished.– I got it!

André: And when you shared your toys with your little twin cousins, how did you feel about doing that?

River: Good! And that was Jesus and God too! Wow!

The conversation concluded at this point. During the Christmas Eve Eucharist, River helped give the homily by repeating some of the above conversation. I know Bonaventure and Scotus smiled as they eavesdropped on this eight-year-old child experiencing their theology.

Advent Wine

*Advent wine held high
crystal-clad sparkling beverage
light lines the vessel
liquid Light, potable, inside*

*More than wassail or cup of cheer
more than Jack or Comfort's mead
more than every human pleasure
meeting every human need*

*Come weal, come woe, come empty measure
drink, quaff the cup, the Vine's dear treasure.
Come woe, come weal, come here to heal
drink from the chalice abolishing malice.*

Felicity Dorsett, O.S.F.

The Cord, 53.6 (2003)

Presence, Poise and Praxis: The Three-fold Challenge for Reconcilers Today

Mary Beth Ingham, C.S.J.

As followers of Jesus, we stand at the dawn of this third millennium with great hope and not a little trepidation. Our hope of course lies in the power of Jesus, living and active in our world. Our trepidation comes from our own sense of our limitations, our vulnerabilities. We long to be peacemakers in a world torn by violence and war; yet in our own lives we are conscious of those moments where we have been fragmented and not at peace. We long to promote health and life; yet in our own lives we are painfully aware of all that is not healthy or life-giving. We long to build bridges, to promote justice and right relationships, to take risks for reconciliation; yet we are often frightened and threatened by what such risks would require of us.

“My grace is enough for you, for in weakness power reaches perfection.” (2 Cor. 12:9) As we each in our own spiritual journey seek to turn our gaze from ourselves to Jesus, as we work to see ourselves in the divine loving regard, the spiritual traditions of our religious families offer us insights and support. For Franciscans, support can sometimes come from where it is least expected: from the complex and intricate thought of one of your greatest medieval metaphysicians: John Duns Scotus. As I hope to show in what follows, Scotus's manner of re-framing the vision of the human person and the created order in the light of divine love and generosity offers a rich source for all who live and work in the spiritual tradition of the Poverello. I am confident that in his discussion of the constitution of the human heart and its deep desire to love God above all things, to honor the self and to promote justice, Scotus offers a fruitful approach for anyone who seeks to promote right relationships with God, self, others and creation. I draw out the elements of his vision according to three themes: presence, poise and praxis.

I. Presence

At the time of this writing, we are entering the second full week of war in Iraq. Because of the trauma that this conflict has brought to our nation and

our world, it is difficult to concentrate on the day to day activities or on such things as writing a paper that require focus and sustained effort. My mind seems to me to be everywhere and nowhere. I am exhausted in the evening, yet with no great sense that I have done that much more than I normally do. My imagination and my emotions are drawn to the other side of the world, to people I do not know, to children and to the other innocent victims of the violence around them.

This experience of inner fragmentation and distraction calls my attention to the way in which my life might have other, less significant fragmentations and how these affect me and those around me. We all know what it feels like to be with someone who is distracted, who is cold or distant. They appear absent from what is going on around them. In their presence we feel unimportant and, perhaps, even bothersome. This type of encounter brings out and confirms our deepest fears: that we really are not that important or that our problems are not as important as those of others. We can all remember at least one time in our lives where we were not completely present to what was going on around us. We can also bring to mind either people or occasions where our behavior was evasive. Often, when we are unreconciled our behavior reveals our discomfort with a past situation or person.

Times when we must force ourselves to pay attention to what is going on around us strip our energy and leave us exhausted. The psychic effort required to unify what can be so fragmented within us is really enormous. These times of distraction or inattention are often those where our own internal world, our preoccupations, needs, concerns are disunified and out of sync with what is going on around us. We use the term "disconnected" for we feel unconnected with what surrounds us. We are "somewhere else" entirely.

Conversely, we all know how empowering it is to be in the presence of someone who is fully engaged with us and with whatever may be happening in our lives. We can all remember at least one moment in our lives where we were engaged with what was going on around us. These moments are energizing, they are dynamic experiences where life seems to be happening around us and within us. No effort is required. Indeed, things happen around us and we are carried along by a strength much greater than our own.

Considering these two contrasting human experiences points to the difficulty and the exhilaration of the activity of full presence. What is really going on in the case of the fully present individual? What has come together for her/him at a particular instant? Conversely, what has not happened, not come together in the case of the distracted individual? What is preventing him/her from allowing the energy to flow through the individual to those around her/him?

If we consider anyone who is formed in his or her craft or field—the professional athlete, the gifted artist or dancer, the master educator, spiritual di-

rector or health care professional—we are aware of the enormous act of presence that is required of this person. The act of presence I refer to is not simply presence to what he or she is doing (running a race, throwing a pot, teaching a class) and to others who are present, but also an internal self-presence that is a dynamic act of self-awareness, rather than a self-consciousness that can distract. This dynamic act of self-awareness and presence to the other is a single, simultaneous act. Such an act can only be performed by a rational being. This act, as we know, is difficult to achieve and almost impossible to maintain over prolonged periods of time. It is, however, a transformative act: both self-transforming and transforming of others. When we achieve it, we sense a harmony and peace that gives life to us and to those around us.

How is such an act possible? Ancient Stoic thinkers used an organic metaphor to point to such an act. It was the metaphor of the living organism in which two natural dynamic dispositions were operative: the first, that of self-conservation or preservation protected the organism at the level of identity and being; the second, that of growth and development directed the organism's energies beyond itself: toward reproduction. Both tendencies function naturally and their point of contact was itself the life energy of the organism. In other words, it was not in protection of the self as opposed to movement outward that was the life force of the organism. Nor was it only in the movement beyond the self that the organism experienced its fullest life. Rather, it was in the simultaneous and dynamic tension of the two that the organism grew and developed, both in complexity and in perfection.

Like many thinkers in the thirteenth century, John Duns Scotus was influenced by such Stoic models, especially as they were transmitted through the early Patristic writers to the monastic tradition of the 12th century. Indeed, Scotus borrows from the Benedictine Anselm a way to understand these two tendencies as they manifest themselves in a rational being. Like his predecessor, Scotus refers to them as *affectio*, or affections, but both meant by this term not an emotion or felt affection, but rather a metaphysical disposition or desire, a rational thrust that belonged to the constitution of the being. These affections are first, the affection for happiness (or possession) and the affection for justice (or loving the good for itself alone). If we see these two affections as directed toward the good, we understand that in the affection for happiness, the good is loved for the self and for whatever it might bring to the self. In the affection for justice, the good is loved independently of what it might bring to the self, that is, it is loved for itself alone and on the basis of its intrinsic value. It is loved simply because it deserves to be loved.

Both affections belong to our rational nature, both are good and required for our fullest perfection. The affection for happiness is a self-directed affection. This affection has as its goal the protection of the individual. As a rational affection, we might call this the integrity of character. When my integrity

is protected, then I am spiritually protected. The affection for justice is a value-directed affection. This affection has as its goal the recognition and acknowledgement of value, independently of individual concerns. As a rational affection, Scotus calls this the moral constitution within the will. This is the affection that makes us free, because this is the affection that is both naturally disposed to love what is good and rationally equipped to control the affection for happiness. The affection for justice asks the question: "is this good really a good?" "is this action really what I should do at this time?"

While Scotus followed Anselm in his use of these two affections and how they constitute the natural and rational freedom of the human will, he did not follow Anselm's more negative anthropology in their regard. In his *De Casu Diaboli*, Anselm had argued that the affection for justice was that rectitude of the will that was lost as a result of original sin. Since the original departure from Paradise, human willing is predominately the affection for happiness as a natural tendency to seek our own good. Scotus responds that, if this were true, then there is no such thing as moral freedom. If the human will does not still retain this important moral affection, then we do not have genuine control over our own actions. We should not be blamed for seeking our own good at the expense of another, because that is what our nature demands. Unlike Anselm, Scotus argues¹ from a more positive anthropology when he claims that the human will is fully natural, fully rational and completely free. The affection for justice, the will's natural disposition toward intrinsic good and natural ability to restrain itself, remains even after the fall. It has not been lost; nevertheless, its natural harmony with the affection for happiness has been affected. This harmony is now more difficult to attain. It requires more work on our part; it is not impossible.

For Scotus (and Anselm), when these two affections work together and are in harmony, when what should be loved as a possession is loved in that way and when what should be loved for itself is loved in that way, then the rational being is both perfected and fulfilled. Indeed, both thinkers agree that herein lies the perfection of rational freedom: it is right and ordered loving; it creates right and ordered relationships.

But such harmony is difficult to attain. Too often the affections are not in an appropriate relationship. Sometimes, the affection for possession takes over and invades the life of rational choices. Everything that is loved or done is inspired by preoccupation with the self and the individual's needs. Nothing is understood to lie outside my personal interests or the interests of those I care for. Everything is seen to be in reference to me. Other times, the affection for justice can become an affection for perfectionism, or for inappropriate other-centered choices. An overweening sense of duty or obligation can mask an affection for justice that is operating alone, as it were. In either extreme case, that of extreme self-centered or other-centered behavior, the perfective bal-

ance of the two affections is lost. When the balance is lost, then freedom is hindered and rationality is diminished. Such loss of balance can reveal itself in destructive personal behaviors: addictions to substance, to relationships, to work or achievement. The affection for possession can disguise itself as the affection for justice, using duty and generosity as reasons for actions or choices.

But like any spiritual discernment, the false harmony eventually reveals itself as false. Sooner or later, the behavior's destructive nature is unmasked. The true harmony of right ordering of these two affections requires the presence of both at all times and in every choice. This means that a total disregard for the self is not productive of freedom or of rationality, let alone a healthy life. The affection for possession loves the self, to be sure, but the self is a creature of inestimable worth, loved by God and deserving of love. I owe it to myself to consider my own good in the choices I make. Indeed, the affection for justice (that desire to love what is good as it deserves) cannot disregard love for the self and still remain faithful to its deepest desire. It is not the case that the two affections operate independently of one another. On the contrary, when I desire to be a good person and to love rightly, I am uniting the two affections into one. The desire to love rightly is a desire that fulfills both affections. It fulfills the affection for justice because loving rightly is what that affection desires. It fulfills the affection for possession because if loving rightly is characteristic of a good person, then the desire to be a good person is the most personal and rational desire we can have. In addition, Scotus would argue that this sort of desire is most personal, most rational, most free and finally, most satisfying.

Because of his more optimistic anthropology, for Scotus, personal happiness and perfection are not at odds with good behavior. We can be attentive and aware of our self and our own needs and aware of the needs of others without tearing ourselves in two. There is no antagonism within the human heart: there is only an intricate balance to be achieved. We achieve this balance by working at the two-fold act of presence to self and to other. This balance is what is required for inner harmony and peace. It is only when we have achieved this harmony that our very presence, like that of Jesus, will bring peace to conflict.

In a beautiful argument in IV, 46, Scotus offers an example of divine behavior that might help us see more clearly what this sort of balanced attitude might look like. In answer to the question of the coincidence of justice and mercy, especially in God's forgiveness of sinners, Scotus begins with a presentation of two notions of justice.²

The first is from Anselm, the second from Aristotle. The first (Anselmian) understanding of justice involves rectitude of the will served for its own sake. This would be justice to myself, or what we might identify with the affection for possession. The second (Aristotelian) understanding of the term deals with

this rectitude in relationship to another. This justice would look to the value of the act, in order to see what it might deserve. Here, of course, we recognize the affection for justice. Indeed, there is a sense of justice that refers to the self, to what character and integrity require. Additionally, there is a sense of justice that involves due proportion to something or someone other than oneself, giving someone what he deserves. An act may be just in either or both senses. I can act justly toward myself as well as toward another. This illustrates what we said earlier in terms of the *affectio iustitiae* and how it can unite with the *affectio commodi* in the case of personal dignity and integrity.

In the case of divine justice, we can consider the following situation: God could act by virtue of either perspective. God can either respond according to the object (what it is owed) or according to the divine nature (what God owes Himself, so to speak). When God acts generously, this is better understood as a function of divine integrity rather than a function of our deserving reward. Such an act reveals the coincidence of the two affections, with the primacy of the affection for possession over justice, strictly observed. Indeed, the two affections are perfectly fulfilled in divine generosity, where God loves as God is, freely and generously. Such generous freedom takes nothing from God's delight; rather it adds to it. Healthy generosity reveals that the most noble action is self-fulfilling and life giving.

II. Poise

When, for my part, I work to attain this inner harmony that involves both presence within and presence to others, I am like the dancer or the athlete. I am poised, ready to act, to execute the move or the play. The poise I refer to here is not the social grace of poise, that is, the ability to "keep one's cool" in social settings, although this might be a consequence of the attitude. I refer rather to an internal point, sometimes called the still point, or "the zone" as athletes say.

At this moment of poise, I am listening and attentive to everything around me. Sometimes it is all a matter of timing: I await my cue. I cannot know when the cue will come, and sometimes the wait seems interminable. In some cases, the cue does not come at all for me. I am not needed in every scenario. But the readiness of the poised moment requires everything I have.

In my opinion, the asceticism of today requires this type of attitude of us: readiness and poise. Ours may not be the era where ascetical practices can be reduced to physical discomfort, such as lack of sleep or long hours in prayer. Rather, the asceticism required of us may be a radical readiness for whatever moment God may present to us. Our readiness must be humble and simple, with no grumbling that a moment did not come for us in a given situation. This sort of readiness takes long preparation in attentiveness, listening for the

Spirit, conviction that we do not have the answers but that, when the moment comes, we will receive what we need. It requires a collaborative and mutual spirit of generosity, where we are happy to assist another in completing the work of peacemaking, where we do not see ourselves as the only person who can reconcile, where we strive to remain open to notice what Jesus is doing in the situation, and not what we think we should be doing.

This type of ascetical attitude takes everything we have. Most importantly, it may require of us that we turn over a project or an effort that has meant everything to us. We may be asked to turn something precious over just when we see ourselves critical or essential to the project. This handing over is a grace: for it is the very outpouring of divine life, the very act of divine kenosis (Phil. 2). Indeed, the ultimate peace and reconciliation we long for may only be reached at the price of this act of generosity.

Our ability to respond to the important moments such as these depends both on the developed sense of presence that is simultaneously internal and external, and upon the readiness to act in response to the requirement of the situation. When Scotus deals with this moment of choice, he states that the morally mature person knows immediately what to do and does it, just as a musician knows what notes to play at the right time and plays them. This poise is not simply a mental attitude or intention, it is like the runner at the starting line, waiting for the "go" of the referee. The inner readiness of the two affections in harmony now gives way to the energy to act, to move outward toward a situation in which we see what should happen and, most importantly, what we need to do. Yet this energy must be controlled energy, informed by patience and attentiveness to the moment when we must act.

It is in the act of poise that Scotus resolves the creative tension, always operative between the two affections within us. For him, it is not the case that one day, all will be in harmony, a type of stasis where we can relax and enjoy things. On the contrary, the poised moment is a type of transcendent, trans-temporal rational experience, where we stand at the boundary of life: of self and other. At this critical edge, we know the energy of life that lies within all and sustains all. Time seems suspended and we have the impression of entering a higher dimension.

III. Praxis

This experience is the moment of praxis, of action, for which our internal presence and poise have prepared us. This is the here and now of justice. If we have not done our homework, as it were, we will pass this moment by and hardly recognize it. We will be so attentive to our plans, our projects, our good actions that we will not be able to allow the Spirit to get in our way.

This moment of praxis depends in a critical way upon the inner relationship of the two affections. On them and on their harmonic relationship depends free choice and, ultimately, freedom. Because we have these two dynamic affections, we have control over our own actions and can await the timing required. At this instant of choice, the rational person stands, as it were, between a double choice: first, to act or not (this is the timing question) and second, to do this or that (this is the substantive question). For example, I may know very well what I should do in a situation, but not yet have the sense that this is the right time. So, I wait, ready to act but also ready to revise my action in light of what may change in the situation.

Artists and athletes offer us the best example of this. For an athlete, everything depends upon the hours of training, upon attention to the game at hand and to the moment when his move is the essential move. The goal is the excellent move, the play, the shot. Likewise, the harmonic relationship between the two affections is the dynamic source for the poised person. The moment of poise finds its fulfillment in the act of praxis. Scotus's vision of the rational human person is a vision that is founded upon the dynamic interaction between the affection for self and the affection for another. This dynamic interaction is a creative tension whose resolution is not found in one affection or the other, but in the poised focus toward action. It is action, it is praxis that fulfills the deepest desires within us: both the desire for our own protection and the desire for the good.

Praxis is the fulfillment of rational desire. It is the completion of what lies within us reaching out toward God. Praxis is the manifestation of the human person as *capax Dei*, as a being open to the divine. Here we find the Incarnational motif of Scotist thought reversed, as the human reaches out toward and enters into union with God. This union foreshadows the beatific embrace, for we are not yet into the complete presence of the creativity that imitates divine creativity. We extend the incarnational and sacramental presence into the world with our acts of love, acts that are both selfless and self-fulfilling.

As our acts contribute to divine action in the world, we enter another dynamic that is both natural and free. This is the divine dynamic of *firmitas*, the commitment present in God's own love. Within the Trinitarian communion, according to Scotus, divine love operates according to both a necessary and a free perspective. God's self-relationship is necessary, quite simply, because of divine simplicity and the integrity of divine self-relationship. Just as organic beings are held together by the dynamic affection for possession (a natural impulse for self-preservation), so too the divine being is sustained by divine identity. In addition, divine love is directed to God's own being because God is the highest good and good cannot not be loved.

God's love within the Trinitarian communion is also free because it is an act of the will and the will is the free potency. In God, freedom and necessity

do not contradict one another, because God's nature is what it is and because God freely chooses and rejoices in love. Scotus affirms simply that, in God, freedom and necessity are both operative, because of the nature of God and the nature of love.

Since freedom is, for Scotus, understood to be independent from any external constraint, one is free to act when one is not constrained or forced by anyone or anything external to oneself. Clearly, the inner life of the trinity is free in precisely this sense. God's inner life of love is defined on the basis of the autonomous divine nature: completely self-contained in its intentional objects. But divine activity exhibits just this sort of intentional independence when acting *ad extra*, or external to God, in creation. No created object possesses the good belonging to the divine nature. External to the divine essence there is no natural reason belonging to any course of action that would constrain or necessitate divine choice. Any actions God takes outside the divine essence are not completely explainable in terms of conditions, objects or situations that exist independently of God.

However, just because there is no external way to justify or explain divine action, this does not mean that God's actions cannot be explained. These actions can be explained, however, precisely in terms of divine identity, divine integrity and divine intentionality, all best understood in terms of how scripture describes God: Love. Concretely, this means that, in any situation involving divine action, one cannot completely explain the situation solely in terms of the conditions within which God has acted. We must allow for a partial explanation coming from the nature of God. Why God chose Abram, for example, cannot be completely explained in terms of Abram's character or natural traits. Why God remained faithful to the Hebrews and Israelites despite their infidelity is a question that can only be completely answered by an appeal to the divine nature and to the requirements of gracious love that flows from God's self-identity and integrity.

All this points to a central dimension that belongs to divine love and freedom: *firmitas* or divine steadfastness. God's choice to act within a certain established order is itself an affirmation of the divine commitment to an earlier choice to establish that order. Divine fidelity expresses God's "ability to adhere to its object in a self-actualizing action, the love-product of which is in no way pre-figured in the will nor coerced by the object."³³

This sort of fidelity is both the deepest expression of divine nature and the fullest manifestation of the exercise of freedom.

This explains why Scripture is so important as a backdrop for Scotist thought and why, despite his importance for the history of philosophy, he is bringing together theology and philosophy. As divine self-revelation, the sacred texts give critical information about the nature of God that lies behind and helps explain divine action in human history. Salvation history recounts in

a marvelous manner the details of divine activity *ad extra*: the call of Abram, the Exodus, the Incarnation. These actions both recount and predict divine response. What God has revealed in the past can be used as a basis for the human expectation for the future. For Scotus, it is not the fact of divine graciousness and fidelity that is at issue; it is the extent of divine graciousness and fidelity that cannot be assigned ahead of time. This movement of divine graciousness of which the Incarnation is the fullest manifestation culminates in the divine response of acceptance in the order of merit. This is the act of love by which God accepts any human action as worthy of reward and orders it toward whatever manner of fulfillment that is deemed suitable according to divine generosity.

When Scotus discusses the order of merit, he situates it clearly in the theological domain, because it depends upon the nature of God, precisely as revealed in Scripture. When he speaks of divine acceptance, Scotus assumes that the God referred to is one that we know well both from our reflection upon scripture and upon our own personal experiences. This is a God who can be trusted. Acceptance appears as the culmination of divine intentionality from the first moment. There is no distinction between the graciousness of the creator, the redeemer and sanctifier. Nothing, not even human weakness, has interfered with the realization of divine desire. Indeed, history unfolds as a single movement of love that informs human experience. Acceptance is nothing less than the bringing to completion of the good work begun by God at the moment when order came forth out of chaos. As ordered and ordering love, it is part of the overall divine intention to reveal and share graciousness and mercy. Like divine action recorded in Scripture, the act of acceptance expresses the divine joy and, in particular, the delight with which God responds to every human action. Acceptance is the divine applause for human efforts at loving; the divine joy at the sight of human generosity. Here God's freedom meets human freedom; God's love encounters human love. Here God freely and lovingly embraces a human action performed out of love. This action, however great or small, is accepted and rewarded. Indeed, where the order of merit is concerned, Scotus affirms only one certainty: God's freedom and love are so immense, that we can count on a reward far beyond anything our actions deserve. Divine goodness does not stop there, for our sins will be punished far less than they deserve:

And so, it is well said that God always rewards beyond our worth, and universally beyond any particular value which an act might merit. This merit is beyond nature and its intrinsic goodness; it is from a gratuitous divine acceptance. What's more, even beyond that justice which would commonly reward an act, for God rewards by means of pure liberality.⁴

If all this is true, then the highest human perfection is not justice (or even acting out of the affection for justice). This represents the fulfillment of moral perfection, but not yet a perfection that shares in divine life. Rather, the highest perfection is love, and generous love in imitation of God's outpouring in creation, redemption and salvation. The two intentions (justice and charity) do in fact make the actions different. An act performed out of love is superior to one performed out of justice because it imitates the divine action and is never limited by the constraints of what is required. Indeed, divine action goes beyond justice to us because generosity is never limited to what we deserve.

Divine acceptance is the manifestation of generous freedom according to a Franciscan perspective. Just as Francis was free to throw all his possessions away and rely completely on the love of God, so God is free to throw caution to the wind, as it were, and toss out rewards, not so much to the completely undeserving (since God can never reward the sinner for sin, nor punish the good person for being good)—Scotus states this clearly in *Ordinatio IV*, d. 46⁵—but far beyond the actual amount that might be determined in a calculation of strict justice. This sort of God is depicted in the parable told by Jesus in Matthew 20: the generous master who pays everyone the same, and wonders why some complain because he is generous.

When, therefore, Scotus exalts the action of the divine will in his texts, it is the affirmation of the divinity of generosity, a defense of the Franciscan penchant to throw caution to the wind. This is what it means to rely "*mere ex voluntate Dei*"—solely on the divine will—which really means solely on divine love and generosity.

Generosity is thus rendered rational; indeed, it is rationality itself. In the generous act, the person pours forth, not unreflectively nor because of any external constraint or condition that requires action of a particular sort, but because this is what it means to be that sort of person. Here generosity meets integrity, as the deepest reality of the divinity is generous and intentional love, mercy and forgiveness. The reason God acts in this way, Scotus would argue, is because this is the sort of person (or Triune communion) that God is. This God is clearly not the God of the Philosophers, or the intellectuals of his time. It is not the God of Aristotle or Plato: a God understood to be Ground of Being, Unmoved Mover, Necessary Principle or Form of the Good. These gods are fine for others, but they do not hold a candle to the triune God revealed in Jesus Christ. And here, Scotus argues, Christianity has something that really is Good News.

Indeed, this God is not best encountered by thinking or speculating about the divine nature: not a God of theory at all. Scotus defines theology as praxis, not a speculative or contemplative science.⁶

This is a personal God encountered by and in the activity of loving and selfless generosity: a God of praxis, a dynamic God to be encountered not

possessed; a God into whose inner life we are invited and whose sole desire is to transform us into our true selves, as genuine and vibrant *imago Dei*. This God is frightening. Here is not someone to carry around in a purse or wallet. This is a demanding, irritating, relentless “Hound of Heaven” sort of God, who never leaves us where we’d rather stay and always calls us further and deeper into the reality of love, generosity and mercy.

In these moments, we do not act as individual agents. Indeed, here is where the divine presence is fully operative with us and fully generous toward us. God cooperates so intimately with human choice and freedom, affirms Scotus, that divine love is present to each of our choices and desires only that we choose rightly. God longs for our best choice and gives us all the help that we need, but never makes us choose rightly. We must do that for ourselves. When we do choose both freely and as God would have us, we join our energies with the divine outpouring of gracious goodness into the world. Every act of praxis is a moment that has been prepared “from the foundation of the world.” Every moment that has gone before has been leading up to this moment. At this moment, we are fully free, fully rational and fully human. All reality awaits our choice.

Endnotes

¹*Ordinatio* II, 6.

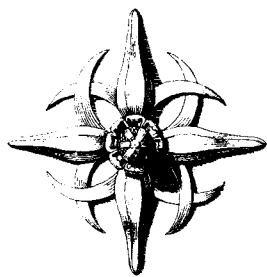
²An English version of this text can be found in Allan B. Wolter, *Duns Scotus on the Will and Morality* (Washington: CUA Press 1986), pp. 238-255.

³William A. Frank, “Duns Scotus’s Concept of Willing Freely: What Divine Freedom Beyond Choice Teaches Us,” *Franciscan Studies* 42 (1982): 86.

⁴*Ordinatio* I, d. 17, n. 149 (Ed. Vat. 5:210). Translation mine.

⁵*Duns Scotus on the Will and Morality*, p. 245.

⁶See *Ordinatio* Prologue, Pars V, (1).



On the Significance of Being “You” Exploring Scotistic Insights for Franciscan Life and Ministry in a Post-Modern Context

F. Edward Coughlin, O.F.M.

The most popular movie in 1971 was *Love Story*; other favorites that year included the *Summer of '42*, *The Owl and the Pussycat*, *Fiddler on the Roof*, and the Oscar went to the *French Connection*. The movie *Harold and Maude* premiered that same year and was a box office flop.¹ The story of the relationship between the twenty-year-old Harold and septuagenarian Maude did not capture the imagination of moviegoers. Ironically, the movie quickly became something of a cult favorite among the coming of age baby boomer generation—a generation characterized by its preoccupation with self, eagerness to explore new experiences, readiness to experiment with a wide variety of illegal drugs, and an inclination to challenge the traditional values and assumptions of every institution.

Harold Chasen is a bored and emotionally dulled young man. He dresses formally and lives in a beautiful but sterile mansion. He is a loner who frequently stages elaborate suicide attempts to get attention, particularly that of his distant and self-preoccupied mother. When Harold’s analyst presses him to say what he does for fun, “what gives him that special satisfaction?” Harold replies: “I go to funerals.” In a later scene we also learn that he enjoys watching demolitions. A powerful counter-point commentary is provided by the Cat Stevens lyrics: “. . . lift your head, and let your feelings out instead. And don’t be shy, just let your feelings roll on by, on by.”²

Dame Marjorie Chardham, Maude, is an unconventional free spirit who is full of life and enthusiasm. She lives in a railroad car that sits across the highway from the Pacific Ocean. Her home is warm and looks very lived-in. It is crammed full of treasured memorabilia that she describes as “incidental, not integral.” Maude is turning eighty on Saturday—an age that she believes is “long enough.” She has decided that her life will “all be over on Saturday.”

In one scene, Maude describes herself to Harold as someone who is “always looking for the new experience.” Harold replies: “Maybe; nevertheless I

think you are upsetting people. I don't think that's right." Maude explains, "Some people get upset because they think they have a hold on things. I am merely acting as a gentle reminder to people: here today, gone tomorrow; so don't get too attached to things now." Maude's free spirited philosophy is conveyed in the Cat Stevens lyrics: "if you want to sing out, sing out. And if you want to be free, be free. . . . If you want to be me, be me, if you want to be you, be you. 'Cause there are a million things to be, you know that there are. . . .'"³

In this article, I would like to use the characters and experiences of Harold and Maude to draw out some of the practical implications of two Scotistic doctrines, namely, (1) the principle of individuality, "thisness" and (2) the human heart's affection for justice and affection for self. Both of these doctrines hold the potential to offer some useful and practical guidance to contemporary men and women who desire to experience a greater measure of peace in a fragmented and disordered world. They also offer a creative and helpful way to envision a way of living in "right relationship" characterized by mutuality and harmony in a world torn apart by division and discord.

The challenge of peace as well as the longing for right and reconciling relationships are among the most pressing needs in these complex and conflicted times. Paradoxically but not surprisingly, the proclamation of peace and an emphasis on right relationship are two of the outstanding characteristics that distinguished the life and ministry of the early followers of St. Francis. The enduring wisdom and insightful perspective of Scotus, an important theologian-philosopher within that early tradition, offers contemporary Franciscans an invitation to rediscover some of the essential characteristics of the Franciscan charism within the Church and world. These Scotistic doctrines also offer contemporary Franciscans a better way to understand core challenges at the heart of the life and ministry of Franciscans who are making a significant difference in our contemporary Church and in our post-modern world.

The Principle of Individuation – "Thisness"

Haecceitas, "thisness," is the principle of individuality. It has a twofold function in Scotus's work in that (1) "it makes an individual unique and incapable of duplication, even by an omnipotent God; and (2) it differentiates [each individual] radically and ultimately from each and every other individual. . . ."⁴ According to Scotus, it is "the individual that is primarily intended by God."⁵ We should understand, therefore, that in the words of Mary Beth Ingham, "[e]very being within the created order possesses an immanent dignity; it is already gifted by the loving Creator with a sanctity beyond our ability to understand."⁶ Each person's "thisness" is, in fact, "a sacred mystery that is known fully to God alone."⁷ Allan B. Wolter can argue, therefore, that this Scotistic doctrine:

would seem to invest each [human person] with a unique value as one *singularly* wanted and loved by God, quite apart from any trait that person shares with others or any contribution he or she might make to society. One can even say, haecceity is our personal gift from God.⁸

Scotus's principle of individuality reflects a high point in the early Franciscan theological tradition's reflection on the noble dignity of the human person. In his fifth admonition, Francis invited everyone to "Consider . . . in what excellence the Lord God has placed you for [God] created you and formed you *to the image* of [God's] beloved Son according to the body, and *to His likeness* according to the Spirit." He concluded this admonition by challenging all women and men to "glory in your infirmities (2 Cor 12:5) and [bear] daily the holy cross of our Lord Jesus Christ (cf. Lk 14:27)."⁹

The ancient wisdom at the heart of this admonition emerged as a central theme in the Franciscan theological tradition. In the theology of Alexander of Hales, Bonaventure, and others, it played a prominent role and acquired some distinctively Franciscan characteristics.

The "excellence" of our having been made human and "in the image of God" also plays an important role in Scotus's theology and philosophy of love. One of his most distinctive contributions to the Franciscan tradition in this area is his principle of individuality. This principle demands that "you" consider honestly how "you" have "received" the gift of "your" being—"thisness"—and then consider how "you" are living and loving in the light of that gift. It is a challenge to hear the "you" in Francis's admonition in a *singular* kind of way.

The challenge of "receiving" the gift of your unique being invites each of you to struggle to comprehend some measure of the mystery of your "thisness," the fact that "you" are "singularly wanted and loved by God." It involves an honest attempt to open your heart to the reality of love itself, a love that enables "you" to be loving and empowers "you" to become more loving. Ideally, a sense of your excellence and "thisness" becomes the firm foundation upon which "you" struggle to en flesh love in the ordinary, sometimes extraordinary moments of "your" life.

Francis heard the humble and crucified Christ's call to love. He understood this call to love as a call to "live according to the form of the Holy Gospel"¹⁰ in the range of relationships that defined his life—a range that included being present to the Lord in prayer, to the poor and suffering in their need, to the brothers in the witness of their life together, and to a Church in ruins. He responded generously to this call and encouraged others to strive to "follow the teaching and the footprints of our Lord Jesus Christ" as "best" they could.¹¹ By continuing to embrace daily the demands of the call to love and be loving, successive generations of Francis's followers have struggled to

discover how each one of them can make a *singular* difference on the margins of the Church, within the local communities, and in the middle of the marketplace.

In the movie, Maude senses intuitively that Harold does not grasp the singular significance of his life, the fact that he—"Harold"—might be wanted and loved by anyone, much less by a God who freely and deliberately called him into being. Maude's intuition leads her to render herself present to him, to engage him in conversation, and to invite him into experiences that will challenge him to understand his life and the world in a whole new way.

In one scene, Maude recruits Harold to help her rescue a dying tree from the suffocating smog and unhealthy environment of downtown Redwood City, California. She assures Harold that "we have got to do something about this life." Having clarified the urgency of the task, this unlikely pair steals a shovel, loads the tree onto a "borrowed truck," and races down the Pacific Coast Highway. Unaware of the importance of their mission, a California highway patrolman manages to pull them over. Maude refuses, however, to enter into his understanding of how things ought to be. She boldly informs him that she does "not believe in having a driver's license" even though she acknowledges that she has been driving for 45 years. When he asks if the truck is hers, she informs him that she "just took it." Sensing the problems that are about to entrap her, she speeds away. When the patrolman pursues her, she draws him into a tight series of circles across the width of the highway. His motorcycle stalls and he falls. Freed from his attempts to control and limit her, Maude continues joyfully and confidently on her way. Before the sun sets, the tree is transplanted in a forest and Maude assures Harold that it will be just fine. "It is where it needs to be, where it can grow."

In another scene, Maude tells Harold that if she could be a flower she would want to be sunflower: "They are tall and simple." She then asks Harold: "What flower would you like to be?" Somewhat hesitantly he says: "Oh, I don't know. One of these, maybe" as he points to a single daisy in a huge patch of wild daisies.

"Oh, but they're NOT all alike," Maude informs him. "Look. See, some are smaller; some are fatter; . . . some have lost petals. All kinds of observable differences! You see, Harold, I feel that much of the world's sorrow comes from the fact that people are 'this', yet allow themselves to be treated as if they were 'that.'"

As the camera pulls back we discover that the daisy patch is in a cemetery with uniform rows of white headstones suggesting that any measure of the individuality of those who have died has been eliminated.

Without in any way suggesting that Maude is an astute Scotistic philosopher, I do think her dialogue with Harold reflects an appreciation of the essence of Scotus's principle of individuation, "thisness." She notices things and delights in the value and mystery of even the smallest of things, the most ordinary kinds of experience. She has seen a lot of life and exudes a sense of inner peace and happiness. She seems to truly enjoy the simplicity of her life on the edges of the world in which she lives.

Maude's sense of herself as an individual enables her to be present to Harold, to respect his individuality, and to offer him the possibility of coming to know through experience his goodness and discover his capacity for love.

Maude becomes a mirror, a model, and a mentor in Harold's life.¹² By choosing to be present to him, to accept him as he is, and to walk with him, Maude is able to establish a relationship. It is a personal relationship through which she is able to invite Harold to look at things in different ways, to think differently, and to respect the desires of his heart. By encouraging him to do different things—"make some kind of music," "stroke, palm, caress, explore" the smooth contours of a sculpture in her living room, have fun at a carnival, for example—she invites Harold to discover new dimensions of his life. Maude is even able to provide an environment safe for Harold to begin to acknowledge and feel the inner pain that he had learned to avoid and deny.

Let's not presume that all the experiences Harold and Maude shared were praiseworthy, appropriate, or necessary—they smoked a bong and shared sex, for example! What was critical for Harold, as for ourselves, was his experience of Maude's respect and love for him as a unique individual. This caring relationship became an encounter with the power of love (grace). It forced him to struggle with its implications and to search for a more adequate understanding of both himself and his relationship with the world.¹³ As the Cat Stevens lyrics suggest, Maude led him "on the road to find out" the deeper meaning of his life and enabled him to discover that some of the answers "lie within, so why not take a look now?"¹⁴

Harold's response to Maude's loving presence in his life is captured in the song *I Think I See The Light* when Cat Stevens sings:

I used to walk alone, every step seemed the same.
This world was not my home, so there was nothing much to gain.
Look up and see the clouds, look down and see the cold floor.
Until you came into my life, girl, I saw nothing, nothing more.
Until I found the one I needed at my side,
I think I would have been a sad man all my life.
I think I see the light coming to me,
Coming through me giving me a second chance.

Because Maude chose to be a loving presence in Harold's life, he "found the one [he] needed at [his] side." The "light" she brought into his life gave him "a second chance." She treated him like a "this," not a "that." In the company of Maude, Harold began to feel loved and wanted by a woman who had a sense of her own self, who chose to turn her attention to him, and who concerned herself with what might be good for Harold rather than for her self. Maude's desire to establish a mutual and harmonious relationship with Harold went a long way toward establishing the conditions wherein Harold could consider new choices and explore new relationship possibilities.

Maude serves "as a gentle reminder" to the followers of Francis that each of us must, in the first place, struggle to grasp something of the mystery of our "thisness," the fact that each of us is "singularly wanted and loved by God." This is not an argument to support the cultivation of eccentricity. It is not a call to radical individuality. It is not a clarion call to an "anything goes" mentality. Rather, it is a call to be rooted and grounded in the mystery of God's singular love for each of us—a way of being in the presence of love itself that makes "me" more capable of loving others, the world, and myself in a *singular* way.

Maude also serves as "a gentle reminder" to the followers of Francis that our Gospel way of life and ministry is essentially a challenge to be in relationship—to cultivate loving-relationships that mirror and model, even if dimly and in an obscure way, the mystery of God's singular love for each person and all creation. Rooted in the "sanctity that is beyond our ability to understand," at least in theory, we are inclined and empowered to turn our attention to living the implications of God's loving desire for each of us to be a unique individual.

The Heart's Two Affections

The human person's capacity for action is rooted in the fact that all rational creatures have been made in "the image of God," that is, gifted with the powers of knowing and loving, as well as free with respect to choice. One of the most distinctive features of Scotus's understanding of the nature of the "rational creature" is his focus on the human will, the principle for all action, that is, right-willing, ordered-loving, justice. This is essentially "a focus on the power of love, the perfection of which reveals the fullest understanding of the human person as rational and as created in the image of God."¹⁵

As conceived by Scotus, the will is the power of loving desire passing into action. It is "the dimension of the self that is constituted to respond rationally to the command of Jesus: love your neighbor as yourself."¹⁶ The intellect, the power to know and understand, is the faculty that informs, works with, and serves the activity of ordered loving, justice, right-willing.¹⁷

Scotus's understanding of the will is best grasped in terms of the will's two affections and its freedom. Following Anselm, he identifies the will's "two affections" as the affection for justice (*affectio iustitiae*) and the affection for the self (*affectio commodi*). The two affections are "really dispositions for loving. They are metaphysical desires. They are not 'felt' affections, nor are they emotional responses to reality."¹⁸ They do reveal, however, the genuine "desires within the human heart."¹⁹ A working knowledge of these affections will, therefore, help us to understand better, and in a very personal way, how one might strive for a greater measure of personal integrity, how one might struggle for a greater measure of inner peace and harmony, and how one disposes the self in cooperation with grace to enter into relationships that value individuality, mutuality, and the good in itself.

The Affection for Self

The affection for what is advantageous to the self (*affectio commodi*) reveals a basic instinct within the human heart for one's own perfection "which consists above all in happiness (*beatitudo*)."²⁰ It demands that we pay attention to our intentions and desires—our inner life and our legitimate human needs. It also confronts us with the necessity of prudently and freely choosing to love ourselves as individuals while avoiding the temptations of either "excessive" self-indulgence or "irresponsible" self-denial. However, this is not to suggest that the concern for self is necessarily "selfish."²¹

The affection for one's own advantage reveals a natural and fundamentally "healthy concern for self."²² It is "radically self-centered" at least in the sense that "nature seeks primarily and above all else its own welfare"—happiness (*beatitudo*).²³ This affection manifests itself in a variety of emotional responses, both positive and negative, as they incline a person to either desire to take possession of a good and/or to protect one's own self.

The presence of strong emotions—anger, jealousy, envy, for example—reveals natural desires within a human heart in a particularly important way. They alert "me" to inner truths about: (1) what truly matters to "me," (2) the good for which "I" long, even if only privately or somewhat unconsciously, and/or (3) the fears and anxieties that arise because of "my" expectations of what is due "me" or how "I" might preserve the good "I" have taken hold of, even if in a very tenuous way.

More often than not, strong negative emotions reveal dimensions of the self that an individual might be reluctant to acknowledge. Frequently, emotions like these reveal truths for which "I" might not yet be ready to assume responsibility. For this reason, it takes skill and discipline to confront the subtle ways "I" might be reluctant to consider reality objectively or allow demanding truth to come into "my" conscious awareness (e.g., defense mechanisms: de-

nial, avoidance, projection, splitting, and the like). It takes inner faith and courage to acknowledge, at least to myself, my anger when I am trying to appear happy, my negative feelings when I am expected to be nice. There are numerous ways in which the affection for what is advantageous to the self must be acknowledged, learned from, and worked through if my capacity to love freely and justly is going to mature and develop as fully as it might. As Wolter notes, “the inclination for the advantageous does not need to be eradicated as something bad, but rather, controlled or moderated lest it lead to excess.”²⁴

In the movie, the prim, proper, and always composed Mrs. Chasen is self-centered, that is, focused totally on herself and her preferences in an extreme way. She knows what she likes, wants, and needs to be doing at every moment in her day. She does not hesitate to impose her preferences and judgments on Harold in ways that demonstrate a complete lack of respect for the desires of his heart. In one scene, for example, she informs Harold that his car, a black Cadillac hearse, is a “monstrosity . . . an ugly black horror . . . an embarrassment!” In a later scene, with the tune from *If You Want To Sing Out, Sing Out* playing in the background, she presents him with a silver gray jaguar coup convertible—a car she describes as “more appropriate for you. I like it very much.” As she walks away quite satisfied with herself, we see Harold holding a flaming welding torch in his right hand next to the car with its huge red bow. After glaring angrily at the place where she stood, he lowers the welder’s shield over his face and turns his attention to transforming the jaguar into a sporty black jaguar hearse.

In another sequence, Harold’s mother informs him that she has decided that it is time for him “to take on adult responsibilities . . . to get married.” She also decides that the best way to find him a suitable wife is to seek the assistance of a dating service. When the application arrives, she informs Harold that he must complete the “Personality Inventory.” She then proceeds to read the questions to him but quickly becomes absorbed in answering them as she thinks best. In the meantime, Harold takes a gun out of his briefcase. He points it at her and glares darkly at her. Suddenly, he shoots himself—another fake suicide attempt that annoys her but does not distract her from answering the remaining questions.

Regrettably, Harold is shy in a very self-conscious kind of way. He rarely lifts up his head and never lets his feelings out.²⁵ He is only able to express the desires of his heart in indirect or passive aggressive ways. He does not seem to have discovered the inner strength to pursue his legitimate needs, those things that might be good for him as an individual. His dark moods and downcast eyes suggest that he experiences little peace within himself. While he seems reluctant to pursue any kind of relationships, his chance and graced encounter with Maude becomes a critical turning point in his life.

The Affection for Justice

The affection for justice (*affectio iustitiae*) is the “nobler” and metaphysically higher affection.²⁶ It inclines the human person to will a good that is “not oriented to the self,”²⁷ that is, the honest good or the good in itself (*bonum honestum*). The affection for justice may be understood, therefore, as “a positive bias or inclination to love things objectively or as right reason dictates.”²⁸ Thus, Scotus argues that God is to be loved for God’s own sake “insofar as [God] is good and is the first good.”²⁹ Lesser goods are to be loved secondarily and honestly, namely, in terms of their intrinsic worth “rather than in terms of how the lesser good might perfect one’s individual person or nature.”³⁰

Scotus’s understanding of this affection is based on two assumptions. First, he argues that “[t]o love something in itself (or for its own sake) is more an act of giving or sharing than is desiring that object [good] for oneself.”³¹ Second, he also argues that in justice, there is “but one goodness toward which charity is directed, and that is God in [God’s self] and [one’s] neighbor as turned towards God in love.”³² Therefore, God is to be loved in the first place, other goods are to be loved secondarily in and through the love that is God—*caritas*.

As Ingham notes, the affection for justice is operative when honest choices cost “me” something.³³ It expresses the rational desire to love others “as they deserve” and to the extent that they deserve, not from any profitability to be gained” for one’s own self.³⁴ The inner movements associated with this affection provide important clues, therefore, that reveal a person’s character and what motivates an individual.³⁵

While the affection for justice looks beyond the self, it is not necessarily a “self-less” affection. Rather, it reveals the human capacity to look beyond the self without denying the value of the self. It demonstrates the human capacity to sacrifice what may be advantageous to the self for the sake of a higher good. In its purest, highest, and most radical form, the affection for justice imitates the charity of Christ in his willingness to be crucified because of the “excess of his love.”³⁶

The Heart’s Two Affections and the Struggle for Inner Harmony

The affection for justice and the affection for what is advantageous to the self are both “God given and lead to [God] in different ways.”³⁷ We need to be alert, therefore, to the fact that “in every rational choice both affections are present and at work. The key to right loving lies in the appropriate relationship between them.”³⁸ A conceptual understanding of these affections provides a practical and helpful framework for reflection and discernment in sorting through the heart’s strong, sometimes confused, often conflicted desires

“on the road to find out” the meaning, purpose, and goal of “my” life. This is a task that is critically important in moral decision making, in the struggle to build mutual relationships, and in fulfilling the command that “I” should strive daily to love God above all things and “my” neighbor as “my” self.

As suggested above, it takes skill, strength, inner discipline, and courage to face these challenges honestly. Without question, it demands faith to believe that sometimes, in the most mysterious of ways, our God intends to lead us through these desires to a better sense of what is truly good, right, and just. Therefore, in approaching these challenges, we should not lose sight of three of Scotus’s most fundamental assumptions, as seen below.

First, the assumption that justice is the free choice made by a maturing individual who is grounded in a sense of his or her being “singularly wanted and loved by God.” Second, the assumption that the choice of the honest good, a good that may have no reference to the self, reaches beyond but does not preclude or deny in any way a genuine love for the self and its legitimate desires. Third, the assumption that the choice to love and be loving is learned in the crucible of experience as a person of faith strives to love rightly, justly, in an ever more Christ-like way. Thus, character is both formed, and continues to be formed, as a person of faith makes loving choices. Over time, one can expect better glimpses of God’s love and come to appreciate, in ever-deeper ways, the fact that “I” am indeed “singularly wanted and loved by God.”

Throughout the movie *Harold and Maude*, we get a sense of the life that Maude has lived. In one scene, for example, she tells Harold a few things about her life in Vienna before the war. Her face reveals how precious and delightful her memories are and yet, at the same time, we see some of the pain she carries within as she looks away and gathers herself before she begins to talk about other things.

When Harold asks her about an umbrella hanging like a picture on the wall she tells him that it is from the days when she demonstrated “for the big issues—liberty, rights, and justice.” She claims she no longer needs the umbrella anymore to defend herself; now she “embraces” things and is “fighting for the big issues in a small, individual way.”

In another scene Harold takes Maude to a junkyard. As they are enjoying their picnic lunch, they watch the heavy machines grind, crunch, and chew on the scrap metal. After acknowledging that the junkyard might hold some measure of attraction for him, Maude turns to Harold and asks: “Is it enough?” She then explains that she is someone who “likes to watch things grow . . . fade . . . die . . . and change into something else. Ah life!”

Maude knows herself, she knows the stories that formed her character and the moments that wounded her heart. She evinces a sense of inner peace, poise, happiness, and joy. Harold describes himself, however, as someone who “has

not lived” but “has died a few times.” In response, Maude advises him: “A lot of people enjoy being dead. But they’re not dead, really. They’re just . . . backing away from life. Reach out. Take a chance. Get hurt, even! Play as well as you can. Go team! Give me an . . . L - I - V - E !Otherwise you have nothing to talk about in the locker room.”

Once again, I would like to suggest that Maude serves as “a gentle reminder” to the followers of Francis that we are called to lean into life, not to back away from life with its joys and sorrows, complications and promises. In facing this challenge, it will be helpful to keep in mind the many early Franciscan stories that demonstrate so effectively Francis’s willingness to attend personally to the challenges of discerning continually the desires of his heart in the context of his Gospel commitment.

In his prayer Francis was always asking: “Who are You, my dearest God? And, what am I?”³⁹ It was the hard question through which he discovered God’s love for him. Even as he struggled to understand the message of the crucified One, he felt empowered to begin repairing “a house in ruins” by *servicing* among the lepers, *forming* brothers according to the wisdom of the cross, *giving* the Gospel as a form of life to all who asked, *working* for peace between a wolf and a city, a mayor and a bishop, and the like.⁴⁰ In other words, Francis lived Scotus’s understanding of the affection for justice in a most singular way. For me, a character like Maude, someone less renowned for her holiness and more like myself, also serves as a helpful reminder that “I” must strive evermore consciously to live more justly “in a small, individual way” by making the small choices that daily invite me to be loving and act justly.

Maude also serves as “a gentle reminder” to the followers of Francis that all of us, “wherever we are, in every place, at every hour, at every time of day, everyday and continually”⁴¹ must strive to be attentive to the demands of relationship and consider carefully what loving presence might require of each of us in terms of justice “in a small, individual way.” In this way, a follower of Francis can stand receptive to the various ways grace and life seek to engage us and invite us to love, that is, to live rightly and justly by choosing goodness—God in all things and above all things.

Conclusion

Harold takes great care in preparing for Maude’s eightieth birthday. He decorates her home with huge and colorful paper daisies. On a small table he has a bottle of champagne chilling, a cake with white icing and yellow flowers, and a single daisy in a small vase. He shows her all these things as their evening together begins; he promises her that after dinner he has one more special surprise for her—a marriage proposal—which he hopes will “make her very happy.” Maude replies: “Oh Harold, I am happy. I can’t imagine a lovelier

farewell . . . my eightieth birthday . . . I took the tablets an hour ago. I'll be gone by midnight."

Harold panics when he realizes what she has done. As they speed toward the hospital in the back of an ambulance, Maude expresses her frustration at "all this noise, so unnecessary." On the way, Harold tells her how much he loves her. With a broad and peaceful smile, Maude replies: "Oh Harold, that is wonderful, go and love some more!"

The movie's ending is obviously bittersweet. After Maude dies, we see Harold's black jaguar-hearse careering off a cliff into the Pacific Ocean. Thankfully, Hollywood endings rarely disappoint. As the camera pulls back we see Harold strapping on the banjo Maude gave him as he begins to sing and dance across a field above the cliff. In the background we hear Cat Stevens singing: "If you want to sing out, sing out. And if you want to be free, be free . . . If you want to be me, be me, if you want to be you, be you. 'Cause there are a million things to be, you know that there are. . . ."

Hopefully, this attempt to bring the characters of Harold and Maude into something of a dialogue with two Scotistic doctrines sheds some light on how the contemporary followers of Francis might live in the light of the tradition's wisdom in their search for inner peace and right relationship in particular. It is a challenge to "you" and to "me" to hear, in a very personal and singular way, the call to live the Gospel in the relationships that seek to engage us at this moment in our lives. It is a call to face the big issues in a simpler, singular, but always more loving kind of way. So, let's "go, and love some more."

Endnotes

¹Directed by Hales Ashby, based on Colin Higgins's 1970 book with the same title. The soundtrack is a compilation of songs written and sung by Cat Stevens; although the soundtrack for the movie is unavailable, most of the songs can be found on various Cat Stevens CDs.

²Cat Stevens, *Don't Be Shy*.

³Cat Stevens, *If You Want To Sing Out, Sing Out*.

⁴Allan B. Wolter, *Duns Scotus' Early Oxford Lecture on Individuation*, Latin text and English translation with introduction (St. Bonaventure, NY: The Franciscan Institute, 1992), xiii.

⁵Scotus, *Ordinatio* II, d. 3, n. 251 as quoted in Wolter, *Early Oxford Lecture on Individuation*, xxvii.

⁶Mary Beth Ingham, *Scotus for Dunces: A Simple Guide to the Subtle Doctor* (St. Bonaventure, NY: Franciscan Institute Publications, 2003), p. 55.

⁷Ingham, p. 53.

⁸Allan B. Wolter, *Duns Scotus's Early Oxford Lecture on Individuation*, xxvii, emphasis added.

⁹Francis of Assisi, The Fifth Admonition, *Francis and Clare: The Complete Works*, ed. Regis J. Armstrong, O.F.M. Cap. (Ramsey, NJ: Paulist Press, 1982), p. 29. Paul's

letter to the Corinthians (2Cor 12:5) provides the context for interpreting Francis's understanding of human physical weakness or frailty (*infirmitas*)—littleness—as understood in light of 2Cor 12:9 where Paul writes: "My grace is enough for you, for in weakness power reaches perfection. And so I willingly boast of my weakness instead, that the power of Christ may rest in me." See also Philippians 4:13.

¹⁰Francis of Assisi, *Testament*, n. 14, in *Francis and Clare*, p. 155.

¹¹Francis of Assisi, *The Earlier Rule* (1223), 1:1 and 22:26, in *Francis and Clare*, pp. 109 and 128; This basic plan for life is phrased in slightly different words in the rules of the Poor Sisters, Third Order Regular, and the Secular Franciscan Order. See also the formulation of a simple plan for living in the *Canticle of the Creatures*, 14, in *Francis and Clare*, p. 39.

¹²A wonderful collection of mentoring stories can be found in Mathilda R. Cuomo, *The Person Who Changed My Life: Prominent People Recall their Mentors* (New York: Barnes and Noble Books, 2003). See also The Testament of St. Clare, 6, in *Francis and Clare*, p. 228.

¹³See Rollo May, *The Courage to Create* (New York: W.W. Norton, Co., Inc., 1975), p. 93.

¹⁴Cat Stevens, *On the Road to Find Out*.

¹⁵Mary Beth Ingham, "John Duns Scotus: Retrieving a Medieval Thinker for Contemporary Theology," in *The Franciscan Intellectual Tradition*, Vol. 1 (St. Bonaventure, NY: Franciscan Institute Publications, 2002), p. 100.

¹⁶Mary Beth Ingham, "A Certain Affection for Justice," *The Cord* 45.3 (1995): p.16; *The Harmony of Goodness: Mutuality and Moral Living According to John Duns Scotus* (Quincy, IL: Franciscan Press, 1996), p. 140.

¹⁷See Thomas Shannon, *The Ethical Theory of John Duns Scotus* (Quincy, IL: Franciscan Press, 1995), p.31. See also Ingham, *Scotus for Dunces*, pp. 94-100.

¹⁸Ingham, *The Harmony of Goodness*, p. 34.

¹⁹Ingham, "A Certain Affection for Justice," p. 16.

²⁰*Ordinatio* IV, suppl. dist. 49, qq. 9-10, in *Duns Scotus on the Will and Morality*, selected and translated with an introduction by Allan B. Wolter, Part II: The Will and Its Inclinations (Washington, DC: The Catholic University of America Press, 1986, 1997), p. 185.

²¹See Ingham, *Scotus for Dunces*, pp. 87-91. Of particular interest here would be an individual's response to the challenges of maturing adulthood as well as to the inevitable psycho-social crises named by Eric Erikson in *Identity, Youth and Crisis* (New York: W.W. Norton, Co., Inc., 1968).

²²Ingham, *The Harmony of Goodness*, p. 33.

²³Wolter, "Native Liberty of the Will as a Key to the Ethics of John Duns Scotus," In *The Philosophical Theology of John Duns Scotus*, edited by Marilyn McCord Adams (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1990), p. 150.

²⁴Wolter, *Will and Morality*, p. 40.

²⁵See the lyrics to Cat Stevens' *Don't Be Shy*.

²⁶John Duns Scotus, *Ordinatio* III, suppl., dist. 46, in *Will and Morality*, p.153; see also Ingham, *Scotus for Dunces*, p. 87.

²⁷*Ordinatio* III, suppl. dist. 46, in *Will and Morality*, p.153. For more on this point see Wolter's discussion of the four characteristics of love in "Native Liberty of the Will as a Key to the Ethics of John Duns Scotus," p. 151.

²⁸Wolter, "Native Liberty of the Will as a Key to the Ethics of John Duns Scotus," p. 152.

²⁹John Duns Scotus, *Ordinatio* III, suppl., dist. 28, a.1 in *Will and Morality*, p. 289. Scotus also states in this discussion that charity “inclines to a perfect and orderly love of God. . . .” Secondly, charity “wills that God be loved by anyone whose love is perfect and directed to loving [God] as [God] is in [God’s self].”

³⁰Wolter, *Will and Morality*, p. 40.

³²*Ordinatio*, III suppl., dist. 28, in *Will and Morality*, p. 291. Scotus identifies charity with justice. Wolter explains this is an extension and amplification of St. Anselm’s understanding of justice. See the introduction, p. 90.

³³Ingham, *Scotus for Dunces*, p. 89.

³⁴Ingham, *The Harmony of Goodness*, p. 34.

³⁵Ingham, *Scotus for Dunces*, p. 89.

³⁶Eph. 2:4.

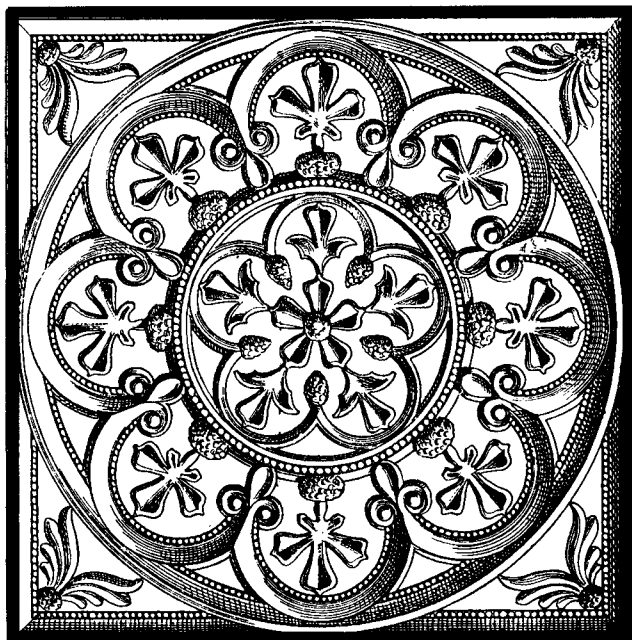
³⁷See John Duns Scotus. *Ordinatio* III, suppl. dist. 26 in *Will and Morality*, 153. See also the introduction, p. 40.

³⁸Ingham, *Scotus for Dunces*, p. 88.

³⁹*Little Flowers of St. Francis*, The Third Consideration, in *Francis of Assisi: Omnibus of Sources*, ed. Marion Habig (Chicago, IL: Franciscan Herald Press, 1972), p. 1444.

⁴⁰*Major Life of St. Francis*, ch. 2, n. 1; ch.1, n.6; ch.4, n.3; 1 Celano, 37; *The Little Flowers of St. Francis*, n.21; *Legenda of Perugia*, 44. All of these texts can be found in *Francis of Assisi: Omnibus of Sources*.

⁴¹Francis of Assisi, *The Earlier Rule*, 23:11, in *Francis and Clare*, p. 133.



The Cord, 53.6 (2003)

BOOK REVIEWS

Poetry As Prayer: Saint Francis of Assisi. Murray Bodo, O.F.M.
Boston: Pauline Books & Media, 2003. 152 pp.

The most recent entry in the Poetry As Prayer Series published by Pauline Books & Media comes from the pen of Murray Bodo, O.F.M., and provides a new view of the poor man from Assisi, Francis. Filled with insights into Francis as mystic, as poet, and as saint, Bodo encourages his readers to recognize the lessons we can learn about prayer through a careful and attentive re-reading of Francis’s life and his writings—particularly the *Canticle of the Creatures*—within the context of the medieval culture in which he was planted.

The opening chapter leads the reader through a brief discussion relevant to common qualities found in both good poetry and good prayer. Both are characterized by an economy of language which encourages honest expression. When they arise from the deep conflicts of the human heart, both poetry and prayer are personally authentic. Both enable the reader to see things anew, by requiring a second look and a passionate response. And both open the reader’s eyes and ears to the unseen and unheard world within.

In Chapter Two Bodo recounts the life of Francis, with special emphasis on the process of conversion that eventually resulted in personal sanctity. Chapter Three makes the connections between Francis’s cultural, spiritual, and mystical experiences and translates them for the modern reader. Here Bodo describes the medieval mindset: the ideals of chivalry, courtly love, and the language of allegory. In these chapters, the holiness of Francis becomes clearer and clearer; so do the reasons for which he has drawn admirers and followers through the centuries.

Chapter Four provides the reader with the historical context of *The Canticle of the Creatures*. Sometimes called *The Canticle of Brother Sun*, it is this text—of all of Francis’s writings, according to Bodo—that most clearly reveals Francis’s soul. Chapter Five takes the reader through a prayerful meditation on the *Canticle*, arriving at the conclusion that:

St. Francis’s *Canticle* is a concrete expression of the mystery of the Incarnation, the mystery of God’s entering the world in the person of Jesus Christ. In that Divine act, all of creation is touched by God. . . . Nothing is simply ordinary because of the extraordinary visitation of God.

For practitioners of poetry and prayer, Bodo includes the final chapter, "Ways to Read Poetry Prayerfully." Including several methods of involving oneself in praying the poetry internally, he also provides a list of additional poems which continue the process of integrating the poet and the pray-er in each of us. The selections offered represent poetry from a variety of authors—Brother Antoninus to Charles Wright—and are intended as a starting point, or as a handy list to take with you to the library.

This small, easily-packed book provides guidance, practice and inspiration for anyone seeking a new understanding of prayer, a new understanding of Francis, or both. It is a welcome addition to anyone's bookshelf and will find a comfortable niche with other inspirational or personal reflection books used as prayer-starters. Its pages are enlivened with images of the Giotto cycle of frescoes in the Basilica of San Francesco in Assisi, Italy. Reading Bodo's thoughts and savoring the classic Franciscan art underlines the quotation from Mark Van Doren with which he opened his text: "A good poem is the shortest distance between you and the subject."

Daria Mitchell, O.S.F.
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The Poverty of Riches: St. Francis of Assisi Reconsidered. Kenneth Baxter Wolf. Oxford Univeristy Press, 2003. 165 pp.

In the single blurb on the back cover of this work, historian Sharon Farmer informs the reader that the author has "written a fascinating and deeply disturbing meditation on the meaning of poverty in Western Medieval Christianity." After a careful reading of its short but impressively researched work (87 pages of text and 46 pages of endnotes), I agree with Professor Farmer, though I think not for the same reasons.

Wolf's book is fascinating in that the exemplary life of Francis makes for an odd target in a world replete with examples of avarice, sham humility, and self-promotion, all of which he charges to Francis. The level of sustained cynicism Wolf attaches to Francis and his motives is deeply disturbing. As I read the text, the author sees Francis as a supremely spiritually and socially self-elevated person, elevated at the expense of and in callous neglect of the genuinely needy.

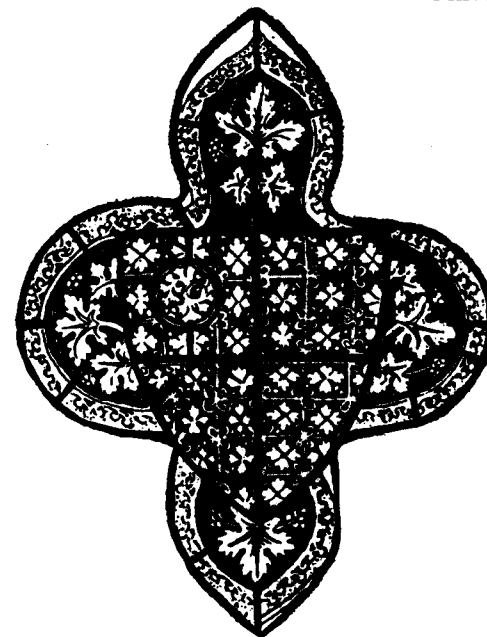
At the heart of Wolf's picture of Francis is a distinction between voluntary and involuntary poverty. Involuntary poverty, or "unholy poverty"—as Wolf sees Francis, and by extension, all mendicants—refers to those who are afflicted or poor "because of circumstances beyond their own control." Those who

choose voluntary poverty do so as a means to "spiritual regeneration" and "personal identification with Jesus." Wolf implies that Francis's poverty "really had little to do with the poor." He writes:

But when Francis finally settled on a particular way of life that made sense to him, it did not revolve around helping the poor, giving alms to lepers, or feeding the needy. Instead Francis opted for the "high road" in imitating the self-imposed poverty of Jesus by disposing of his own possessions and living, as he saw it, anyway, in complete and total dependence on God.

Further, in the author's view, the founding of an order was detrimental to society because "it compromised the goals" of service to the poor. There are other areas of misinterpretation throughout the book, too many to cite here. Missing from Wolf's reconsideration is Francis's experience of the theological virtues of love, faith, and hope that informed his worldview and sustained his actions. Missing is consideration of the vow of poverty in a vocational context. Missing, too, is a rigorous historical analysis of Francis's supposed ineffectiveness in helping the poor. Wolf presents no evidence of actual negative effects of voluntary poverty on the involuntary poor, either by episode or supported research.

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About Our Contributors

André Cirino, O.F.M., is a friar minor of the Immaculate Conception province. He has long served as a staff member of the Franciscan Pilgrimage Programs, and is the author of several books, the most recent of which is *The Journey Into God*, co-authored with Josef Raischl, published in 2002.

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Kathleen Eickwort, S.B.C., an ordained Episcopal priest retired from parish ministry, resides in a new community: a mixed group of Gray Friars and Sisters of Brigit and Clare (hence, SBC). The Order has married and celibate members, lay and ordained, similar to the early Celtic communities. Sr. Kathleen has a PhD. from Cornell University, in the field of ecology. She currently serves as chaplain to the Celtic Franciscan Order of *Celi De*, part of the Anglican Communion.

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The PORT, sponsored by the Frankfort Franciscans, is located on the grounds of St. Francis Woods, one hour from Chicago's O'Hare and Midway Airports.

Holy Pictures

A Meditation on Stillness and Silence



DESIGNED BY GERARD THOMAS STRAUB

Holy Pictures

There is a certain beauty in the stillness of a Holy Picture. It is a beauty that is not of this world, but of another. It is a beauty that is not of the eye, but of the heart. It is a beauty that is not of the moment, but of the eternal.

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With a continually re-reading of scriptural texts, it is the only way to find a true beauty. It is a beauty that is not of the world, but of another. It is a beauty that is not of the eye, but of the heart. It is a beauty that is not of the moment, but of the eternal. It is a beauty that is not of the world, but of another. It is a beauty that is not of the eye, but of the heart. It is a beauty that is not of the moment, but of the eternal.

—*Jonathan Monahan*
“Meditation on the Silence of the Heart”

When we are in a state of prayer, we are in a state of silence. It is a silence that is not of the world, but of another. It is a silence that is not of the eye, but of the heart. It is a silence that is not of the moment, but of the eternal.

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The Franciscan Way

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

November 14-16

FORMATION OF LAY COMMUNITIES

Darleen Pryds, Associate Professor of Spirituality and Church History, Franciscan School of Theology, Berkeley, California

Why would one be interested in communal living **today**? This retreat will explore the history of lay communities, offer practical learning exercises, time for personal reflections and group discussions.

Fee per person includes meals, lodging, and retreat materials:

Single: \$160; Double: \$120; Commuter includes meals and materials: \$90.

December 5-7

FRANCISCAN CONTEMPLATION AND EVERYDAY LIFE

When there is so much broken-heartedness, prayer is a path to healing and reconciliation. Fr. Dan will explore what it means to live a contemplative life in the midst of an active lifestyle. This retreat will give time to embrace the tradition of contemplative prayers as the path to peace, healing and reconciliation.

Fee per person includes meals, lodging, and retreat materials:

Single: \$160; Double: \$120; Commuter includes meals and materials: \$90.

Come Join Us...



THE FRANCISCAN RENEWAL CENTER

5802 E. Lincoln Drive, Scottsdale, AZ 85253

Toll Free: 1-800-356-3247 E-Mail: Casa@The Casa.org

Call (480) 948-7460 for information/reservations

Website: www.the casa.org

2003-2004 PROGRAMS

For more information on these or other programs, contact:

Franciscan Life Office

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Little Falls, Minnesota

56345-3597

320-632-0668

franciscanlife@fslf.org

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FRANCISCAN
SISTERS

SEATTLE FALLS
MINNESOTA

Saturday, December 6, 2003 (9:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m.)

Advent Day of Reflection

With Sister Elise Saggau, OSF, a Franciscan from Little Falls, Minnesota. Consideration will be given to the virtue of hope and its message for our dark times. We will reflect on what it means when we say: "the Word became flesh and dwelt among us." We will look at our own lives and consider the challenges that our faith offers us today. Presentations, prayer together and alone, and suggestions for personal practice will characterize the day. Cost: \$25. Register by November 28 with non-refundable \$10 deposit.

February 1 (7:00 p.m.) – February 6 (noon), 2004

Retreat: "Peter, do you love me?"

Father Richard McGuire will facilitate this retreat based on John 21:15-19. When hearing God say "I love you" we experience the mystery that changes our life and allows us to say "I love You" in a brand new way—daily. Cost: \$290. Register by January 16 with non-refundable \$50 deposit.

Saturday, March 13, 2004

Spiritual Companionship Workshop

Ed Sellner, a professor and writer from St. Paul, Minnesota, will lead this retreat for Sisters, Associates and interested others. Learn how to share more deeply the journey of our life. Heart to heart conversation that opens one to the mystery of life. Facilitating and staying in *con-ver-sation* that can move us to *conversion*. Cost: \$25. Register by March 5 with \$10 non-refundable deposit.

July 12 (7:00 p.m.) – July 18 (noon), 2004

Retreat: "The Admonitions of Francis"

This retreat is based on "The Admonitions of Francis" which give us an understanding of the Gospel passages which shaped Francis' spirit. The Admonitions also illustrate Francis' own understanding of human nature and the attitudes that can keep us from receiving and living the good news. Presented by Barbara Leonhard, OSF, an Oldenburg Franciscan who has extensive teaching and mission experience, a broad education and a Ph.D. in Christian Spirituality. Cost: \$325. Register by June 28 with \$50 non-refundable deposit

Index to *The Cord* Articles by Author

- Bach, Lester, O.F.M. Cap. "Family Ties." May/June, 148-156.
- Baker, Teresa V., S.F.O. and Anne Mulqueen. "The Privilege of Being Secular—the Grace of Continuous Formation: 25 Years of Living in the Rule of 1978." May/June, 120-126.
- Chinnici, Joseph P., O.F.M. "The Passion of Christ: The Birth of the Brothers and Sisters." Mar/Apr, 57-69.
- Cirino, André, O.F.M. "River's Franciscan First Holy Communion." Nov/Dec, 300-302.
- Cook, William R. "Francis of Assisi and the Heroes of Israel's Past." Jan/Feb, 2-15.
- Coughlin, F. Edward, O.F.M. "On the Significance of Being 'You': Exploring Scotistic Insights for Franciscan Life and Ministry in a Post-Modern Context." Nov/Dec, 315-328.
- Delio, Ilia, O.S.F. "Francis and the Body of Christ." Jan/Feb, 26-35.
- De Nunzio, Emanuela, O.F.S. "Twenty-Five Years of Renewed Rule." May/June, 97-98.
- Eickwort, Kathleen Teresa, S.B.C. "The Life of St. Francis in St. Bonaventure's *Five Feasts of the Child Jesus*." Nov/Dec, 293-299.
- Finnegan, Charles, O.F.M. "Preparing for 2008." Sept/Oct, 249-251.
- Finnegan, Charles, O.F.M. "The Advent-Christmas Mystery: A Franciscan Reflection." Nov/Dec, 286-292.
- Gentile, Carol, S.F.O. and others. "Faith in Action Through the Commissions." May/June, 127-135.
- Haddad, Tony, O.F.M. Cap. "St. Francis's Document on Solitude as Experienced in Lebanon." Sept/Oct, 239-243.
- Heo, Clara, S.F.M.A. "The Loving Relationship of Clare with Her Mother." July/Aug, 207-212.
- Higgins, Michael, T.O.R. "The Franciscan Rule: An Invitation to Relationship." May/June 105-110.
- Houston, Kerr. "The Extent, Effects and Symbolisms of Encluse at San Damiano." July/Aug, 181-192.
- Hugo, William, O.F.M. Cap. "An Encounter of Franciscan Sister-Brotherhood with the Church's Sex Abuse and Leadership Scandal." Mar/Apr, 74-79.
- Ingham, Mary Beth, C.S.J. "Presence, Poise and Praxis: The Three-fold Challenge for Reconcilers Today." Nov/Dec, 303-315.
- Jagfeld, Lawrence, O.F.M. "Thick Skin' and the Franciscan Charism: A Paradox." Mar/Apr, 51-56.
- Karecki, Madge, S.S.J.-T.O.S.F. "Francis, Clare and Family." July/Aug, 193-206.
- Mallin, Peter F., O.F.M. Conv. "St. Joseph of Cupertino, Franciscan Mystic." Sept/Oct, 261-266.

- Matic, Ivan, O.F.M. "Active Presence of Secular Franciscans in the Church and the World." May/June, 148-155.
- Meany, Mary. "Queen and Spouse of the Lamb" July/Aug, 166-180.
- Mulholland, Seamus, O.F.M. "Rescuing Duns Scotus: Re-Placing Duns Scotus in the Franciscan Spiritual Tradition." Sept/Oct, 267-273.
- Mulqueen, Anne, SFO and Teresa Baker, SFO. "The Privilege of Being Secular—the Grace of Continuous Formation: 25 Years of Living in the Rule of 1978." May/June, 120-126.
- Sciamannini, Rayner, O.F.M. Conv. "The 'Hill of Paradise.'" Jan/Feb, 21-25.
- Schwab, Joseph, O.F.M. "Guardians as Leaders." Sept/Oct, 244-248.
- Short, William J., O.F.M. "Give An Account of the Hope That Lies Within You." Sept/Oct, 252-259.
- Taormina, Kathy, S.F.O. "Broadening the Vision: Franciscan Youth in the Year 2003." May/June 136-140.
- Washburn, Tom, O.F.M. "Reflection on the Scandal from Francis of Assisi." Mar/Apr, 80-85.
- Wicks, William, S.F.O. "Application of the 1978 Rule 25 Years Later." May/June, 111-119.
- Wood, Joseph, O.F.M. Conv. "St. Francis's Conversion and His Encounter with the Leper as Related in the Sources." Sept/Oct, 226-238.
- Wood, Joseph, O.F.M. Conv. "Living in the Shadow of Br. Elias." Jan/Feb., 17-20.

Poems

- Dorsett, Felicity, O.S.F. "Advent Wine." Nov/Dec, 302.
- Forman, Dorothy, O.S.F. "When?" Mar/Apr, 56.
- McNichols, William, SJ. "Francis: Wounded Winter Light." Jan/Feb, 16.
- Vance, Clare Agnes, O.S.C. "The Poor, Crucified." Sept/Oct, 260.

Book Reviews

- Bodo, Murray, O.F.M. "Poetry As Prayer: Saint Francis of Assisi." Nov/Dec, 329-330.
- Jacobson, J. Robert. "All Creation Sings: Creation and New Creation through the Eyes of Scripture." July/Aug, 214-215.
- Straub, Gerard Thomas. "The Sun and Moon Over Assisi: A Personal Encounter with Francis and Clare." Jan/Feb, 36-38.
- Wolf, Kenneth Baxter. "The Poverty of Riches: St. Francis of Assisi Reconsidered." Nov/Dec, 330-331.

Subject Index

- Advent Reflection, Nov/Dec, 286-292.
- Agnes of Prague, spousal imagery, July/Aug, 168-169. and Clare of Assisi, July/Aug, 166-180.
- Basilica of St. Francis, Jan/Feb, 21-24; 25.

- Bonhoeffer, Dietrich, Jan/Feb, 33.
 Brother Elias, Jan/Feb, 17-20.
- Clare of Assisi,
 spousal imagery, July/ Aug, 169-170.
 loving relationship with her mother,
 July/Aug, 207-212.
- Conversion, Mar/Apr, 51-56.
 Conventual Franciscan Statement, Mar/
 Apr, 71-73.
- Document on Solitude, Sept/Oct, 239-
 243.
- Elias, Brother, Jan/Feb, 17-20.
 Enclosure at San Damiano, July/Aug,
 181-192.
 Evangelical Life, Mar/Apr, 57-69.
- First Holy Communion, Nov/Dec, 300-
 302.
- Five Feasts of the Child Jesus, Nov/Dec,
 293-299.
- Francis
 and the Body of Christ, Jan/Feb,
 26-35.
 and Reform, Mar/Apr, 80-85.
 conversion anniversary anticipated,
 Sept/Oct, 249-251.
 encounter with the leper, Sept/ Oct,
 226-238.
- Francis and Clare
 as "mothers," July/Aug, 201-204.
- Francis, Clare and Family, July/Aug,
 193-205.
- Guest Editorial, Mar/Apr, 70.
- Harold and Maude*, Nov/Dec, 315-320.
 Heart's Two Affections, Nove/Dec, 320-
 325.
 Heroes of Israel's Past, Jan/Feb,
 2-15.
 Hill of Paradise, Jan/Feb, 17-20.
 Hope and Evangelical Life, Mar/
 Apr, 58-61.
 Hope
 "give an account" Sept/Oct, 252-
260.
 Hope (c0nt.)
 Ministry and authority, Sept/
 Oct, 258-259.
- Human Persons as divine image,
 Sept/Oct, 256.
- Humanity of God, Mar/Apr, 74-79.
- John Duns Scotus
 Challenge for Reconcilers, Nov/
 Dec, 303-314.
 Socratic Insights for Franciscan Life
 and Ministry, Nov/Dec, 315-328.
- Principle of Individuation, Nov/Dec,
 316-320.
- Secular Franciscan Order
 Active Presence in the World,
 May/June, 148-155.
 Family Ties, May/June, 141-147.
 Work of the Commissions
 Franciscan spirituality, May/June,
 129-130.
 National Family Commission, May/
 June, 130-131.
 Peace & justice, May/June, 128-129.
 Respect for Creation, May/June,
 131-132.
- Secular Franciscan Rule
 and relationship, May/June, 105-
 111.
 twenty-fifth anniversary, May/
 June, 112-119.
- St. Bonaventure and the Five Feasts of
 the Child Jesus, Nov/Dec 293-299.
- St. Joseph of Cupertino,
 Sept/Oct, 261-266.
- Word from Bonaventure,
 July/Aug, 213.
 Sept/Oct, 275.
 Nov/Dec, 299.

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 Jacapone 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
OP	The Office of the Passion	ABF	The Deeds of St. Francis and His Companions
PrCr	The Prayer before the Crucifix	LFl	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		
RCl	Rule of Clare		
TestCl	Testament of Clare		
BCl	Blessing of Clare		