

A WORD FROM BONAVENTURE

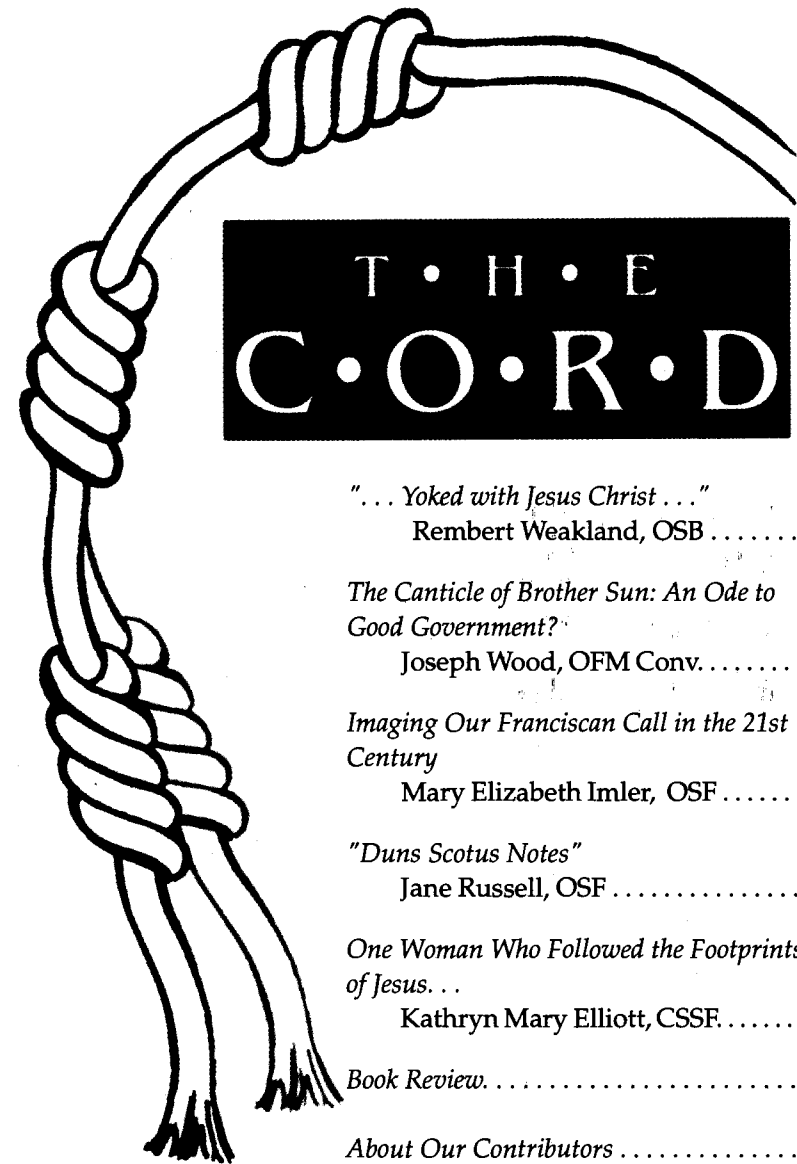
PICTURE IN YOUR MIND A TREE WHOSE ROOTS ARE WATERED BY AN EVER-FLOWING FOUNTAIN THAT BECOMES A GREAT AND LIVING RIVER....FROM THE TRUNK OF THIS TREE, IMAGINE . . . TWELVE BRANCHES THAT ARE ADORNED WITH LEAVES, FLOWERS AND FRUIT. . . .

IN THE GARDEN OF THE HEAVENLY PARADISE—GOD'S TABLE—THIS FRUIT IS SERVED TO THOSE WHO DESIRE IT. THIS IS SUGGESTED BY THE FIRST STANZA, WHICH SAYS: O CROSS, SALVATION-BEARING TREE, WATERED BY A LIVING FOUNTAIN, YOUR FLOWER IS SPICE-SCENTED, YOUR FRUIT AN OBJECT OF DESIRE.

PROLOGUE TO THE TREE OF LIFE

The Cord
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THE CORD
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Publisher: Margaret Carney, OSF
Editor: Roberta A. McKelvie, OSF

Distribution Manager: Noel Riggs
Production Assistant: Daria Mitchell, OSF

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

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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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4. References to Scripture sources or to basic Franciscan sources should not be footnoted, but entered within parenthesis immediately after the cited text, with period following the closed parenthesis. For example:
(1Cor. 13:6). (2Cel 5:8).
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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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Editorial

Is it really time for us to be immersed in the seasons of Lent and Easter? Can it be that the winter chill and mountains of snow here in western New York will be coming to an end when this issue is received by its readers? How does the cycle of life move so quickly? This time last year our country was on the verge of war and now we must admit, if we are honest, that we have seen more suffering connected to that war than some probably anticipated. In fact, we buried the first casualty from the town of Allegany just this week. It matters not (at least to me) that he died in Afghanistan instead of Iraq; he is still a war casualty. His death diminishes all of us, if John Donne's words are true.

Awareness of suffering is one thing, holy acceptance of it is another. Part of our focus for this issue has been to provide material that will lead us into deeper reflection upon the suffering that has shaped our Church—and consequently our place in that Church. Our lead article has a ring of authenticity to it, we think, precisely because its author has known what it means to be “yoked with Jesus Christ.” We also offer a piece on a woman whose spirituality of reparation may seem far removed from our own views of penitence, but which offers the opportunity to consider our own levels of service, prayer, and suffering.

We also present in this issue the Presidential Address given last August by Mary Elizabeth Imler at the annual Franciscan Federation conference. A commentary on Franciscan symbols and the harmony of goodness certainly encourages us to embrace the cross more fully as 21st century Franciscans! Jane Russell's poem about the Subtle Doctor allows us to continue our promotion of John Duns Scotus as an accessible figure in Franciscan life. And Joseph Wood once again takes us into the mind and heart of Francis, this time in a way that allows us to see Francis as a man willing to “intervene in political and religious matters”—something many of our brothers and sisters do today, at the cost of great personal suffering.

We know and believe that, for all of us, any suffering in this life pales beyond all telling in the light shed on us by the glory of the Risen Lord. May we accept our sufferings faithfully, relying always on our God to supply the grace we need to come into our own heavenly inheritance.

Roberta A. McKelvie, OSF

“... Yoked with Jesus Christ ...”

Rembert G. Weakland, OSB

This is the slightly edited text of the homily given by the Very Reverend Archbishop Weakland on October 5, 2003, at the Motherhouse of the Sisters of St. Francis in Milwaukee, as part of the community's celebration of the feast of St. Francis. Parts of the text are addressed directly to the Sisters, and we have chosen not to edit the second person pronouns.

A reading from the Holy Gospel according to Matthew (11:25-30)

On one occasion Jesus spoke thus: “Father, Lord of heaven and earth, to you I offer praise; for what you have hidden from the learned and the clever you have revealed to the merest children. Father, it is true. You have graciously willed it so. Everything has been given over to me by my Father. No one knows the Son but the Father, and no one knows the Father but the Son – and anyone to whom the Son wishes to reveal him.

“Come to me, all you who are weary and find life burdensome, and I will refresh you. Take my yoke upon your shoulders and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble of heart. Your souls will find rest, for my yoke is easy and my burden light.”

Dear Friends, all of us Franciscans, and all the rest of you,

There is a popular image of St. Francis out there. I am sure you have seen it and heard it often. St. Francis is depicted as carefree, not excited much about anything, just living life nonchalantly, and, in addition, someone who loved to talk to birds and creation . . . this kind of sweet image of St. Francis. Yet, more recently, at least in some of the biographical writings of Francis, that image is being challenged a bit more, and we find that Francis was a person who sought to incorporate the whole of Christ's life into his own. It is important for us to develop this view of Francis if we want to have the same kind of childlike simplicity that characterized Francis. It doesn't mean avoiding the cross, it means accepting the whole of life and being able to see Christ in it; and, in that way, we obtain a broader vision. It is in that vision that we gain the freedom

that Francis had and are able then somehow to appreciate better all of creation. We don't want to miss that thread that runs through Francis's life, which is really putting on Christ, how we put on Christ day in, day out, and always ask ourselves who is the Christ that we put on.

The Gospel today is well chosen, because it means that if we are docile, childlike to that presence of Christ within us, then we can become more and more like Francis, and more and more, as it were, come to know the Father. That's the first image today: we all have to become childlike. I am challenging you to do that, but to do it in a way that is much more profound than that popular image.

The second point today is, that to become childlike, we have to become more like Jesus Christ; and if this seems daunting to us, then we have to remember that we are yoked with Christ through life and that that yoke is not burdensome. We are yoked to Jesus Christ, and this is the image that you should have. You have probably seen pictures of oxen with the yoke over their heads doing the plowing. Well, sometimes there are two oxen, side by side, under the same yoke. Think of that image of being yoked with Jesus Christ through life, so that in carrying the burdens of life, in doing what you should be doing, you are with Christ pulling; you are not alone; you are never alone. In that way the yoke is not burdensome to us, because it is Christ who carries it with us, and sometimes, I must say, for us.

We get through life because we are yoked to Jesus Christ, and that makes our life meaningful. We are a part of Christ's mission. That's the way in which Francis took up his cross. He carried that cross with the marks on his body; he was always aware of Christ crucified and his being one with Christ crucified. It is so easy for us to want to be one with Christ when he is getting the best of the pharisees; we like that. Or we like being one with Christ when he performs wonderful miracles, when he feeds the thousands. That's nice to be one with Christ at those moments. But then when Christ begins to anger others because he challenges them, we want to slip away, like so many of the disciples did. When Christ has to face death, an ignominious death with lots of suffering, it is so easy for us, then, not to be among those disciples.

We heard today from Galatians about St. Paul saying that he carried the wounds of Christ in his body. You probably thought, well, that means he had the stigmata like St. Francis and that's all there was to it. I don't think St. Paul had the stigmata, by the way; I think Francis did, but not Paul. Paul, when he talks about the wounds of Christ that he carries in his body, refers to the times when he was beaten. He refers to the times when he was stoned, and when he was shipwrecked. I bet he had all kinds of wounds, and he wouldn't say they were football wounds from his youth. These were wounds that he carried in his body because he preached the mission of Jesus Christ and was willing to make all the sacrifices that were necessary to follow Christ.

All of us have been branded by the wounds of Jesus Christ. You might not carry them visibly on your body, but there might be many there that you do carry from the years that you have served the Lord. Oh, you might not have all the rheumatism you have if you hadn't taught in that awful, cold school in that small rural town; or you might not have all the wounds you have if you hadn't worn all those older dresses that maybe didn't do your health any good when you cooked at the stove. I'm not saying what the wounds are. You all carry your own wounds, don't complain about them, but they're there. We all carry the wounds of Christ in our bodies if we have truly been imitators and put on Jesus Christ. And that tells us to whom we belong. So we are not only yoked with Jesus Christ, but I like to think that we are branded then with the image of Jesus Christ on us, not necessarily the stigmata, but the branding that took place at Baptism and was reinforced at Confirmation, just as slaves were branded and you knew who owned them, or just as in the holocaust when people were branded so you knew what their race was, to whom they belonged. All of this means that we are branded with Jesus Christ and we carry that stigmata, if you will, as a wonderful sign of belonging to Christ.

So, we are yoked with Christ and we belong to Christ. If Francis were here, he would say that that is the basis of what it means to be a Franciscan, to be aware of that presence of Jesus Christ, and never, never to curtail it, to cut it, to make it easy.

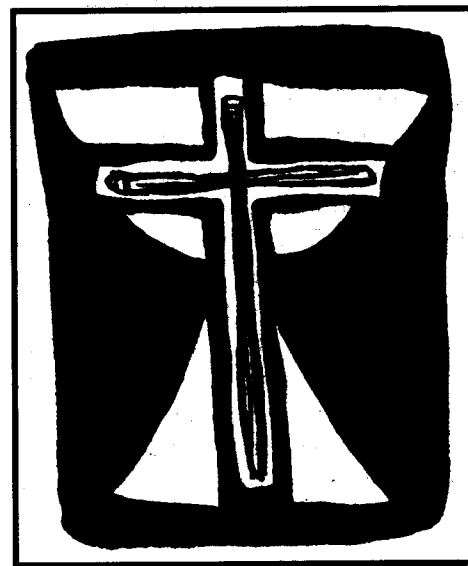
But I want to go on to another point. Francis never saw himself really as just a Franciscan. He saw himself as somebody who was called by God to bring a renewal to the Church. That's important. I get nervous about so many groups today in the Church who are inward-looking, who don't see that their mission is to a larger Church and then through that Church to the world. The other day I wrote this in fact to a certain Cardinal in Rome who had made some public remarks. I wrote, no, don't talk that way, because the religious are always for the Church, and the spirituality that the religious have, that spirituality is for all of us so we become aware of who Jesus Christ is. If you don't find that in some of the modern religious movements, that's their fault, that's their weakness; but all the great, great saints were aware that what they were doing and the image of sanctity they were striving for, that this is necessary for all of us.

So it is with Francis. Francis is somebody who was worried about, concerned about the renewal of the Church. Oh, my, how we need Francis today! How we need the Franciscan spirit today! How we need to get back to the essence of what it is to be a Christian, which is to put on Jesus Christ; that's what it is all about. Instead, we fight over who is going to pour the wine and who is going to do this and who is going to do that; we fight over such insignificant things and miss what is essential: to be a Christian, which is a follower,

and more than that, somebody yoked with Jesus Christ. That's what it is all about. That's why Francis is so important for us today.

But I am going to challenge you at this point. It's so easy for us to take some aspect of Jesus Christ and put it aside; but we have to be people who are yoked with the totality of who Jesus Christ is, not pick and choose. Jesus came teaching, and we have to be teachers. If you were to ask me the greatest struggle I had as a bishop [I am writing my memoirs now], the greatest frustration, it was ignorance. You can deal with anything else, but you can't deal with ignorance. So we need so much now to be teaching Christ, that's important. That only comes by reading Scripture, because only Christ can reveal the Father to us; so this means that we have got to live in the Scriptures and in the Sacraments. Then we have to be also healing Christs. Oh, that healing aspect is so needed in our world today. There is so much division in that world. There are so many people saying nasty things about each other. We need a healing Jesus Christ, and that's where Francis is important to us today. It is so needed that we have a healing person.

The prophetic Jesus . . . oh, religious talk a lot about being prophetic, but when it comes to putting our heads on the block, that's another story. Can I



just give you my view [don't quote me on this one]? To me the whole point of celibacy is an imitation of Jesus Christ as prophet, not as priest (if you get what I am talking about), but as prophet. That's why Jeremiah was celibate, that's why John the Baptist was celibate, because they told truth to power and they didn't care, they could do that because they didn't have to worry about other responsibilities. I don't know how often when I went down to El Salvador the Lutheran bishop down there—a wonderful, holy, saintly, great human being—would say, Rembert, oh, the Catholic archbishop has

it so easy, because he can get up there and denounce the government and take those death threats and never have to worry about his family, his wife and kids, and I sit here every day being protective because I never know when being prophetic and challenging others will hit those closest to me and those for whom I am responsible. So we do need more prophetic witnesses in our world—and that is what Jesus did—and we have to accept the consequences.

The sacrificing Jesus, the suffering Jesus, the one who is willing to give up his life for others, that's something we also have to imitate. Religious life should not be an easy way out, it should not be just a protection; it's a way of suffering also and suffering for others, so that others will have more.

Then the dying Christ—we all have to be a part of that dying Christ—not only physical dying as we get older (oh, that's happening to all of us, we know it), but also dying to so many things we were attached to, dying to change. I find right now that I am dying in a way that I never expected to die before; I'm grieving, I'm grieving over Vatican II. I'm grieving over all the energy I spent trying to bring that through and about and implemented and find that today it doesn't seem to matter much to many people; they want to go backwards. We all have to grieve over things in the past that didn't work out the way we thought they would. We have to grieve about the dreams we had that were never fulfilled. We have to get used to the dying that is necessary to be Christlike.

Finally, in that whole area, we also have to imitate the resurrected Christ. The resurrected Christ is the sign of hope. [Imitating the resurrected Christ] is the way in which we say that all of this is worthwhile, because Jesus rises and takes [unto himself] that human condition (as horrible as it might seem) that he died for. All of that [suffering] has now a greater end, a greater destiny, and that's what resurrection is all about: hope.

I have given you the easy ones. There are two more that are very hard in the totality of who and what is Jesus Christ. The next one is that we must always see ourselves as yoked to Jesus Christ but as a part of the Body of Christ. You see, it is so easy in our day and age to take that image and personalize it, privatize it, and make it me and Jesus Christ and we're going to get through. But what about the rest? If there is anything about Francis that is important, it is his concern for the poor, those who were marginalized, those who weren't making it. That should be the Church, that's you and me. So we must be constantly putting on not just an abstract Jesus Christ, but the Jesus Christ of here and now in this world, the Body of Christ, everybody, and that's the Church. We put that on, and you don't pick your neighbors, you don't even pick your leaders; that's where you are. Oh, you can pick Sister Marcia and those leaders, but not *the* leaders; you are helpless, we all are in a way. But we are a part of that Church: all of those in that Church who are joyful and all of those who are suffering, all the poor and all the wealthy.

And, when you put on Jesus Christ, you also put on and are yoked to the Cosmic Christ; that's the word that St. Paul uses. To be a part of the Cosmic Christ means that you see what Jesus' death, resurrection, and salvation means not just to all the people that I mentioned, but to every aspect of creation. Every aspect of creation is dear to the Father, and every aspect of creation finds its ultimate fulfillment in the end of time when Jesus Christ presents that

world to his Father. So Francis's care and concern about ecology in the world is rooted deeply in that Scripture vision of the Cosmic Christ. When you put on that Cosmic Christ, you become one with that care and concern for this world, because it is in this world where we work out our salvation, where Christ has to become visible, where we put on Christ and transfer and transmit that to the next generations. That's why this world is important to us, not just that we will have more gas to run our cars. It's an idea, a way of looking at the whole world in terms of who is Jesus Christ.

Wow! I think today that's what is needed. Our Christianity has become too narrowly focused. Our saints try to pull us forward, but they don't always do it. So now, on this feast of St. Francis, when we have looked at that wholeness of the Jesus Christ that he put on, I want to remind you of the end of today's Gospel. Because the end of the Gospel, in Jesus' words, is an invitation. Jesus is inviting us all to come and to be a part of the Kingdom and to be yoked with him. "Come to me all you who labor and are burdened." That's all of us, that's all of us. "Take my yoke upon you." Jesus is calling you today to put that yoke on you, to be yoked with him now through life. Go through life pulling half the load, not complaining about it, and knowing most of the time you're hardly pulling any—but it is the Lord who is working in and through you. And then you can hear the words very deeply, "For my yoke is easy, my burden light."



The Canticle of Brother Sun *An Ode to Good Government?*

Joseph Wood, OFM Conv.

The Canticle of Brother Sun

Most High, all-powerful, good Lord,
Yours are the praises, the glory, and the honor, and all blessing,
To You alone, Most High, do they belong,
and no human is worthy to mention Your name.
Praised be You, my Lord, with all Your creatures,
especially Sir Brother Sun,
Who is the day and through whom You give us light.
And he is beautiful and radiant with great splendor;
and bears a likeness of You, Most High One.
Praised be You, my Lord, through Sister Moon and the stars,
in heaven You formed them clear and precious and beautiful.
Praised be You, my Lord, through Brother Wind,
and through the air, cloudy and serene, and every kind of weather,
through whom You give sustenance to Your creatures.
Praised be You, my Lord, through Sister Water,
who is very useful and humble and precious and chaste.
Praised be You, my Lord, through Brother Fire,
through whom You light the night,
and he is beautiful and playful and robust and strong.
Praised be You, my Lord, through our Sister Mother Earth,
who sustains and governs us,
and who produces various fruit with colored flowers and herbs.
Praised be You, my Lord, through those who give pardon for
Your love,
and bear infirmity and tribulation.

Blessed are those who endure in peace
for by You, Most High, shall they be crowned.
Praised be You, my Lord, through our Sister Bodily Death,
from whom no one living can escape.
Woe to those who die in mortal sin.
Blessed are those whom death will find in Your most holy will,
for the second death shall do them no harm.
Praise and bless my Lord and give Him thanks
and serve Him with great humility.

As with any work of literature, especially the dictated work of a very conscientious dying man, we may appreciate the Canticle of Brother Sun as containing more than one reality: one reality that would appear obvious to anyone—a swan song of gratitude to a merciful Creator—and another reality which would not appear obvious to a later generation. Those of us who are old enough can remember the immediate social messages innate in almost every rock song from the late 1960s, whereas today's younger generation, while still appreciating the same piece of music as a "classic" (merely because of the melody and rhythm), will remain completely oblivious to the original message because of a lack of awareness regarding the social climate of the times.

With an historical lens may we speculate that the Canticle could be both a praising of the Creator as the "Most High, all-powerful, and good Lord," and at the same time be an ambassadorial letter that praises (and admonishes) an earthly lord, the "most high, all-powerful, and good lord" *pope* or *emperor*?

Regis Armstrong, OFM Cap., comments that immediately after his conversion "Francis was emerging as a peace-maker rather than as an underminer of the social and religious worlds, even though his vision . . . did, in fact, weaken the feudal and monastic social structures . . . of inequalities and hierarchies."¹ Yet Francis could only "weaken" a feudal structure or break down "inequalities and hierarchies" if the very leadership of such structures (clergy and nobility) did, in fact, take seriously his writings and warnings.

Francis saw himself, as did later biographers, as somehow having an important role to play on the world stage. After he presented himself to Pope Innocent and received oral approval of the Rule, Francis dreamt of his importance through the symbolism of seeing a tree of great height bowing down before him. When he awoke he told his companions that he believed the tree was the pope (1C XIII). Francis saw himself important enough to chastise his friars, to exhort diocesan clergy, to preach to Muslims, to send letters to rulers, to befriend nobles, to rewrite the psalms, and to talk to animals—all the while calling himself a "worthless," "weak," "humble" and "illiterate" man. But Francis unhesitatingly "commanded," "decreed," "forbade," and wished the "anger of the Almighty" on anyone who would tamper with his words (cf. Admonitions,

Early Rule, etc.). He was a humble man who felt competent and important enough to intervene in religious and political matters.

The Assisi Compilation (84), among other sources (2MP 101, etc.), speaks of Francis's concerns while he lay dying, especially noting the great rift between the bishop and the mayor of Assisi. Francis tells two friars to approach the mayor, "on his behalf," asking him to gather with as many magistrates as possible, at the bishop's residence. He then tells two other friars to go there, to sing the Canticle to the whole assembly, and to be sure to sing his newest verse speaking of pardon and endurance in suffering. The Assisi Compilation tells us that Francis felt compelled to send this ambassadorial party "[because] there was no one [else] who was intervening" (AC 84). Francis was confident "that [the Lord] would humble their hearts and the [mayor and bishop] would make peace." Indeed, after hearing the hymn, both men admitted their faults, asked forgiveness, and "with great kindness and love they embraced and kissed each other" (AC 84).

Thomas of Celano confirms that Francis's Canticle is a rewriting of the premier scriptural canticle of Daniel 3:17 ff. (a position favored by some contemporary authors.²) In Daniel, three young Jewish men, raised and promoted in a foreign court for their bureaucratic skills, are condemned to a fiery furnace for not worshipping a king who claimed he was a god. Once in the furnace, they are miraculously protected from the flames and begin to rejoice and invite all of the natural elements to praise and glorify the Creator. Could Francis have seen a lesson in the Book of Daniel that applied to his own generation? Were there Christian leaders (bishops, abbots, barons, dukes, counts, magistrates—even popes and emperors) who also saw themselves as "gods"? Was Francis's Canticle the last effort of a man who had recently been assured of his own salvation, (AC 83) to set things right for those he was leaving behind "as orphans" (LtE)?

For centuries, two great monarchs, the pope and the emperor, believed they ruled by divine right, and were often in conflict with one another. They caused factions and defections, one side playing off the weaknesses and alliances of the other.

Long before the Canticle and Francis's praising of "Brother Sun," Pope Innocent III metaphorically used the same elements to remind the kings of the earth that "just as the moon derives its light from the sun . . . so, too, the royal power derives the splendor of its dignity from pontifical authority."³ As generous and as trusting as Pope Innocent had been with Francis, history records that this pontiff had another agenda for the rulers of the world. As "Vicar of Christ" (a term he up-graded from "Vicar of Peter"), Innocent considered himself the supreme judge who could summon to his forum any litigant in any quarrel in the Christian world. As "vice regent of God" he would "judge all

men, but be judged by none." He would see the kings of Europe kneel at his feet to receive their countries from him as fiefs. Innocent thought of himself as "greater than men, and little less than God." In his day, and later in legend, he was, without question, the "master of the world." In a short amount of time he had transformed himself and the medieval papacy into an imperial priesthood.⁴

The pope's adversary, the emperor (in this case, Frederick II), chose to spite his overlord and incorporated the sun and moon (symbols of world sovereignty) into his own royal seal. When Frederick received his first crown (of Sicily) he was hailed as the new Apollo, the sun-god.⁵ When he received his second crown (of Germany), he was hailed as "the anointed of the Lord," "a heaven-sent messenger."⁶ When he received his third crown (the Roman Empire), poets gathered and sang "that a new sun had risen on the horizon."⁷ When Frederick received his fourth crown (Jerusalem), he reminded those in attendance that he was born within a day of Christ (December 26) and that he had been born in the humble town of Jesi (named for "Jesus"), and therefore, it was fitting that he should also reign in Christ's place as King of the Holy Land.

At the end of his life, when Francis could perhaps see the future so clearly, did he feel compelled to write a letter to these rulers because during his own lifetime he had been regarded as a mirror image of the emperor, a man who was somehow both the favorite son and the bane of the papacy?

People in the Middle Ages were always desperate for entertainment, especially for exaggerated tales of heroic or disreputable deeds. For many years the best news on the medieval networks was a toss-up between the on-going feuds between papacy and empire, and the comparisons and contrasts between the erudite emperor and his ascetic counterpart.⁸ Stories of the lives and deeds of Francis and the Emperor Frederick were not only recounted after their deaths, but even while they were both still alive.

While Frederick and Francis were both young, it may have been hard to distinguish one from the other because of their graciousness. As they matured they were both patient and impatient with their subordinates. Both held a great admiration for the Cistercians as a practical reforming Order that promoted the humanity of Christ. Both Frederick and Francis believed in peace without the sword. Both were welcomed into the court of the Sultan Melek-al Kamil. Both won the heart of that noble Muslim and contracted bloodless treaties. Stories abound of both men speaking to animals. Frederick loved nature and had a menagerie of animals that traveled with him. He even allowed children to visit and view the animals wherever his court settled. Both loved music. Francis would sing in French and pretend to play the violin while rubbing two sticks together. Frederick wrote music and taught the monks at Padua new hymns while he was there on retreat. Even the cynical chronicler, Friar

Salimbene, said of the emperor that despite himself, he could not help but "love him." Frederick's green eyes and calm bearing unsettled people; Francis's humility and fiery sermons equally unsettled the crowds.

But as the warm relationship between the empire and the papacy cooled, affirmative comparisons between the two men chilled into denunciations. Should it be surprising then, that a man like Francis, who foretold that his own body would be venerated after his death (2MP 109) and who predicted that his good friend, Cardinal Hugolino, would one day be pope, should not also be able to intuit the conflicts looming on the horizon between the papacy and the empire?

Within five months of Francis's death, Hugolino, as the new Pope Gregory IX, launched the first of several excommunications against the Emperor Frederick because of his refusal to go on crusade. Gregory did not hesitate to exhume the heretical prophecies of the Abbot Joachim of Fiore when condemning Frederick as the apocalyptic beast from the abyss, and the anti-Christ!⁹ Six months later, during Francis's canonization, Gregory applied images to the *Poverello* that also served as a final stab at the disobedient emperor. Gregory proclaimed Francis as the new "David," "Jacob," and "Samson," "faithful warriors at the eleventh hour." Francis was being heralded as the "obedient knight" (in opposition to the "disobedient knight," Frederick). Francis had been "raised up to put the Philistines to flight [i.e. Frederick and his allies] (*Mira circa nos*)."

Did the endless strife between Church and State, that had violent ramifications on every level of society, finally compel Francis to stir up a little crusade of his own?



Francis's own life had been wounded by conflicts and war. When he was sixteen he participated in a bloody civil war that chased out an unjust duke, razed his castle, and braved a papal excommunication. At age twenty, Francis fought in the battle of Collestrada where he was taken prisoner and languished with a long illness. At age twenty-two, he enlisted in a crusade with Walter of Brienne. At age thirty-seven he witnessed what history records as one of the worst blood

baths of all time at Damietta, Egypt. Throughout his life Francis proved that he was not oblivious to worldly affairs. And after his conversion, he never shied away from peacemaking. He interceded on behalf of Christian interests with the Sultan, he interceded on behalf of the poor in Arezzo, and he interceded on behalf of all who asked for his prayers because of temptation or illness.

How then can we say that the *Canticle* was not composed as a "charter of peace"¹⁰ by a true crusader of God?¹¹ The *Canticle*, after all, was a song writ-

ten in the troubadour fashion,¹² which meant that it was the hymn of a knight singing of brave deeds. Francis, the courtly lover, speaking a courtly language, is actually binding all the elements of nature together in a harmonious and originally-intended relationship. The adjective-virtues that Francis praises: gentleness, serenity, humility, strength, robustness, and even radiance, are all virtues of the perfect knight.¹³

Francis's Admonitions are constant in their message of returning a right order to creation: through disobedience we broke our relationship with God; through obedience harmony will be restored. In the Middle Ages, every scientist, musician, architect and theologian studied mathematics and the stars. It was the goal of every fashioner of substance and intellect to transform an earthly discord into a mirror image of heavenly concord. Thus, in the *Canticle*, Francis is doing his part to remind his audience about the balance and obligation of power. Francis "becomes the new Adam . . . who restores Eden."¹⁴

Thus, as a restorer of the Original Plan of God, is Francis writing the *Canticle* as a means of speaking to a powerful ruler? Is he trying to make him aware of a situation that he can correct and thereby be appreciated in an even greater light by his subjects, if he heeds the warning? The *Canticle* can easily be understood as a device that tickles the ear of an overlord. It is the refined language of a courtier that delicately broaches an uncomfortable subject—a subject of imbalance, of injustice. The leaders of the Middle Ages desperately needed such a message. They spent their lives fighting over ownership of land and its resources. Is Francis telling rulers that "Our Sister Mother Earth," upon whom all people depend for daily sustenance, must no longer be manipulated as a weapon of oppression and inequality? Is Francis stating that land needed to be shared, not hoarded, highly taxed, and warred over? In a time when brother fought brother for property and inheritance privileges, causing cities and countries to be torn apart, does Francis call the elements "brothers" and "sisters" because he was somehow innately aware of humanity's primal need for a non-jealous mutuality and interdependence?

Francis teaches his followers that to be effective troubadours of God—servants and minstrels (AC 83)—they too had to rhyme power with responsibility and balance ambition with reconciliation. As the premiere friar minor ambassador, Francis masterfully rearranged the levels of true authority by hailing "Brother Sun," a symbol of the Lord of Light, as the King of heaven and earth. In the *Canticle*, the pope is no longer the sun, Christ is the sun. The emperor is no longer the moon, we are the moon. Humanity reflects the light of Christ, the true Sun King.

In the final analysis, the *Canticle* is not only a hymn praising God for the power, beauty and wonder of the created elements, but rather, a statement that the Creator is best praised when human beings offer pardon and are even

willing to suffer for the love of God in a spirit of patience.¹⁵

The Middle Ages, like most other centuries and cultures, revered numerology as sacred. Could it be a coincidence then that a few years after Francis's death, in 1296, the friars commissioned Giotto to interpret Francis's life on the walls of his tomb church in exactly twenty-eight episodes (of Bonaventure's *Legenda*)? An agrarian society would have never missed the obvious reference of the number twenty-eight as being the natural pattern for the monthly lunar cycle. Is Francis being portrayed as a bigger than life "Everyman" in the Giotto fresco cycle of Assisi? Is the rose window of the basilica (which in unusual fashion faces East, toward the rising sun) strategically set in the very middle of Francis's life cycle because he is and we are the "*alter Christus*," the moon, called forever and contentedly to bathe in the light of God the Father?

Only in the end, as he lay on the bare ground "naked before a naked God" (a God of self-emptying) as St. Jerome often said, could Francis rest in peace, knowing that he had accomplished all that he could do to "rebuild God's house."

During his whole life Francis had crept softly into the dens of power and deftly wielded a mighty weapon of influence. It is a fitting curtain call for the "king of song" to have culminated his life's goal for peace by raising his invincible voice and ultimately to have conquered with a song.

Endnotes

¹Regis Armstrong, *Clare of Assisi, Early Documents* (St. Bonaventure, NY: Franciscan Institute Publications, 1993), 10.

²Octavian Schmucki, "The Mysticism of St. Francis in his Writings," *Greyfriars Review* 3.3 (1989): 261.

³Jane Sayers, *Innocent III: Leader of Europe 1198-1216* (New York: Longman, 1994), 197.

⁴Ernst Kantorowicz, *Frederick the Second* (New York: Frederick Ungar Publishing Co., 1957), 44-45.

⁵Kantorowicz, 202.

⁶Kantorowicz, 55.

⁷Gertrude Slaughter, *The Amazing Frederic* (New York: McMillan Co., 1937), 68.

⁸David Einstein, *Emperor Frederick II* (New York: Philosophical Library, 1949), 175.

⁹Kantorowicz, 162.

¹⁰Sylvia Marie Gamberoni "The Canticle of Brother Sun, A Theology of Creation," *The Cord* 48.6 (1998): 289.

¹¹Seamus Mulholland "The Canticle of Creatures: A Reflection on the Creative and Artistic Influences," *The Cord* 51.5 (2001): 233.

¹²Mulholland, 232.

¹³Mulholland, 233.

¹⁴Francesco Cardini "Francesco d'Assisi e gli Animali," *Studi Francescani* 78.1-2 (1981): 10.

¹⁵Cardini, 18.

Imaging Our Franciscan Call in the 21st Century

Mary Elizabeth Imler, OSF

Editor's Note: This text was the Presidential Address given at the 38th Annual Conference of the Franciscan Federation of the Third Order Regular last August. It has been slightly edited in two ways: for conversion to a better reading style (rather than a spoken address), and for room to add two logos and an image of "the blue crucifix" referred to in the text. Unfortunately, we could not put graphics for every section.

As we embark on the journey of these next few days I invite you to begin by getting in touch with this sacred space in the length, depth and height of it, the temperature, colors and feel of it all. But also, as Physics would have you consider, [in touch with] that fourth dimension of time. . . . I invite you to reach out in this wrinkle of time, to be alert as Franciscans to this sacred encounter with the Leo's and Clare's, the lepers and wolves, all sisters and brothers. Become conscious why you are here, now at this gathering just as I tried consciously to do over the course of these three years of my Federation service, not to miss some incredible opportunities, to be in on conversations that really matter, making connections that will last long into my lifetime, and now peaking in this 38th Annual Federation Conference. Open your minds, hearts and hands to hold all that is good. Open yourself to gaze, consider, contemplate and feel the power of desire within you to imitate through a few of the icons that speak of our deep story.

Our Conference Logo

Like contemporary sociologists, I am conscious of this "open space" as we gather tonight in a bit of Franciscan chaos, tomorrow in regions and then together with our congregations. I recall the grace of Genesis as the Spirit promises to hover over the abyss (Gen 1:31). . . . All that God needs to create



fire again, so to speak, is within this space and time. In humility, all we need to do is believe our littleness is enough, believing God can do more than we can imagine. Let our desires for this gathering be holy. Let our longing for the good and gracious God of this gathering open our ears to hear, our eyes to see, our hearts to feel, our minds to know God in this here and now. As president of a federation of over eighty Franciscan congregations, let me welcome each and every one of you to this intersection of the sacred in time and space. Be welcoming to this “Harmony of Goodness.”

Conference 2003 Title: The Harmony Of Goodness

Goodness is at the heart of our Franciscan theology. Recall that Genesis moment that connected the entire cosmos into oneness, into communion, for it was there and then that our God declared everything God made as GOOD! God saw all God had made and indeed in that fullness it was very good (Gen 1:31). I can only imagine the wonderful harmony God experienced in that first Sabbath, a harmony from the abundance and variety of all things to which our brother Francis later declared, “My God and All!” The goodness of harmony we discover in music occurs when two or more very different tones are played together. In art, harmony is seen in the contrast of light and darkness of hues,

and, as we might say of relationships, there is harmony when opposites attract. In the particularity of one’s “thisness” blending with another’s unique “thisness,” harmony is so much richer than a monotone chant or a monochromatic world—as wonderful as that oneness might be. Even at the very essence of the “thisness” of our God is the harmony in the Trinitarian communion unlike any other gods.

This year’s theme, “Harmony of Goodness” grew out of the transformational experiences of our past few conferences. In 1999, in Columbus, we explored the vastness of the cosmos. At the threshold of the new millennium we dared to delve into the mystery of the Trinity. Then in 2001, we listened to the newness of vowed life; and last year we were pushed to address the challenges of peacemaking. Many of us can still hear Sr. Ellen’s remark that we are not to throw stones but be instruments that recognize the goodness and contribution of each stone and try to find the right relationship in which they build one upon another. As the Board further reflected, we each came to know that if we truly become peacemakers it will take us, like our brother Jesus, to the cross. As this penetrated our hearts, we were impelled to address the call to be reconcilers who see differences not as *them* vs. *us* but as peacemakers who acknowledge the need . . . the beauty . . . the richness of differences when blended into a harmony. I believe that we in this 21st century are being called to be converted from simply tolerating differences to truly celebrating diversity, reconciling what seems to be divergent. In this, we participate with Jesus in the redemption of the world.

Reconciling As Franciscan Peacemakers

The theology of our Franciscan brother, John Duns Scotus will guide us through “reconciling as Franciscan peacemakers.” Let us be truly present, poised for praxis as our Rule and Life beckons us to “our God who has brought peace and reconciliation to all things in heaven and on earth.” (TOR Rule, #12)

Do you ever wonder before a greatness such as that of Duns Scotus how he came to know a new truth? According to his name, Brother John was born in the country of Scotland in the town of Duns, most likely in 1265. In 1293 Scotus studied under the Franciscan scholars in Paris. There his table reading would have been from Bonaventure’s Major Legend, [a “life” of St. Francis]. This text, like the gospel of John, had time to simmer, and distance [from which] to gain a deeper perspective on the who and why of Francis, a man “totally aflame with a seraphic fire” (LMj Prologue I:19).

It strikes me that Brother John would have been familiar not only with this perspective of Francis but also with a Franciscan worldview. Scotus would have heard, “From the moment when Francis first began his active service in

the army of the crucified, a number of the mysteries of the cross were seen in his life, as must be clear to anyone who studies his biography." One theme of Bonaventure's storytelling was laid out "in the seven visions which he had of our Lord's cross, [Francis] was transformed into the likeness of the crucified in thought and desire and deed and by ecstatic love of him" (LMj Part II, I:1).

Bonaventure goes on to describe Francis as one "bearing the seal of the living God . . . held up as an example for those who would be the perfect followers of Christ." The Legend continues, "but even more is this confirmed with the irrefutable testimony of truth by the seal of the likeness of the living God, namely of Christ crucified, which was imprinted on his body not by natural forces or human skill but by the wondrous power of the Spirit of the living God" (LMj I, 22-30). Brother John Duns Scotus would have come to know through the hearing of the visions of the crosses in the Legenda, about Francis, about himself, about the world and God.

Scotus, I believe, had to have been deeply moved by Bonaventure's theology of the cross so gloriously summarizing all seven visions in Chapter XIII:10. Let us see in these the symbols for this conference the recalling of the truth of these visions: Jesus bore our humanity, the cross of Christ is manifested in the incarnation as complete acceptance of our human condition in a particular intersection of space and time, of the human and divine. See the crossbeams not at odds or enemies of each other in an either/or perspective but rather as salvific because of how they reconcile, as the harmony of goodness in a both/and perspective. Can we not see in the cross arms held in dynamic tension, a kind of leverage to lift us into the very reign of God? Have we the courage to celebrate them, naming them as the wisdom of our TOR Rule and Life would, "sister and brother" in *fraternitas* through our brother, Jesus "who reconciled all things in himself" (2Cor 5:19)? Similarly Mary Beth Ingham, CSJ, offers the image of the cross beams as blessing holding a wind chime in a holy and delicate balance.

Naked Cross on LaVerna

Francis graced his sacred places—the likes of Fonte Columbo, Poggio Bustone and LaVerna—with the image of the cross. Clare must have noticed, in her pondering, Christ held at these cross beams. Love is poised for the graced possibility at the intersection. As a poet once put it, "we are put on this earth for a bit of a while to bear the beams of love."

The San Damiano Cross

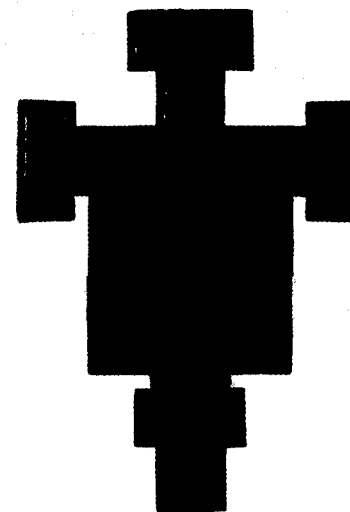
Gaze on our all-too-familiar San Damiano Cross, whose timeless voice beckons us to repair the house of God, the church, each human earthen vessel of our time. Consider how its crossbeams hold at the intersection, the heart of

Christ. Contemplate a heart that reveals both life and death. Let us imitate this heart grappling with the tensions of the poor, chaste and obedient life, sustaining community and mission in a sacred balance. See the heart of celibates who "profess chastity for the sake of the kingdom of heaven" (TOR Rule, #15) while at the same time risking affectionate relationships. Let us dare to live a life guided by valuing our poverty not merely as not appropriating things but in measuring all the needs for our service as instruments of God's peace. Let us live the vow that binds and the value that sets us free. Let us be faithful Franciscans "promising obedience and reverence" (TOR Rule, #3), trusting the experience of those in authority and the authority of our own experience. Let that contemplative Heart whom we desire to imitate teach us to hold in balance listening and speaking, hearing and heeding, poise and praxis. Can we, too, stand firm in the shadow of these cross beams with Francis to "repair [God's] church"?

The Blue Cross

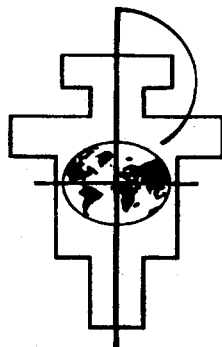
But Francis didn't so much pray before this crucifix as eventually "become [that] prayer" (1C95), a living sign of reconciling harmony. This icon, perhaps, was too real and a bit new, one that a sacristan of the Basilica of San Francesco found too much and tucked away and hence became less familiar for Franciscans. The Blue Cross painted to hang above the tomb of Francis presents an image whose meek and humble heart has dropped below the intersection weighed down by the brokenness and unloving choices of this world, our world. We gaze at a cross which Joseph Wood, OFM Conv., calls the "cross of Francis's response" in which the face of Christ incarnate lies at the

intersection. A face that longs to see the "pilgrims and strangers" (TOR Rule, #22) of his world give their all "to preserve the unity of mutual love and peace." (RCl 4:23) We consider this face that desires to see us live his poverty and humility. (TOR Rule, #21) We contemplate a face that speaks words that are Spirit and Life (TOR Rule, #11), a face the depth of which reveals a life giving its all trying to hold that delicate balance of Scotus: the "affection for self" and the "affection for justice." Can we, too, hold these desires within our hearts in balance as Christ calls us to imitate Him?



Logo of the Franciscan Federation

In the here and now we come to our common cross. We hold this cross of our vision, the cross of the Franciscan Federation. This symbol, in its simplicity, says much as our gaze is drawn to the world at the intersection of the cross' beams. Our world at a time of fragile peace and broken promises is so in need of witnesses to gospel reconciliation. As we in the here and now image anew our TOR way of life, may we discover in the autonomy of our particular charisms how we can at the same time be federated around the mission of Jesus and contemplate the possibility of regional collaboration and the unity of federation in a holy newness. Let us hear the call through our common prayer as Franciscans to learn what is ours to do. Together as sisters and brothers we can proclaim, adore, bless, serve and praise our God for the goodness of this world. We can imitate Jesus by bearing the cross, redeemed ourselves and participating in its universal redemption. We are called to proclaim (as St. Paul tells us):



Christ crucified, a stumbling block to the Jews and a folly to the Gentiles, yet to those who are called, both Jews and Greeks alike, Christ is the power and the wisdom of God. (1Cor 1:23-4)

Can we hold our world gently enough so as to see God's original vision of a harmony of goodness?

Brother Ed Coughlin, OFM, pointed out to us that Francis, in the Fifth Admonition, invites everyone in their particularity 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."

Francis concluded this admonition by challenging all women and men to "glory in your infirmities and [bear] daily the holy cross of our Lord Jesus Christ." Let us be open to learn how we are to bear daily this holy cross of ours. Our infirmities, weaknesses bring us together as the Franciscan Federation, into congregations, regions, as sisters and brothers of a particular time and place. Let us be poised, ready to be converted when we may find ourselves at the intersection of the cross. Let us be true to our incarnational spirituality, for Jesus said, "Take up your cross and follow me" not "worship me." Let us not forget the last phrase of Clare's invitation to prayer, "to gaze . . . consider . . . contemplate . . . as you desire to imitate" (2LAg 19).

Francis calls each of us in imitation of Christ to "take up our bodies and carry his holy cross." (OP Ps VII). Let us hold up all that is unresolved in our

world so that the Spirit of God shall hover and breathe a gentle breeze to nudge our wind chimes to sound the harmony of goodness. Let us show on our faces the trust in reconciling what is yet irreconcilable in our world. Let us hold true to both the affection for self and the affection for justice struggling for that inner harmony. May we be encouraged in this gathering. May we be open to the grace that does not desire to snuff out either side but hold both in the intersection of the cross beams of love, as witnessed by our Sr. Mary Motte and the Franciscan Missionaries of Mary trying to reconcile Adrian Robinson and their murdered Sister Philomena. May we not want to maintain a lifeless static equilibrium as Sean O'Malley invites his new archdiocese, indeed the entire church to join him in repairing the broken parts from the Boston scandal? Let us, like Francis, like Jesus, live so as to bear the tensions in the poverty of ordinary times.

My wild hope is that the holiness of Francis, the goodness of Jesus comes alive again in our time through us, now and here in this sacred space. May we hear of such wonders as we honor our reconcilers who haven't wasted time dividing the world into the good guys and the bad guys. They have held them both together in their hearts, where we are all in communion in the Heart of God, crossing dividers in a reconciling embrace. Listen to their stories of redemption overcoming those old Newtonian dualities of old/young, male/female, conservative/progressive, homosexual/straight, extrovert/introvert, faithful/unfaithful by bearing their holy cross. Let us follow Francis as when once he lay in the cross beams between life and death listening to the harmony of the Canticle of Brother Sun. Others turned to him to reconcile differences and to trust in the reconciling power of harmony sung by the brothers and sisters to resolve conflict. There within the city of the servant of God, was a need to reestablish peace and concord between the religious and secular worlds. On this occasion, Francis composed the following strophe and added it to his Canticle:

All praise be yours, my Lord, through those who give pardon for Your love and bear infirmity and tribulation. Blessed are those who endure in peace for by You, Most High, they shall be crowned.

Francis then called two of his companions and asked them to go and find the leaders to meet and bless them for him with the singing of the Canticle of Brother Sun. Francis said, "I have confidence that the Lord will put humility and peace in their hearts and that they will return to their former friendship and affection" (Adaptation of the LP 44, 100). Do we not have such confidence in reconciling as Franciscan peacemakers? Let us ring out our wind chimes, a symbol for this conference, and listen to the Harmony of Goodness we make. And as church we say, "AMEN! ALLELUIA!"

DUNS SCOTUS NOTES

To Mary Beth Ingham, CSJ

I

I hoped to get to know
the Subtle Doctor
in three weeks—impossible,
I knew, but hope
still springs eternal . . .

I had tested,
tasted
once before,
and found him
far too dry,
too complicated
(what's your point?)
to persevere,
returned him to the shelf,
gone on to juicier pursuits.

This time investing cash
and precious weeks,
I was committed,
would not leave
without some nectar
from that thistle bloom.
The teacher spread a canvas,
splashed some big ideas
and danced across the room
ecstatic. "Here's a key:
the whole Rube Goldberg scheme
is an AESTHETIC!
It's all about appreciating
beauty and divine delight,

which naturally ties in
to *love*, connects
with all of our
contingency
(might not have been,
you know.)
So why did Love create?
It comes of *freedom*,
which, in God,
spills over
generosity."

The overview exuded scent
of hope, but time will tell
if teacher's insights
really point a path
through Latin brambles,
yield a honeycomb.

" . . . nature is prior naturally
to 'this nature,'
and the unity proper—
which follows on nature qua nature
is prior naturally
to its unity qua this nature."?!'

We hold our breath
and trust these thorns
do hoard a honey
waiting to be born.

II

Swift weeks of study bring the thought
that thistle blooms are lovely
even though the leaves do prick
annoyingly. No guided tour
can clear the bristling issues
we don't care about;
it does direct attention
to surprising blossoms lurking there.

Duns Scotus sings to God, Creator,
 “You are happy–happiness itself,
 because you are in possession of yourself.
 You are the clear vision of yourself
 & the most joyful love.
 Though self-sufficient, happy in yourself alone,
 you still understand in a single act
 everything that can be known.
 You hold the power to freely will
 each thing that can be caused,
 and through your willing make it be. . . .”²

He ponders what constitutes
 “God’s freedom in loving himself,”
 concludes “it consists in the fact
 that he elicits this act and perseveres in it
 as something delightful
 which he has elected to do.”³

Why did the Son of God become incarnate?
 Not just to redeem the human race!
 “The glory of the souls to be redeemed
 is not comparable to the glory
 of the soul of Christ. Neither is it likely
 that the highest good of all creation
 merely chanced to come to pass.
 No one is predestined because God foresaw
 another would fall,
 lest anyone have occasion to rejoice
 at another’s misfortune.”⁴

The Scot embraces all with dignity–
 each “this” unique,
 no human ruined by ancient sin
 but only somewhat weakened.
 “The affection for justice
 can rein in our affection for the beneficial
 so we do not *have* to seek our comfort.
 This affection for what is just, I say,
 is the liberty innate to the will.”⁵

All our acts can bear a charm or grace.
 “Just as beauty is not some absolute quality
 in a beautiful body,
 but a combination of all that is in harmony,
 so the moral goodness of an act
 is a kind of décor it has,
 a combination of due proportion
 to all it should be proportioned to.”⁶

Better yet, God chooses to reward our deeds
 “beyond our worth
 This merit is beyond nature
 and its intrinsic goodness;
 it comes from a gratuitous acceptance,
 beyond that justice which would commonly
 reward an act. God rewards
 by means of pure liberality.”⁷

Joyful love, delight, the highest good,
 affection for justice, beauty, liberality:
 bramble blooms to stock, ferment,
 in time distill exhilarating wine.

Jane Russell, OSF

Notes

¹*Ordinatio* II, d. 3, no. 172. In *Duns Scotus Metaphysician*, 185.

²*De Primo Principio*, quoted in *Will & Morality*, 8.

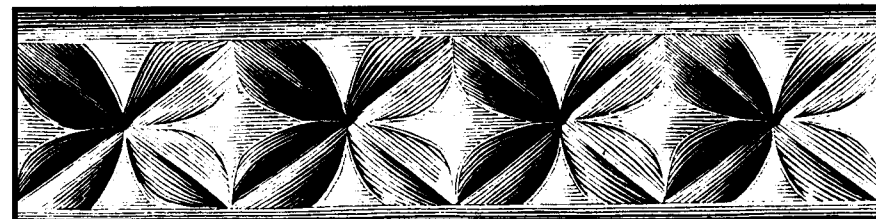
³Quodlibetal Question 16.34, in *God & Creatures*, 379-380.

⁴*Ordinatio* III, d. 7, q. 3. In *John Duns Scotus – Four Questions on Mary*, 25.

⁵*Ordinatio* II, d. 6. In *Will & Morality* 468; alt.

⁶*Ordinatio* I, d. 17, n. 62. In *Will & Morality* 207f.

⁷*Ordinatio* I, d. 17, n. 149. In *The Harmony of Goodness*, 134.



One Woman Who Followed the Footprints of Jesus: Blessed Mary Angela Truszkowska and the Spirit of Reparation

Kathryn Mary Elliott, CSSF

Francis of Assisi, in writing his way of life for the brothers in 1221, stated simply, "The rule and life of these brothers is this: to live in obedience, in chastity, and without anything of their own, and to follow the teaching and the footprints of our Lord Jesus Christ." (ER I:1) Francis recognized the uniqueness of each of his followers, and in giving this Rule to them (and to those brothers and sisters who would come after) let them know that each was to follow these footprints of Jesus in his or her own way, each adding a special dimension to the family called Franciscan.

Among the many Franciscans in succeeding centuries was Blessed Mary Angela Truszkowska, foundress of the Felician Sisters. The Jesus she followed was the Suffering Christ, so her footsteps were those of reparation. By her life and example, Blessed Mary Angela showed what it meant to take up one's cross. Her entire life was lived as an act of reparation.

Reparation, as explained in *The Catholic Encyclopedia*, "is a theological concept closely connected with those of atonement and satisfaction and thus belonging to some of the deepest mysteries of the Christian faith."¹ It can also be viewed as "the action of repairing or keeping in repair" and when used in this context it "designates the whole work of restoring all to the friendship of God."² In this way the word reparation is close to its root, the Latin *reparare*, which means to prepare anew or restore.³

Reparation is not accomplished by multiplying sufferings but by the humility, love and obedience with which sufferings are endured.⁴ The duty of reparation, then, has to be seen in a much wider scope than only that of expiation. It needs to be seen in the reestablishment of all things in Christ. This duty is the obligation "to share in the redemptive mission of Jesus Christ, who by obedience to the will of his Father in heaven, especially by the offering of his life on the cross, merited eternal salvation for all. . . ."⁵

Historical Context

In order to understand the character, and consequently the significance of reparation in the life of Blessed Mary Angela, it is necessary to understand her place in history and in the society in which she lived. We will look at its impact, not only on her early family life, but also as it formed the impetus which led to the founding of the Felician Sisters.

In his book, *The Mind of John Paul II*, George Williams summarizes the Poland during the lifetime of Blessed Mary Angela:

The history of Polonia in the 19th Century is one of successive uprisings and defeats, harshest for the largely Catholic Poles and Orthodox Russians. After a brief episode (1807-15) of the Duchy of Warsaw, created by Napoleon Bonaparte under pressure from General John Henryk Dabrowski, the Duchy was reduced in size to the advantage of Lutheran Prussia by the Treaty of Vienna but elevated in rank as the kingdom of Poland. The Tsar was its king. By the end of the century, after three revolutions, the Tsar imposed the Russian language in schools. Polonia survived under three states from 1815 to 1918. This was the period during which, because of the spiritual tie with revolutionary France, the prophetic poets, the shapers of modern Polish literature, much of it deeply patriotic, created Polish Messianism, the interpretation of the sufferings of the nation in terms of Christ's passion and resurrection.⁶

Poland has been metaphorically called the Christ among the nations, redeeming, through suffering, not only the Polish nation, but mankind as well.⁷

Adam Michiewicz (1798-1855) is considered to be the poet who best articulated the idea and ideals of Polish Messianism. In his writing he expressed the belief that, "Like Christ, Poland suffers for the salvation of the world, to redeem the sins of all nations so that they may become worthy of freedom."⁸ Zygmunt Krasinski also pictured his martyred country as the messiah of the nations. It was his belief that the plight of Poland signified the coming of the Kingdom of God upon the earth that would triumph with the resurrection of Poland.⁹

The Church, for her part, also suffered particularly in the area of Poland subject to Russian domination. After the Insurrection of 1830-1831, harsh measures were taken against the Catholic Church. The government would not give official approval to episcopal candidates and, as a result, the See of Warsaw was vacant from 1829 to 1836, and again from 1838 to 1856. Two hundred monasteries were suppressed in 1832, and by 1834 the freedom of movement of the clergy was restricted. By 1841 a major portion of Church property had been confiscated. During the reign of Alexander III (1855-1881),

at the time of the Second Insurrection of 1863-1864, the Archbishop of Warsaw, along with four hundred clerics, was banished to Siberia. Almost all monasteries and Catholic societies were abolished. The Felician Sisters, founded in 1855, were ordered to disband. Public processions and May devotions were forbidden. No permission was given for bishops to travel to attend Vatican Council I.¹⁰

Biographical Background

This was the Poland into which Joseph Truskowski, the father of Blessed Mary Angela, was born. He is described as "the only son of a citizen and landowner."⁸ After finishing his course of studies at the University of Warsaw in 1822, he pursued a career as a jurist. Joseph did not care to work with his father, and accepted the position as a judge in the Juvenile Court in Kalisz. As a result he was in constant contact with juvenile delinquents. Shortly after he began his work in the courts, he married Josephine Rudzinska. Joseph was twenty-two, his wife sixteen. Three years later, on May 16, 1825, their first child, Sophia Camille, was born.

Born prematurely and later described as a frail and delicate child, Sophia was lively, perceptive and overly serious for her young age. She was also unusually sensitive to human misery. Sophia was brought up, with her brothers and sisters, in a God-fearing atmosphere. She was submissive to her parents, gentle with her peers, and captivated the hearts of all. Profound piety was part of her life from early childhood; later she would devote long periods of time to prayer. Because of her poor health, Sophia received most of her education at home. She read avidly, was fluent in French, and was learning Italian and Latin. As the oldest of five children, she helped the younger children with their studies. She was generous with the poor and, through her modestly concealed virtues, she exerted a wholesome influence upon her environment.¹¹

As a young woman the primary influence in her life was her father. Encouraged by Sophia's desire to learn Mr. Truskowski gave his daughter the key to his library. "Sophia's quick mind thrilled him and her spiritual hunger delighted him . . . for her knowledge led to analysis and organization. She carefully balanced theory with practical application and this habit stood her in good stead for the rest of her life."¹²

Also awakening at this time in her life, and causing some discomfort, was an intuitive gift of prayer, and a hunger for God.

This tension reflected the spirit of the times. . . . In Poland, the attempt at reconciliation brought a certain spiritual realism, a return to real life in order to spiritualize it. As a result, the love of Christ began to permeate even Polish philosophy and the correlative love of neigh-

bor produced a healthy reawakening of humanism, but now a Christian humanism."¹³

Sophia exemplified this in her response to human suffering. She suffered deeply at the sight of physical misery, but the spiritual poverty that was around her was even more agonizing. Sophia reacted to the misery around her, not only on a human level, but also by taking these sufferings to prayer. "If moral evil set itself between her God and His cause, she would battle with that evil and strive to eradicate all misery from the world about her, restoring all things in Christ."¹⁴

She joined the St. Vincent DePaul Society in 1854 and visited garrets and basements where she encountered the throw-offs of society: orphans and abandoned children, and the infirm aged. The immensity of human misery in the city of Warsaw did not give her peace of mind. With the help of her father and the St. Vincent DePaul Society, she rented two rooms in the attic of a home located next to the church of the Blessed Virgin in Warsaw. From this small start, Sophia, together with her cousin Clotilde Ciechanowski, began to educate the children and minister to the elderly.

At this time of her life, it is said, Sophia closely resembled the life of Francis. After being told by the Crucified at San Damiano "Go rebuild my house; as you see, it is all being destroyed" (2 Cel VI: 10) Francis began his life's work. Sophia went about the process of restoration by searching out the homeless, the elderly, and the delinquent, to rebuild with living stones, a trait that would remain throughout her life and which she would instill in the hearts and lives of her spiritual daughters.¹⁵

Spiritual Development

This was also the time in her life that she made the acquaintance of Father Honorat Kozminski, OFM Cap. After hearing him preach, Sophia took Father Honorat as her confessor, and through his encouragement became a Franciscan Tertiary. Her investiture took place on May 27, 1855; she received the name Angela, taking Blessed Angela of Foligno as her patroness. It was Father Honorat, as her spiritual director, who would influence Sophia the most in her spiritual development, as well as in the development of the congregation she would be credited with founding.

It became necessary for Sophia to rent larger quarters, as the number of children and aged had increased. Moving to Mostowa Street, Sophia and her cousin Clothilde made their permanent residence there. On "November 21, 1855, the feast of the Presentation of Mary, kneeling before the image of Our Lady of Czestochowa, whom they regarded as the Foundress of their work, they solemnly promised to dedicate their lives to her service in accordance

with her Divine Son, Jesus Christ."¹⁶ This day is regarded as the day of foundation for the Congregation of the Sisters of St. Felix.

Sophia had no intention of founding a religious community, but she did in fact found a community which would break from the traditions of European women religious. She and her sisters became one of the first communities of women that would combine the active and contemplative ways of life. Mother Mary Angela, as she was now known, did this by instilling into her daughters the ideals of which she was the incarnation: charity, benignity and reparation.¹⁷ For Mother Angela the ideal of reparation would be lived out in her life by restoring the church, both in her active ministry and in her hidden life, by taking the words of St. Paul to heart and making them her own: "It makes me happy to suffer for you, as I am suffering now, and in my own body to do what I can to make up all that has still to be undergone by Christ for the sake of his body, the Church." (Col 1:24) It is fitting, then, that Blessed Mary Angela, and her nine companions at this time, should be invested with the Franciscan habit on Good Friday, April 19, 1857.

As the Congregation continued to grow it was evident that Father Honorat thought the life of the sisters should be primarily contemplative, and with this in mind, saw to it that the Sisters were divided into two choirs on October 4, 1860. The first, the "Marys," were strictly cloistered; their prayers would support the works of the second choir, the "Marthas," who were considered active-contemplative and were involved in apostolic works. Mother Angela, who had been elected Superior General in the Spring of 1859, was assigned to reside with the Cloistered Sisters, and served as Superior General of both choirs.

During this time, which could be described as Mother Angela's "Dark Night," she was able to develop a deep prayer life and to function as the spiritual Mother for the community in spite of her poor physical health, her concerns for the Community, and her dealing with Father Honorat, all of which contributed to the suffering that would last, in varying degrees, for the rest of her life. The words of Bonaventure, taken from his *Itinerarium*, describe her life's direction: "There is not another path but a burning love for the Crucified." In Meditation IX she writes, "Oh, what I would not do, with what eagerness I would get rid of those books (spiritual) if I could only learn like our Holy Father, St. Francis, to read one book—Christ Crucified."¹⁸

During this time of interior identification with the Crucified Christ, Mother Angela saw the expansion of the work of the sisters into the rural areas of Poland. The Agricultural Society was asking religious to undertake establishment and supervision of social centers for peasant families in the vicinities of Lublin and Podlasie in the Russian Sector.¹⁹ It was to one of the sisters stationed at one of these social centers (or "ochrony"), Sister Mary Bogdana, that Mother Angela imparted her thoughts on the love of the Crucified Christ:

Let us then love our Lord Jesus Christ, but let us love him on the cross. This will not only ease our pain, but will be a sweet consolation to Him . . . why should it matter to us from what kind of wood our cross is hewn. The important thing is that it comes from Love itself. Christ himself fastens us to the cross beam, so He also can give us the courage to bear it. . . . We must not look for any other consolation except the comfort which comes from suffering with God. . . . Can you say with Paul, "May I glory in anything else only in the cross of Jesus crucified?"²⁰

Mother Angela would apply this to her own life. She adhered to penitential practices and even stated that she wore "a hair shirt and iron chains constantly,"²¹ yet she never imposed any penitential practices on the sisters without consulting them for their opinions. Then these practices usually took the form of additional prayers. If a sister should want to do something over and beyond what was called for, Mother Angela would caution the sister to be prudent in the use of these penitential devices.

Embracing the Cross

Political unrest was rising to the surface in the early 1860s, and being a product of the Poland suffering oppression, and ingrained with the philosophy of messianism, she felt that her prayers and the prayers of her sisters could help make satisfaction for the sins of the nation. In November of 1861, she wrote, "This devotion (the recitation of the Office of the Immaculate Conception) will be offered for the intentions of our country. We are being told in the cloister that God wants this from us, that He will hear us and it appears that He Himself is compelling us to do it."²²

In this period of history, however, the prayers and practices of reparation would not alter the course of things to come. Regardless of the political tensions the Sisters continued their work in the villages and Mother Angela continued to write to encourage her daughters, and in those writings, her spirit of restoring all to the friendship of God is made evident. In a letter dated March, 1862, to Sister Hedwig, the superior of the social center in Chroberz, and her sisters she writes,

Dear Sisters, do you know how you may best grow in the love of God? It is by forgetting yourselves, actually doing for him whatever we do for the least of his brethren. . . . Our Holy Father St. Francis might not have merited the stigmata if he had not surrendered wholly and completely to the will of God by devoting himself to his neighbor's salvation. . . . Our Lord Himself gave us His encouraging example so

that we would not lose heart over our reluctance to suffer. Though He was all-powerful, He offered Himself as a sacrifice of Love.²³

By 1863 an insurrection against Russian control had begun, and the sisters working in the villages were operating field hospitals for both Polish partisans and Russian soldiers. Again, Mother Angela counsels Sister Hedwig:

Actually putting up with ourselves and our shortcomings is cross enough for us, a truly heavy one from which we will never be delivered. . . . Try to intensify your spiritual life. Very few people realize that it does not depend on extraordinary states of prayer, ecstatic experiences, or special revelations. It consists in being identified with the mind and spirit of Christ so that we can say with Paul, "I live, now not I, but Christ lives in me."²⁴

The uprising was unsuccessful and, as a result, the Russian government began reprisals against the Polish people. On March 2, 1864, Tsar Alexander II granted property rights to the peasants. As a result, landowners could no longer support the social centers staffed by the Sisters, and many of the centers were forced to close. The Sisters returned to Warsaw. Threats of suppression had started and a government committee was collecting information on religious orders, their houses, possessions, and membership. Mother Angela, living with the fear that her life's work was facing extinction, was re-elected Superior General on July 27, 1864. Having spent three years in the cloister, Mother Angela was needed back among the active branch of the Congregation.

On December 18, 1864, soldiers arrived at the Motherhouse in Warsaw. Four officers and two civilians assembled the community and read the decree of suppression. It required that the sisters discard their religious dress and disperse within three days. The cloistered branch was to relocate with the Bernardine Sisters in Lowicz. Mother Angela was to go with the cloistered sisters. One of her last acts before the sisters disbanded was to write a circular to the sisters concerning the suppression:

My beloved, what can I share with you this year since my heart is filled with sadness? The Infant Jesus brings us all the very heavy cross of suffering and tears, exile and destruction. . . . Although I am now burdened with such a heavy cross, and can say with the mother of the Maccabees, that I am a crucified exile some two hundred times, however, beyond comparison I would be more tormented and grieved were I to learn that you are unfaithful to God and that you accept the cross from his hand unwillingly and ungratefully.²⁵

Mother Angela remained in the cloister, but while there maintained communication with her exiled daughters, and "as a result of the sisters residing in Krakow and the intervention of Bishop Galecki, Ordinary of the Diocese of Krakow, the Austrian Government admitted the Community of the Felician Sisters into Galicia in August, 1865. Upon receiving this information the Servant of God commissioned the sisters to reorganize a new common religious life, to open a novitiate in Krakow, and to build a new convent."²⁶ Mother Angela was reunited with the sisters and helped revitalize and expand the Congregation's activities. (The cloistered branch of the congregation became the Order of Capuchin Sisters, living the Rule of St. Clare and claiming Mother Angela as their foundress.)

The congregation grew rapidly and, by 1874, five Felician Sisters were sent to the United States to work among Polish immigrants. Mother Angela was elected Superior General for three consecutive terms. In 1869, she resigned her office due to health reasons and began to live what she referred to as "the hidden life," tending flowers, decorating the altars in the Motherhouse Chapel, and sewing vestments and altar linens for the poorer parishes where the sisters served. Although deaf, she still maintained an interest in the congregation she founded. The bulk of her correspondence to Father Honorat now dealt with the Constitutions being drafted for the Community.

Conclusion

Till the end of her life Mother Angela served her Congregation with her example of virtue, prayer, and suffering. This remarkable woman is brought to life in her writings, especially in her letters to the sisters. "The letters are written in a simple style because they were dictated by the current circumstances of life and not by literary presumption. One reads them for enlightenment and encouragement because they radiate the authenticity of mature faith," stated Pope John Paul II, then Karol Cardinal Wojtyla, in reference to the writings of Mother Angela in the preface to *Selected Writings*, Volume I.

Her writings reveal a spirit of reparation which is developed over her lifetime and is two-fold. First, there is the deep belief of living out the Corporal Works of Mercy, because in her life, and as an example to her sisters, Mother Angela was a living example of feeding the hungry, giving drink to the thirsty, clothing the naked and visiting the sick and imprisoned. It was in this way that she helped restore the Church.

Secondly, Mother Angela became one with the Crucified when she took to heart the words of Jesus, "If anyone wants to be a follower of mine, let him renounce himself, and take up his cross and follow Me" (Matt. 15:24). Her whole life became connected with the cross; it was her focus and her love. She tells us, "Oh, how good it is to live and to die on the cross! Oh, how good and

helpful is the cross at all times and in all places . . . we should not look for any other consolation but this, to suffer with the Crucified Christ."

Her words, as well as her life, have meaning for Franciscans today. Blessed Mary Angela Truszkowska is an example of what it means to live a life of reparation. It is not the externals, the doing extra, but a reparation that consists of an act of renewal on a day to day basis, and the words written by her over one hundred years ago still serve as an example to those who come after her, "Their perfection should not consist in doing unusual things, but in leading ordinary lives in an extraordinary way . . . so it could be said of them, as it was said of Christ, that he did all things well . . ." ²⁷

It has been written that "Sophia Truszkowska was a woman whose great faith and uncommon piety were exceeded only by her intelligence and wisdom. She was one of those extraordinary and generous women, who in a word, is born to rule kingdoms."²⁸ On April 18, 2003, both the Felician sisters and the Order of Capuchin Sisters celebrated the tenth anniversary of the beatification of Blessed Mary Angela Truszkowska. The cause of her canonization is in process.

Endnotes

¹"Reparation," *The Catholic Encyclopedia*, 1911, 775.

²"Theology of Reparation," *New Catholic Encyclopedia*, 1967, 380.

³"Reparation," *Modern Catholic Encyclopedia*, 1980, 463.

⁴"Theology of Reparation," *New Catholic Encyclopedia*, 1967, 380.

⁵"Theology of Reparation," *New Catholic Encyclopedia*, 1967, 380.

⁶George H. Williams, *The Mind of John Paul II: Origins of His Thought and Action* (New York: Seabury, 1981), 22-23.

⁷Piotr S. Wandycz, *The Lands of Partitioned Poland 1795-1918* (Seattle: U of Washington Press, 1974), 117-118.

⁸W. F. Reddaway, *The Cambridge History of Poland* (Cambridge: UP, 1941), 320-321, 324.

⁹Oscar Halecki, *A History of Poland*, trans. Monica Gardner (New York: Roy, 1943), 246.

¹⁰"Poland," *New Catholic Encyclopedia*, 479-480.

¹¹Father Bernardine of Siena, *The Beatification and Canonization of the Servant of God Mary Angela Truszkowska* (Roma: Universita Gregoriana, 1967), 1-2.

¹²Artur Gorski, *The Heart of Mother Angela*, trans. Sister Mary Fidelia Chmiel (Pittsburg: Shemco, 1986), 8.

¹³Gorski, 10.

¹⁴Gorski, 17.

¹⁵In 1861, while reflecting on those early times in her life, Blessed Mary Angela wrote: "Nothing was too difficult if it was for God. . . . Once I began to serve God in the world, I felt a deep inner happiness and natural tendency to do good. Working for others and practicing active charity seemed almost instinctive. Even as a child I was

inclined that way. As the years went by, doing good to others drew me even more strongly toward God. Nothing could stand between me and the fulfillment of my purposes. I was equal to the greatest sacrifices as long as I could serve others and alleviate their miseries. . . ."

¹⁶Bernardine of Siena, 3.

¹⁷Sister Mary Ellen Ryba, *Response*, (np, 1974) 16.

¹⁸*Selected Writings*, vol. IV, 66.

¹⁹Bernardine of Siena, 5.

²⁰*Selected Writings*, vol. XIV, 14-15.

²¹*Selected Writings*, vol. IV, 85.

²²*Selected Writings*, vol. II, 114.

²³Gorski, 150-151.

²⁴Gorski, 155-156.

²⁵*Selected Writings*, vol. I, 216-217.

²⁶Ryba, 16.

²⁷Bernardine of Siena, 6.

²⁸Gorski, 68, 69.

BOOK REVIEW

Landscape of Prayer. Murray Bodo, OFM. St. Anthony Messenger Press, 2003. 240 pp.

Drawing heavily on his personal experiences in prayer, Murray Bodo involves the reader in his own understanding of the ways and means of talking with God. His *Landscape of Prayer* is an intimate glimpse of his childhood, his parents, and the milestones of his life enlightened by the wisdom gleaned through meditating on how God is always present in day-to-day minutiae. The ticking of a clock, a rushing stream, the symbolism of a nearby railroad line—life's commonplace settings are seen as sacred places of contact with the all-good God.

Place, in Murray's economy of prayer, is shared in a particularly vivid manner. The reader can almost bask in the anemic sunshine of a southwestern winter afternoon and settle into his mother's cozy armchair wrapped in a Navajo rug with a cup of comforting brew for a reflection on life's mysteries. Nostalgia is often present but never overbearing, leading the reader to his/her own ancestral settings for owning and healing the past.

Especially meaningful for the Franciscan reader are Bodo's reflections on Assisi, made even more telling by his extraordinary familiarity with the medieval setting of the birth of the movement. In that small city where the stone streets witnessed Francis first carousing with his friends and then preaching penance to her citizens, Bodo leads readers and pilgrims to greater insight into authentic Franciscan experience in the 21st century.

This collection of more than fifty meditative essays allows the reader great latitude in sampling the results of six years of Bodo's prayer experiences. Whether one approaches the work by theme, by liturgical year, by season or any other personal selection process, Bodo's readers will be charmed, challenged, and led to a place of peaceful centering where their own spirits can find God.

Bodo's gift with the word, his humble sharing of his own life's mysteries, and his transparent commitment to following the footprints of Jesus with his brother Francis can be savored over and over. New insights will continue to leap from the pages of this journal for those who want the spirit of prayer to pervade the commonplace moments of their daily lives. This book can serve both beginner and experienced practitioner in "opening the door every morning and every evening. . . ."

Daria Mitchell, OSF
St. Bonaventure, NY14778



About Our Contributors

Kathryn Mary Elliott, CSSE, is a member of the Chicago Province of the Felician Sisters. A graduate of the Franciscan Institute, Kathryn now serves as her province archivist and teaches in the Felician formation programs.

Mary Elizabeth Imler, OSF, General Superior of the Franciscan Sisters of the Sacred Heart, Frankfort, Illinois, is a co-founder of the Portiuncula Center for Prayer in the Joliet Diocese and a past president of the Board of Retreats International. She has recently completed her term as President of the Franciscan Federation of the Third Order Regular. A graduate of The Franciscan Institute, she also holds a Masters in Physics and Chemistry and has done advanced studies at the Guelph Center for Spirituality.

Jane E. Russell, OSF, is a member of the School Sisters of St. Francis, Milwaukee. Currently, Jane teaches at Belmont Abbey College in North Carolina. In the past she has served on her congregational leadership team. In the summer of 2002 Jane participated in a class on Soctus at the Franciscan Institute, and her poem is rooted in that experience.

Rembert Weakland, OSB, is the retired archbishop of Milwaukee. He was active in the liturgical renewal movement following the Second Vatican Council and is a well-known public speaker.

Joseph Wood, OFM, Conv., is a friar of the St. Bonaventure Province. He ministered in Italy from 1990-1998, serving as a retreat and vocation director at the Basilica of St. Francis in Assisi and as archivist at the General Curia in Rome. He is presently a team member for the Franciscan Pilgrimage Program and an editorial board member for *The Cord*. He is co-founder of "Yes Pictures," a new film company.

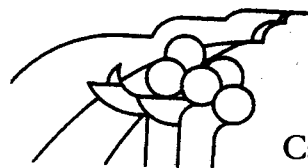
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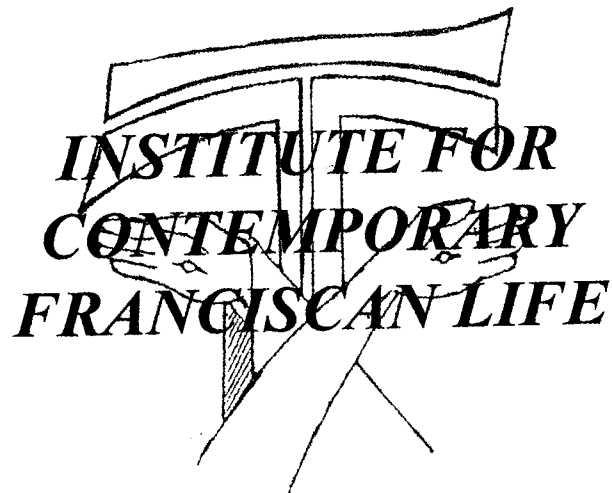
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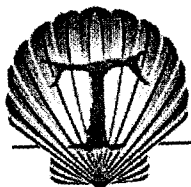
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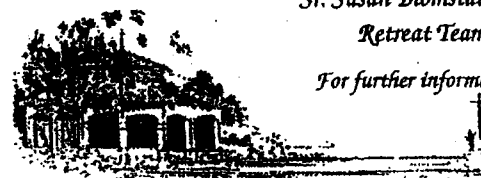
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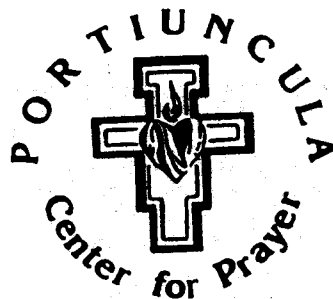
Sr. Susan Blomstad, OSF
Retreat Team

For further information:



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Participants are invited into the freedom to simply be, using the journal as a guide, with a theme reflection every 10 days and opportunities to be companioned by a spiritual director as one wishes.

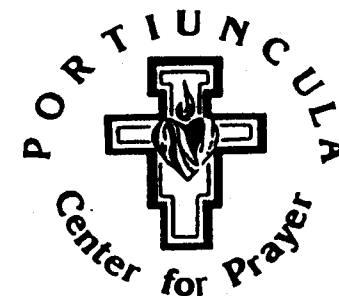
Hermitages, solitude spaces, and single rooms available on first come basis. For more information and brochure packet contact:

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email SKACOPP@aol.com

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

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The Portiuncula Center For Prayer SUMMER RETREATS 2004

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June 26-July 2, 2004

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The Retreat Team consists of men and women who are in touch with current Franciscan Spirituality:

Tod Laverty, OFM, retreat director, team member for the Assisi Pilgrimages;
Georgene Wilson, Wheaton Franciscan, anchorite, author, artist, retreat director;
Marianne Saieg, Joliet Franciscan, photographic artist, retreat director;
JoAnn Haney, Rochester Franciscan, 20 year spiritual and retreat director;

For Brochure and or Registration Contact:

Mary Ann Hamilton Ph: 815-464-3880
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A Learning and Retreat Experience in
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MONDAY, JULY 12- SATURDAY, JULY 17, 2004

SOME PRINCIPLES UPON WHICH THIS PROGRAM IS BASED:

- *God's Self-revelation to us occurs within the reality of lived experience.
- *We direct others out of our own experience.
- *Franciscan spirituality offers a unique approach to Spiritual Direction and indeed to all of our ministries.

The GOAL of this program: to better understand Francis and his lived experience and, with the help of Bonaventure, to understand more clearly the spiritual dynamic at work both in Francis and within ourselves.

Components: 1) A study of Francis the man, in which we look at the lived experience of Francis, through the lens of contemporary Jungian thought, with special focus on his dreams and "visions" 2) A study of Bonaventure's principles of the spiritual life as found in his writings, especially *The Tree of Life* and *The Soul's Journey Into God*.

The **METHOD** will be a continuing reflection on one's own personal experience of life and faith. We will use an adult-learning model that consists of times of reflection on our own experience as well as moments of input/teaching. The **CALL** of God and our **RESPONSE** is the dynamic that encapsulates the spiritual journey and will be referred to throughout the program.

Reference texts: *Simply Bonaventure*, by Ilia Delio, OSF (available on site for purchase)

Omnibus of Sources (available for reference)
Bonaventure (from the series The Classics of Western Civilization, available for reference)

Presenters: Brother David Connolly, ofmCap and Brother Ignatius Feaver, ofmCap

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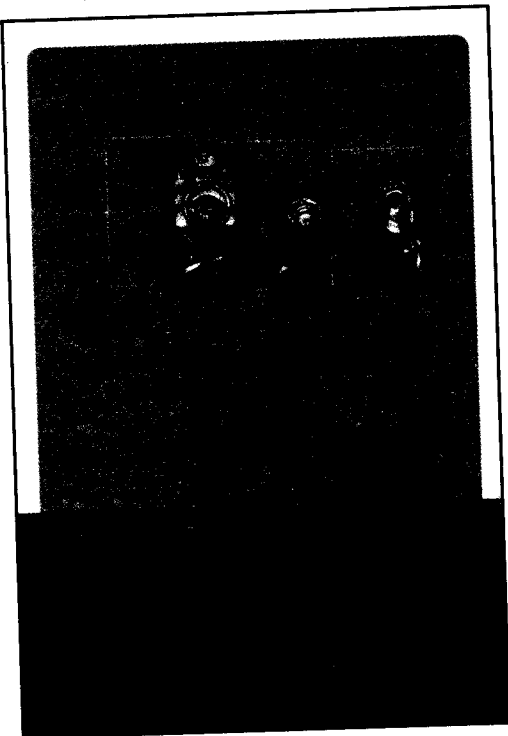
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2004

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Aug 6-14

**Portiuncula Retreat Center
Frankfort, IL
815-464-3880**

2005

July 1-9

**Franciscan Internat. Study Centre
Canterbury, England
011-44-1227 769 349
caraccios@FSBDial.co.uk
contact: Richard Caraccio**

Aug 5-13

**Stella Maris Retreat Center
Skaneateles, NY
315-685-6836**

2006

Apr. 28 - May 6

**Shalom Retreat Center
Dubuque, IA
563-582-3592**

On the Franciscan Circuit Coming Events 2004

Journeying Through Shadow and Darkness. March 26-27, 2004. Friday, 7:00 p.m.-Saturday, 5:00 p.m.

Sr. J. Lora Dambrowski, OSF and Fr. Bernie Tickerhoof, TOR. This weekend of reflection explores the spiritual experience of darkness through the lens of the Jungian Shadow and seeks to offer help in discerning a path through the darkness. Franciscan Spirit and Life Center. 3605 McRoberts Road, Pittsburgh, PA 15234-2340. 412-881-9207.

Journeying Program: Forgiveness: A Gift to Give Yourself. April 2-4, 2004. Friday, 7:30 p.m.-Sunday, noon.

Vince Hyatt. This retreat will assist participants with learning and practicing the steps in the forgiveness process, as well as discovering how to maintain a spirit of forgiveness in one's life. Franciscan Spirituality Center. 920 Market Street, LaCrosse, WI 54601. 608-791-5295. Email: FSCenter@fspa.org.

Keeping the Earth. April 13, 2004. Tuesday, 7:00-8:00 p.m.

Sr. Anne Dougherty, OSF. A celebration of Earth Day with video, discussion and prayer. The Franciscan Center, 3010 N. Perry Ave., Tampa, FL 33603-5345.

Stumbling Blocks and Stepping Stones. April 16-18, 2004. Friday, 7:00 p.m.-Sunday, 1:00 p.m.

Fr. Gavin Griffith, OFM. Weekend retreat for individuals active in any 12-Step program. The Franciscan Center, 3010 N. Perry Ave., Tampa, FL 33603-5345.

Spirit Woven: Life Connected. April 23-25, 2004. Friday, 7:00 p.m.-Sunday, noon.

Fr. Bernie Tickerhoof, TOR. This retreat seeks to build our awareness of the ties that bond us with God, with creation and with one another. Franciscan Spirit and Life Center. 3605 McRoberts Road, Pittsburgh, PA 15234-2340. 412-881-9207.

Reconciliation. May 28-29, 2004. Friday, 7:00 p.m.-Sunday, 2:00 p.m.

Bishop Thomas Gumbleton and Sr. Anne Dougherty, OSF. This second annual "peace retreat" will be a time to reflect on how God creates relationships, heals and restores them when they have been broken. The Franciscan Center, 3010 N. Perry Ave., Tampa, FL 33603-5345.

Abbreviations

Writings of Saint Francis

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

Writings of Saint Clare

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

Franciscan Sources

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