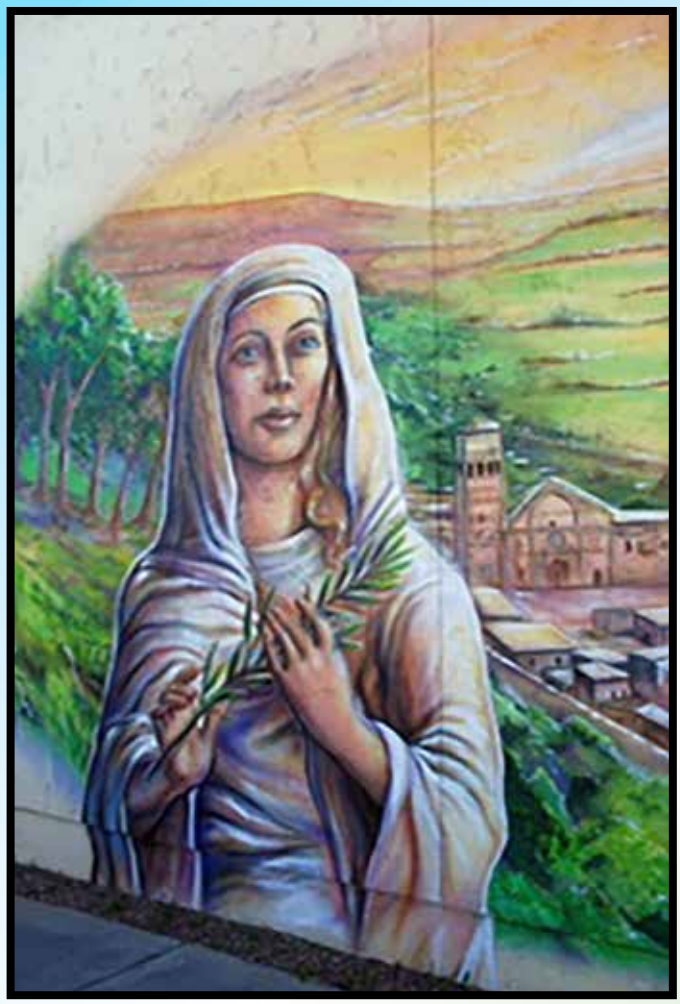
Franciscan Connections: The Cord - A Spiritual Review



Clare as Administrator

The Bodiliness of Franciscan Spirituality

Franciscan Administration and Gospel Values

Volume 66 - Issue 3 **Fall 2016**

Franciscan Connections:
The Cord – A Spiritual Review

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From the Editor-in-Chief

David B. Couturier, O.F.M., Cap., is the Editor-in-Chief of *Franciscan Connections*. He is the Dean of the School of Franciscan Studies at St. Bonaventure University and Director of the Franciscan Institute.

As summer was winding down, Dr. Jean Francois Godet-Calogeras, Professor of Franciscan Studies at St. Bonaventure University, and I went out for a beer after work. We talked about an interesting book he had sent me, one by Prof. Michael Serres, on one of my favorite research topics, Millennials and their psychology. Serres is a professor of the history of science at Stanford and posits that Millennials (and their younger counterpart, the Mosaics, 18-24 years of age) are a different generation of learners and students. They inhabit a changed world, live by an alternate time, and think in a discontinuously different manner. Serres writes:

> The culture of their ancestors was grounded in a temporal horizon of several thousand years, adorned with Greco-Latin antiquity, the Jewish Bible, a few cuneiform tablets, and a short prehistory. This temporal horizon has now been extended billions of years, going back to the Plank barrier, and passing through the accretion of the planet, the evolution of the species, and a paleontology spanning millions of years.
>
> No longer inhabiting the same time, they are living a completely different history. They are formatted by the media, which is broadcast by adults who have meticulously destroyed their faculty of attention by reducing the duration of images to seven seconds, and the response time to questions to fifteen seconds—these are official figures. The word that is repeated most often in the media is "death," and the most frequently represented images are those of corpses. In the first twelve years of their lives, these adults will force them to watch more than twenty thousand murders. They are formatted by advertising. (*Thumbelina: The Culture and Technology of Millennials, 2015*).

Discontinuous times require thinkers who can reimagine the world, our place in it and our relationship to the God who lovingly created it. This edition of Franciscan Connections provides an introduction to this kind of Franciscan thinking.

Godet-Calogeras, in his article on Clare as Administrator, demonstrates how Clare used "subversion" to redefine her role as abbess of her new feminine *fraternitas*. Willem Speelman shows how early Franciscans "had discovered their own bodies as a possible means to an encounter with Jesus and, through Jesus, with God." Gilgannon indicates how the Franciscan virtue of minority could help theologians understand and conquer their unacknowledged positions of theological privilege.

One theme that runs through our articles is the art of Franciscan subversion, the lens that looks at the "gaps left by even the rightest reason" (Welsh), whether in politics (Cudahy), science (Osterman), spirituality (Millington) or love (Shelby). Franciscans, in the spirit of Clare and Francis, lovingly subvert what has been normalized for the glory of a God who "casts down the mighty from their thrones and lifts up the poor."

Fr. Dave

Francis, rebuild my Church!

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More information can be found on our website, www.franciscans.ac.uk.The Franciscan International Study Centre, Giles Lane, Canterbury CT2 7NA, UK. Telephone +44 1227 769349. Registered Charity No. 260851

International News

On August 4, **Pope Francis** visited the **Basilica of Our Lady of the Angels** outside Assisi. After praying privately in the central chapel, he delivered a meditation on the parable of the unforgiving servant (Mt 18:21-35). In the adjacent friary he met with Franciscan superiors general and bishops. In its infirmary he visited the friars and their caregivers. The pope also delivered a public address on the plaza in front of the basilica.

In July at the tomb of St. Francis, the ministers general of the First Order and the Third Order Regular held a private reconciliation service in preparation for the "Pardon of Assisi" to be celebrated at the Portiuncula on August 1-2.

On July 22, **Pope Francis** released the apostolic constitution **"To Seek the Face of God"** about women's contemplative life, expressing the Church's gratitude for their witness and specifying 12 areas where changes may be needed.

Restoration work began last June on the *Edicula* (freestanding building over Jesus' tomb) in Jerusalem's **Church of the Holy Sepulchre**. Representatives of the Greek Orthodox, Roman Catholic, and Armenian Apostolic Churches have authorized work estimated to last a year and to be carried out by the National Technical University of Athens. The Ottoman Empire's 1852 Status Quo Agreement designated these three Churches as joint custodians, with the Ethiopian, Syriac, and Coptic Churches also having rights to use portions of the basilica.

The current ***Edicula*** was built by the Greek Orthodox community in 1810 and has been encased in metal scaffolding for over 70 years. The $3.4 million cost is being paid by the joint custodians. Jordanian King Abdullah made a personal contributions; after World War I and until 1967 his country had civil responsibility for this basilica.

The June issue of **BICI** (**Bolletino di Informazioni Cappuccine Internazionali)** introduced an all-digital format offering interactive links for photo galleries to accompany news items, longer texts, videos (such as a conference of the minister general) and a new online map of the Capuchin world. Two versions enable those without access to high-speed internet to stay connected with the latest news.

Pierbattista Pizzaballa, O.F.M., who recently completed 12 years as Custos of the Holy Land, has been appointed apostolic administrator of the Latin-rite Patriarchate of Jerusalem and named a titular archbishop.

*T*he eighth **"Pro Dialogue" formation meeting of the Friars Minor Conventual** *brou*ght together friars *from* Albania, France, Ghana, Germany, Malta, India, Polan*d*, Romania, Slovenia and Turkey to explore the theme "Migration and Intercultur*al and* Interreligious Dialogue." Participants meeting *o*n June 15-19, 2016 in Corfu heard reports from several experts, *including* **Most Reverend Yannis Spiteris, O.F.M. Cap.**, archbishop of Corfu, Zakynthos and Kefalonia, *who* spoke on the topic "The Catholic Church in Greece: Relations with the Orthodox Church and the Pan-Orthodox Synod of June 19, 2016 in Crete."

The Wild Goose Project invites Catholic Christians into a more profound life-giving relationship with the Holy Spirit, who seeks "to be present to us in a manner that brings light out of darkness, freedom out of bondage, order out of chaos and life out of death." **Father Dave Pivonka, T.O.R.,** facilitates this project (**franciscanstor.org/wildgoose**)that currently offers seven videos on Spirit-related topics.

Vincent Prennushi, O.F.M., and 37 companions murdered by the Albanian government between 1945 and 1974 have been declared martyrs by the Congregation for the Causes of the Saints. Prennushi served as archbishop of Durres.

Roberto Gonzalez, O.F.M., archbishop of San Juan, Puerto Rico since 1988, joined Rev. Heriberto Martinez, general secretary of Puerto Rico's Bible Society and coordinator of the Ecumenical and Interfaith Coalition of Puerto Rico to post a statement at Jubilee USA regarding their country's debt crisis. They write: "This financial crisis has a human cost on our people and, especially an unacceptable cost on our children. In our homeland, 56 percent of children live in poverty. The irony of Puerto Rico's financial crisis is not lost on us. The vulnerable, the least among us, had nothing to do with causing this crisis, and they are the ones most affected by the crisis."

Roundtable

National News

The Franciscan Federation of the Sisters and Brothers of the Third Regular of the U.S. celebrated its 50th anniversary last June 17-20 in Milwaukee. The Federation's 32 past presidents and 14 executive directors (23 in attendance) were honored. Sister Kathie Uhler, OSF delivered the presidential address. At a picnic, members representing all branches of the Franciscan family and Franciscan-hearted people signed a document to commemorate the 800th anniversary of the "Pardon of Assisi" (the Portiuncula indulgence). Contact lzmuda@fspa.org for details about obtaining DVDs of the most significant events.

The 260 attendees from 57 member congregation adopted a resolution pledging "to work for the elimination of gun violence by committing ourselves to respect for life by cultivating a culture of life that explores nonviolent living and advocates for each individual, family, school and neighborhood so that our communities can once again become places of peace and beacons of life movement." The resolution calls for stricter background checks for all types of gun purchases and registration with local police within three days of purchase. Federation members also committed themselves to address related issues such as the decline in family life, the need for a stronger mental health system, and budget cuts that affect the poor disproportionately.

"Reviving Our Spirit" was the theme of the **Secular Franciscan Quinquennial Congress** held in St. Louis (June 30-July 4). Participants filled 101 boxes of "Franciscan Blessing" bags with an estimated two tons of snacks, socks, and personal care items to benefit St. Anthony Food Pantry in that city. Its stunned and delighted director, Franciscan Sister Connie Probst, had to make a second trip with a van in order to collect them.

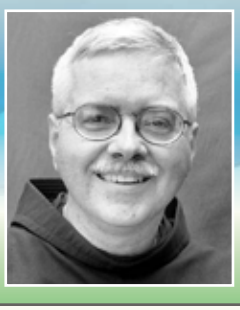
Mary Ann Gawelek, Ed.D. has been named the 10th president of Lourdes University in Sylvania, Ohio. She most recently served as provost and dean of the faculty at Seton Hill University in Greensburg, Pennsylvania. Doctor Gawelek, who began on July 1, has also been a professor of psychology.

Margaret Carney, O.S.F., who served for 12 years as president of St. Bonaventure University in Allegany, NY, was honored by SBU trustees, colleagues, and friends at a special dinner last June 10. She received Holy Name Province's Franciscan medal for her service and Franciscan spirit, a plaque from Minister General Michael Perry, OFM, and a portrait of herself, commissioned by three families. The plaque recognized "a lifetime spent in service to others, principally as an educator and leader within the Franciscan community, and for her significant contribution to the Franciscan family and the Franciscan Intellectual Tradition." Tributes, a "Sister Act" skit, and Irish songs were part of the festivities.

The **McGinley-Carney Center for Franciscan Ministry** is the name of St. Bonaventure University's new campus ministry center, scheduled to open in 2017. Margaret worked tirelessly on the revision of the Third Order Regular Rule approved in 1982.

Dr. Andrew Roth is the 2016-17 interim president of St. Bonaventure University. During his tenure as president and CEO of Notre Dame College in suburban Cleveland (2003-14), the school's enrollment nearly tripled, and its full-time faculty more than doubled.

At St. Bonaventure University on July 14, Professor Jacques Dalarun gave the annual Ignatius Brady Lecture, explaining ***The Rediscovered Life of St. Francis of Assisi***, written for the friars between 1232 and 1239. This text, which condenses the *Vita Prima* and adds new material (especially about miracles), is 1/8 of a preaching manual that was used up through the 15th century, probably in the Marches of Ancona. *The Rediscovered Life* (translated by Timothy Johnson of Flagler College) is available from Franciscan Institute Publications.



Compiled by **Pat McCloskey, O.F.M.,** the author of *Peace and Good: Through the Year with Francis of Assisi* (Franciscan Media). Send news items for this column to pmccloskey@FranciscanMedia.org. He serves as Franciscan Editor of *St. Anthony Messenger* and writes its "Dear Reader," and "Ask a Franciscan" columns. He also edits *Weekday Homily Helps.*

The Commentaries on Luke by Bonaventure and Peter of John Olivi

By Robert J. Karris, O.F.M.

I recently completed my annotated translation of Peter of John Olivi's large Commentary on St. Luke's Gospel. Before it is published by Franciscan Institute Publications, I would like to provide a preview of coming attractions. It seems good to accomplish that goal by comparing it with St. Bonaventure's three-volume Commentary on Luke's Gospel, which I published in 2001-2004. Both commentaries were written in the same 13th century: Bonaventure's at the midpoint of that century whilst Peter of John Olivi's dates to its last decade. While there is always the danger of falling into the trap of comparing oranges and cantaloupes, contrasting Bonaventure and Olivi's works with one another may offer useful insights into these two Franciscan theologians, their methodologies, and their love for poverty. I will treat the following points: Sources, example of St. Francis of Assisi, methodology, engaging the reader/listener and Christ and poverty.

Use of Sources

Bonaventure often benefits from the Commentary on Luke by Hugh of St. Cher. For example, in his commentary on Luke 11:31, Bonaventure writes:

> Wherefore, through a comparison by reason of seven preeminent characteristics the queen of the South will judge the unbelieving Jews. For queen: She, of the weak sex, comes from a remote territory, with difficulty, having left her kingdom, with gifts, to a mere man, known only by reputation, as is expressly garnered from 1 Kings 10:1-10. But for the Jews: men who contemn and despise Christ present, freely revealing himself, unique, beneficent, God and man, proved by miracles. (*WSB VIII/2*,1092)

Hugh of St. Cher comments:

> For seven reasons the queen of the South condemns the Jews. First, because she is a woman, and they are men. Second, because she came from afar, and they had him present. Third, because she came with difficulty and spent much, and they had him revealed free of charge. Fourth, because she left her kingdom, and there are in their own land. Fifth, because she came with gifts, and they denied the beneficence of Christ. Sixth, because she came to a mere man, and they came to God and man. Seventh, because she knew Solomon by reputation only, and they despised the one approved by many miracles. (*WSB VIII/2*, 1092-93, n. 200)

While Bonaventure adjusts the points made by his contemporary Hugh of St. Cher, it is clear that he is dependent on the insights of this learned Dominican and Cardinal.

For his part, Peter of John Olivi frequently quotes from St. Thomas Aquinas' *Catena aurea*. A good example occurs in his interpretation of Luke 9:57-59. In a relatively short space, Peter of John Olivi quotes Theophylactus, Bede, and Chrysostom. He observes:

> The first person deceitfully says to Christ: "I will follow you wherever you go." Christ unmasks his deceitfulness when he says: "The foxes have dens, and the birds of the air have nests." Christ's twofold parabolic example can be reduced to the same point, namely, an attack on the person's avarice. The reason is that according to Theophylactus: "He had seen the Lord drawing many people to himself and thought that he received money from them. So if he would follow the Lord, he too could accumulate money." Likewise Bede observes: "Why do you seek to follow me for the riches and lucre of this world when my poverty is so absolute that I have no resting place and no home of my own?" … "But the Son of Man has nowhere to lay his head." Chrysostom observes: "See how he sets forth by his works the poverty that he taught. For him there was no table spread, no candelabrum, no house, nor anything of this sort."

Thomas Aquinas actually stated:

> Theophylactus comments: For he had seen the Lord drawing many people to himself and thought that he received money from them. So if he would follow the Lord, he could accumulate money. Bede observes: Why do you seek to follow me for the riches and lucre of this world when my poverty is so absolute that I have no resting place and home of my own? … Chrysostom notes: "See how he sets forth by his works the poverty he taught. For him there was no table spread, no candelabrum, no house nor anything of this sort.

Again, Peter of John Olivi is not quoting Thomas Aquinas in a slavish manner, but adjusts and adapts the points that Thomas of Aquinas is making from the tradition of the authoritative church fathers.

Use of the Example of St. Francis of Assisi

The reader may well expect that these two Franciscan commentators would cite the life, thought, and actions of St. Francis of Assisi, the founder of the Franciscan Order. The reader will not be disappointed.

In four cases, St. Bonaventure cites the example of St. Francis of Assisi. I provide as one example his commentary on Luke 9:23:

Note that he says: "Daily, take up your cross" because daily the penitence of the cross must be new and fresh, so that he may always say: "I said: Now I have begun" (Psalm 76:11) like Blessed Francis, who, when he was dying, said that now he was beginning to do good: "Brothers, let us begin and make progress, for up until now we have made little progress." (see *WSB VIII/2*, 838).

For his part, Peter of John Olivi refers to Francis five times, but does not stress imitation of Francis in one's spiritual life. Rather, he points to the apocalyptic significance of Francis as the angel of the sixth seal (Rev 7:2) and forerunner of the sixth period of ecclesiastical history. In the conclusion of his commentary on the parable of the rich man and Lazarus (Luke 16:19-31), he comments:

Now by "five brothers" the fivefold age or status of the Old Testament until Christ is meant. Another interpretation is the people taught by the five books of Moses or following the five senses. Thus Lazarus and the rich man are understood to have been at the end of the fifth age and at the beginning of the sixth. So also Lazarus, poor and covered by ulcers, represents the poor Christ, wounded on the cross for our sakes, soothingly licked by the pagan dogs converted to him, because they with wonderful and loving devotion have sucked and are sucking all the wounds of Christ… Upon the opening of the sixth seal, after the five ecclesiastical periods, there is another allegory. Then Lazarus represents the evangelical status formed in Francis ulcerated by Christ's stigmata and he is still to be ulcerated by the ulcers of Christ-formed martyrs by the rich, carnal worshippers and the cult of that ecclesiastical time which contemns the form of Christ and Lazarus the beggar… (See Luke 16, n. 97-98.)

It doesn't take much insight to realize that Peter of John Olivi is criticizing some aspects of the church of his time. Such criticism took its toll on him and his reputation.

Methodology in Interpreting Luke

In interpreting the Third Gospel, Bonaventure is heavily dependent not only on Hugh of St. Cher, but also upon the *Ordinary Gloss* and his "distinctions" that use multiple scripture passages. The editors of the critical edition well stated:

> Many thousands of quotations from both Testaments are accumulated for the purpose of suggesting a plurality of citations for any opinion whatsoever. From these quotations the preacher could draw as he willed, so that he might support whatever he said with the authority of Scripture, as the practice of that age required. For this purpose, too, a continuous chain of authorities from the Ordinary Gloss and the books of the Fathers was fashioned (*WSB VIII/3*, xiii).

Because of space limitations, it is impossible to give a full-blown example of this aspect of Bonaventure's exegesis. Sufficient is his commentary on Luke 23:42-43 (the Good Thief story):

> For he (the thief) acknowledges not only Christ's innocent life, but also his extraordinary power. So the text continues: "And he said to Jesus: Lord, remember me when you come into your kingdom." With these words he simultaneously confesses Christ's regal power and asks for the forgiveness of his sin. In such a way Nehemiah prayed, as Nehemiah 5:19 reads: "Remember me, O my God, for good." The Psalmist prays: "Remember, O Lord, your own compassionate mercy … According to your mercy may you remember me, for your goodness sake, O Lord" (24:6-7) … It was also a prayer of supplication. Thus the Ordinary Gloss observes: "A great grace shines forth in this thief. Although punishment holds captive his every member except his heart and tongue, he offers what he is free to give. He believes with his heart and confesses with his tongue." … So Ambrose comments: "What a most exquisite example of a desirable conversion: that forgiveness is so quickly lavished on the thief and the grace he receives far exceeds his plea. For the Lord God always gives more than is asked for." (*WSB VIII/3*, 2163-64, n.51-52).

Thus, Bonaventure, in this brief commentary, cites Nehemiah, the Psalmist, the *Ordinary Gloss*, and church father Ambrose.

Peter of John Olivi creates his own exegetical highway. Most infrequent are his citations of the *Ordinary Gloss* or of Sacred Scripture. His style is to ask questions, and he does so 85 times. Some questions are short; some are long. A simple question deals with the good thief's statement that Jesus had done no evil (Luke 23:41). Peter of John Olivi observes:

> How did this thief know this? Three answers can be given. First, he knew it by Christ's public reputation for holiness and miracles which was very widespread throughout the entire land… Second, Christ's words, signs, and deeds openly place before him Christ's wondrous innocence, meekness, humility, compassion, constancy, magnanimity and gratitude towards God. Third, a sudden influx of a singular grace immediately changed his soul, leading him to remorse and to the insight and confession that Jesus was truly Christ and God, and the true King of the Jews and of all the elect… (Luke 23, n.29).

It seems that Bonaventure is not interested in such questions.

Commentaries that Engage the Reader

Bonaventure's very style of using distinctions, authoritative sources, play on words, and contrasts would and did appeal to his readers/listeners and preachers. I single out his use of an anecdote to teach that avarice dries up our hands whereas generosity and almsgiving give them life. In commenting on Luke 6:10, Bonaventure remarks:

> Furthermore, there are the example and manifest experience of a certain English king, who used to grant large alms and whose hand and arm remain integral and incorrupt. Of him it is told that one day a certain bishop said to him, when he extended his hand to give to a poor person the silver serving dish, which he had in his hands before him, that his hand would never dry up. This saying, it is said, has been fulfilled up until the present

day. (*WSB VIII/1*, 475-76).

Besides employing 85 questions to engage his readers, Peter of John Olivi also grabs his readers' attention by criticizing contemporary practices. I give one example. In his commentary on the parable of The Father and his Two Sons (Luke 15:11-32), Peter of John Olivi focuses on the feast given for the prodigal son. He argues against the generalization "any male or female sinner is always to be received into the loving feast of the saints." He then mentions what must have been a contemporary practice**: "**Thus some err shamelessly, although their intentions are pious, when they collect public prostitutes and dimwitted women from the fields and hedges and quickly throw a religious habit on them and just about dedicate them in a society of virgins who are living a regular life." Peter of John Olivi provides additional arguments against this interpretation of Luke 15. He states that these women are showing no or little preliminary signs befitting repentance. Also, 1 John 4:1 warns that one must test the spirits to see whether they are from God, and in Matthew 7:15, Christ himself warns about false prophets. His final argument is "… that the rules of the holy fathers established that those coming to religious life are to be proven before they are received to see whether they are fit and suitable for this religious way of life" (Luke 15, n. 53). Thus, he finds no basis that such a haphazard practice pertains to the literal or spiritual meaning of the banqueting festivities of Luke 15, esp. Luke 15:23-24.

Christ and Poverty

In commentaries written by two Franciscans on Luke's Gospel, the Gospel of and for the poor, we would expect extensive consideration of the theme of poverty and imitation of the poor Christ. Bonaventure and Peter of John Olivi use extensive trumpet blasts to accentuate this theme.

Bonaventure's exposition of Luke's Infancy Narrative opens a small window into his extensive consideration of the poor Christ. In commenting on Luke 2:7, which states that Mary clothed Jesus in swaddling clothes, Bonaventure states:

> And his poor mother Mary wrapped him in swaddling clothes, that is, not in one single garment, but in many, so that he could be called a pauper in tatters and would clearly exemplify what the Apostle says in 1 Timothy 6:8: 'Having some food and something in which we are clothed, let us be content with these' … Therefore, the poor mother gave birth to the poor Christ in such a way that he might invite us to embrace poverty and to be enriched by his penury, according to what 2 Corinthians 8:9 says: 'You know the graciousness of our Lord Jesus Christ, who, although he was rich, became poor for your sakes.' And by means of his all-embracing indigence he condemned avaricious opulence … Already by example Christ began to demonstrate the state of perfection which consists of humility, austerity, and poverty. (*WSB VIII/1*, 145-51, n. 11-16)

Peter of John Olivi's commentary on Luke 22:43 opens the large window about the poor Christ just a crack: "And there appeared to him an angel from heaven to strengthen and comfort him." As we would expect, Peter of John Olivi raises a question about this verse: "Did Christ need such strengthening?" In his answer, he emphasizes Jesus' mortality:

> Thus because he was human, he had to be nursed by his mother's milk, carried in her arms, to be guarded against Herod's wiles, to cry as an infant when he was discomforted, and to be cherished by his mother's caresses. Thus he had placed himself in our hierarchy which is ruled by angels. He humbled himself and was made a little lower than the angels. Christ allowed this although he ruled over the angels and was in charge of all their actions. Do not be amazed that he wanted to be taken care of by angels since he wanted to be fed in the houses of strangers with the food of other masters as befits a true beggar and exemplar of poverty… (Luke *22*, n. 64).

In brief, Christ chose to become human, but not as a rich king or ruler, but as a beggar and exemplar of poverty.

Conclusion

Since Peter of John Olivi is less familiar to readers than St. Bonaventure, I conclude with a brief evaluation of his Commentary on the Gospel of Luke. The contemporary relevance of Peter of John Olivi's commentary on Luke is its accentuation of contemplation and poverty as hallmarks of Mary and Jesus, who dominate Luke's account of the first period of church history. St. Francis of Assisi, who inaugurated the sixth period of church history for Peter of John Olivi, recapitulated the poverty, self-sacrifice, and contemplation of the first period and provides a way for all friars, and indeed all Christians, to put on the mind of Christ. Decades ago, Hans Conzelmann lit up the world of Lukan studies by emphasizing that Luke's main theological concern in writing his Gospel was eschatological, that is, the delay of the Parousia (*The Theology of Luke*). Thus, Luke presented three periods of time: the Old Testament leading up to and including John the Baptist; the time of Jesus (The Middle of Time); and the time of the Church. For Peter of John Olivi, the interpreter of Luke's Gospel must see and live out the insight that the end is not endlessly in the future. Rather, we are living in the time of the end being realized. That is, the end is being experienced right now as Christ is restoring believers to the paradisiacal beginning where contemplation of God's goodness reigned and people were not avaricious, but held all things in common. Dare we get onboard Peter of John Olivi's eschatological train of thought and way of life with its consequences of conversion out of the clutches of Mammon and towards the joy of contemplation? This train leads to glory.

Robert J. Karris, O.F.M. Th.D., is Professor-Emeritus of St. Bonaventure University. He now resides in Chicago where he continues his Franciscan research.

Clare as Administrator:
Changing the Paradigm

By Jean-François Godet-Calogeras, Ph.D.

"The witness also said that three years after Lady Clare had been in the Order, at the prayers and insistence of Saint Francis, who almost forced her, she accepted the direction and government of the sisters. Asked how she knew this, she said she was present." That is what Sister Pacifica declared during the investigation that would lead to the canonization of Clare (Proc 1:6). She did not mention the title attached to that function of government: abbess.

Although etymologically the word abbess means mother, in the religious world of Clare's time, it meant the superior of the community, the one who is at the head, above the others. Francis may have thought that adopting the vocabulary used in the church would draw less question or suspicion about the new community of San Damiano. However, Clare did not like it. One may think that she did not want to be assimilated into the monastic wworld. But her own writings as well as the early documents reveal reasoning deeper than that: Clare disagreed with the job description. She disagreed with the kind of leadership, patriarchal and hierarchical, prevalent in church and society. She did not want to be a superior. So, what did she do? In her simplicity as well as assertiveness she accepted the title of abbess, but changed the job description, returning to the very meaning of the word, mother.

Traditionally, in Mediterranean culture, the mother is the one who governs, as Francis sings so well in his Canticle of the Creatures: "Praised be you, my Lord, through our Sister Mother Earth, who sustains and governs us, and who produces varied fruits with colored flowers and herbs." The mother is the home maker, the food provider, the care giver, the educator. She runs the house, she governs, which means she guides, like piloting a ship, from behind. Does this apply to Clare with her sisters in San Damiano? We need to take a look at her own writings and see how she describes the job of the abbess.

We find Clare's basic definition of the abbess in the Form of Life of the Poor Sisters she composed after some forty years of community life:

"The one who is elected shall consider the burden she has taken on herself and to whom she will render an account of the flock committed to her. She shall study to lead them by her virtues and her holy behavior rather than by reason of her office, so that the sisters, incited by her example, may obey her through love rather than fear" (4:8-9).

The first element that comes out is that the position of abbess is not a position of honor, prestige or power. It is a burden, a weight, a charge upon the abbess' shoulders. The abbess carries her sisters. For Clare, that position of leadership is a position of service, and a service for which she is accountable.

The second element is that the abbess should lead by example. Her authority should emanate from the way she lives and relates to others. She should generate love.

For Clare, being the mother of the community means to serve, not to order. She is the sister serving her sisters. In the true meaning of the word, she is the minister – she uses the word handmaid, in Latin *ancilla*, of her sisters, the administrator of the community. How does she manifest that?

First of all, as we can see in her Form of Life, Clare constantly wants to build consensus, among the sisters: "If anyone by divine inspiration shall come to us wanting to accept this life, the abbess must seek the consensus of all the sisters" (2:1) … "And regarding whatever is for the benefit and the integrity of the monastery, the abbess shall confer with all her sisters, for the Lord often reveals what is best to a younger. They shall take on no heavy debt unless with the common consent of the sisters and for an obvious necessity" (4:17-19) … "In order to conserve the unity of mutual love and peace, all the officials of the monastery shall be elected by the common consent of all the sisters" (4:22). For Clare, building the community and fostering the common good must involve all the members. She has a very communal approach.

Clare also governs as a mother, and a very nurturing one. She pays attention to the bodily needs of her sisters: "The abbess must wisely provide them [the sisters] with clothes, according to the qualities of the persons, the places, the times, and the cold regions" (2:16). Like a mother she reaches out to those in emotional crises: "She [the abbess] shall console those who are afflicted, and she shall even be the ultimate refuge for those in trouble" (4:11-12). And as a good mother, Clare at times becomes a teacher, an educator, eliciting admiration and gratitude. A sister reported: "She [Sr. Angeluccia] also said when the most holy mother used to send the sisters serving outside the monastery, she reminded them to praise God when they saw beautiful trees, flowers, and bushes; and, likewise, always to praise God for and in all things when they saw all peoples and creatures" (Proc 11:2).

Finally, Clare remains a sister among sisters, and it is from that position that she governs. She is the abbess *with* her sisters. "She [the abbess] shall observe the community life in everything, but especially in the church, the dormitory, the refectory, the infirmary and in clothing" (4:13). Moreover, Clare insists that the job of the abbess is to serve her sisters: "The abbess should be on such familiar terms with her sisters that they could speak and act with her as ladies do with their handmaid. For this is how it must be, that the abbess be the handmaid of all the sisters" (10:4-5).

Obviously, Clare subverted the traditional, monastic definition of abbess. When she and other women joined the movement originating with Francis and his male companions, it was to build *fraternitas*, a community based on fraternal relationship, and San Damiano was *fraternitas* at its best. Clare repeatedly uses the words communion, common, community, commonly, which indicate her focus: community building. Her job description is pretty well summarized in her Testament (where, by the way, she never uses the word abbess), confirming what is said in the Form of Life of the Poor Sisters: "I ask of the one who will be in charge of the sisters that she strive to go before the others by virtues and holy behavior more than by office, so that her sisters, incited by her example, do not obey because of the office, but because of the love. She should be farsighted and wise about her sisters, as a good mother is towards her daughters. Above all, regarding the alms the Lord will give, she should strive to provide according to the needs of each one. She

should also be so kind and accessible that the sisters feel safe to express their needs and confident to come back to her any time, as it will seem expedient to them, as much for themselves as for their sisters" (61-66).

The one in charge of the sisters is the one serving them, ministering to them (the true meaning of the word administrator). That was how Clare lived the responsibility she accepted, and in doing so transformed, for the sisters of San Damiano and for those who were to follow, the ruling paradigm of the title, abbess.

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Theologians of Privilege, Preferential Option for the Poor and the Franciscan Value of Minority

By Michelle Gilgannon, Ph.D.

This paper attempts to explore the role that often unrealized privilege plays in our interpretation of the preferential option for the poor. It seems to be rather common, but unintended, that theologians from the "center" downplay the radical ideas of the preferential option for the poor. This will be explored by examining some ways in which theologians use and react to Stephen Pope's article, "Proper and Improper Partiality and the Preferential Option for the Poor."[1] It seems to be especially the case when we attempt to understand and apply such statements as the following from Gustavo Gutierrez: "God's love is revealed to the poor. They are the ones who receive, understand and proclaim this love."[2] We seem to be too willing to water down the radicalness of this notion because it threatens our own interpretation of Christian witness and ethical behavior. The preferential option that undergirds liberation theology is more than merely an invitation to the poor and marginalized to join US at the table?[3] It is actually calling us to put the needs, insight, and voice of those on the margins at the center of our thinking

In an attempt to understand privilege and preferential option, the paper will focus on the Franciscan value of minority. As noted by Michael W. Blastic, OFM, minority is the unique value found in the Franciscan charism.[4] Minority and humility require those who follow them to make themselves less for the good of others. Reflections on this charism, and its lived reality in Francis, can be found in the writings of St. Bonaventure.[5] These stories and exhortations provide a colorful, and honestly counter-cultural understanding of what it means to make oneself "less than." Exploring the value of minority as it was lived by Francis and as it is lived by contemporary Franciscans might offer us a way of exploring our own bias and privilege in our relation to those at the margins.

Privilege and how it shapes our thinking about morality and ethics was a theme that was addressed in a few papers at the 2014 Catholic Theological Society of America conference (CTSA). Bryan Massingale and Anna Floerke Scheid presented their work and struggles in trying to incorporate the global church into the discipline of moral theology. Later, at a plenary session of the same conference, Christina Astorgoa and Christopher Vogt shared thoughts on the nature of social and personal ethics. One of the themes arising from these different presentations was the role of the other, non-Western perspective to ethics and morality and the role of liberation theology.[6] Massingale and Floerke Scheid asked how catholic (universal) is Catholic moral theology if it is not open to really incorporating non-Western approaches to morality? Astorga and Vogt discussed the role of liberation theology in social ethics and these two sets of talks merge to ask us to consider how our own privilege as theologians stop us from understanding other approaches to morality and the notion of the preferential option for the poor.

In their plenary talks, both Astorga and Vogt addressed liberation theology using Stephen Pope's seminal article on the topic of the preferential option for the poor. In this article, Pope explains the proper way to understand preferential partiality with relation to the poor from three areas: cognitive partiality, moral partiality and religious partiality.[7] It is the role of cognitive partiality upon which this paper will reflect. The hermeneutical privilege of the poor is a phrase and concept accepted and used by many liberation theologians and it points to the requirement that we view reality, revelation and even policy/politics through the specific lens of the physically poor and marginalized.[8] Pope rightly notes that liberation theology is not suggesting that ONLY the view of the poor is used when confronting unjust social situations, etc. He notes that the poor are not considered automatic experts on technical matters such as "debt conversion" but that liberation theologians are asserting the need to view such technical matters from the perspective of the poor.[9]

In this same section, Pope notes that others have taken exception with the way liberation theologians interpret Scripture. While he defends these interpretations against the charge of being naïve and not historical-critical in nature, he does note that liberation exegesis can be considered inadequate in its interpretation.[10] It is the charge of "inadequacy" that can lead one to think about issues of privilege. Without denying the invaluable tools and interpretation given to us from the historical-critical method, there is within our field a bias that this method presents the only "valid" interpretation of scripture. The primacy of historical-critical method may be an area of unexplored, Western/European intellectual privilege.

Gustavo Gutierrez explains this best himself at the beginning

1 Stephan J. Pope, "Proper and Improper Partiality and the Preferential Option for the Poor," *Theological Studies* 54 (1993): 242–71.

2 Gustavo Gutierrez, *The Power of the Poor in History*, trans. Robert Barr (Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis, 1983): 105.

3 For example, Christopher Vogt in his Plenary Session Response at the CTSA conference notes Pope's understanding of hermeneutical privilege "as justified because it fosters *inclusion* by disclosing and highlighting the experience and insights of people who previously had been ignored. It widens the circle of conversation rather than shifting authority from one group within the circle to another." "All Ethics is Social *And* Personal: A Response to Christian Astorga's 'All Ethics is Social Ethics,'" *Proceedings of the Catholic Theological Society of America*, Vol. 69 (2014), 60. Accessed online at http://ejournals.bc.edu/ojs/index.php/ctsa/issue/view/602/showToc.

4 Michael W. Blastic, OFM, "The Franciscan Difference: What Makes a Catholic University/College Franciscan?" *AFCU Journal: A Franciscan Perspective on Higher Education*, Vol. 4, no. 1 (Jan. 2007), 20.

5 Bonaventure, *The Life of St. Francis*, (New York: Paulist Press, 1978).

6 At the end of his response, Christopher Vogt also noted the relevance of Massingale and Floerke Scheid's presentations and how moral theology can incorporate other voices in ways that go beyond tokenism, Vogt, 61.

7 Pope, 245.

8 Pope, 247. In a note, Pope references the importance of this phrase for liberation theology but that it is not accepted by magisterial accounts of the preferential option.

9 Ibid., 248.

10 Ibid., 248.

of his book of published essays on the poor.[11] He notes the importance of the bible but the insecurity of approaching the bible without the acquisition of special knowledge.[12] "Exegetes, as someone once said, are members of a very exclusive, expensive club. To become a member of this club you have to have assimilated Western culture—German and Anglo-Saxon culture, actually—because exegesis in the Christian churches of today is so closely tied in with it."[13] Without devaluing this approach, Gutierrez reminds us that not only is the purpose of the bible to "proclaim the good news to the poor,"[14] but that he is reinterpreting the bible from the viewpoint of personal experience in the world.[15] He sets out his method for using the bible in light of the poor as being Christological, done in faith (as in the faith community), historical (viewpoint of current history) and militant (by this he means putting the message of the bible for the persecuted into practice).[16]

Gutierrez is one of the primary (but not the only) liberation theologians that Pope uses in his article on proper partiality. Gutierrez explains quite thoroughly his respect for the scientific approach to scripture but his need to create a different interpretive method in light of his project. We must remember that Gutierrez is writing these essays not necessarily for the Church at large, but specifically for the poor in Latin America. He understands their fear of approaching Scripture from an uneducated perspective and is suggesting another way to understand the Scripture in their own situation. Suggesting this as inadequate seems to imply that Gutierrez' approach needs permission from the "approved" historical-critical method. The historical-critical method represents one important approach, but it is an approach that comes from one specific majority culture. There is more than one legitimate way to interpret Scripture and this is especially the case when the methodology used in liberation theology has been explained in such a manner as in Gutierrez's writing.

Another part of Pope's explanation of hermeneutical privilege that was referenced by Vogt in his CTSA response deals with Jon Sobrino's quote, "The poor are accepted as constituting the primary recipients of the Good News and therefore as having an inherent capacity to understand it 'better' than anyone else."[17] Pope notes that there is a transition in liberation theology that moves from the absolute methodological privilege to a relative normative privilege with regards to Scriptural interpretation.[18] Pope would like this transition to be furthered by "differentiating valid claims of insights and sensibilities availed by material poverty from illusory or exaggerated claims of broad class-based epistemological superiority."[19] He notes that there are many "privileged locations" from which we can understand God's mercy, goodness, etc., and that hermeneutical privilege does much to open scripture to the perspectives of those who have been ignored.[20] Vogt suggests that this transition/approach "widens the circle of conversation rather than shifting authority from one group within the circle to another."[21] While this seems to be an inclusive statement, there is an element of it that also smacks of privilege.

Sobrino's quote, like the quotes of Gutierrez noted above, comes from a specific interpretive lens. He uses Rahner's understanding of God drawing near to us in grace as constituting the role of the poor as concrete mediators of the Good News.[22] That is, much like the role of the ancient Hebrews to be a light to all nations, the role of the poor is to show what grace freely given looks like. For the materially impoverished, grace is often the only thing that secures their sustenance; therefore, they have a perspective on the Good News, God's grace, that is superior to those of us who through luck, birth, and unconsidered privilege do not literally survive upon grace. The suggestion that liberation theology should transition from assuming a hermeneutical authority to simply asking that the poor are given a seat at the table can make one wonder why we are so uncomfortable giving up our own seats at the table.

This is similar to the way Bryan Massingale expressed his struggles to include African anthropology and ethics into a course on social ethics. He spoke of the phenomenon of "marginalization by inclusion."[23] He had brought in African ethical thought as a "guest" not as something that was equal to or an alternative of traditional Western ethics. He implied that our privileged position in theology, based in Western cultural values, has led us to dismiss other, equal, appropriate and perhaps more accurate interpretations. Many theologians have commented on the Christian inclination to "tame the Gospel" in order to make us comfortable in light of its calling. It is also possible that theology seeks to "tame" liberation theology so that we continue to be the ones who control the theological, ethical and moral conversation. In many ways, the aim to weaken the prophetic call of the poor in liberation theology allows us to trot it out in our ethics classes as a token to the marginalized but then put it away when it asks us to live out its call.

It is the premise of this paper that the Franciscan value of minority might be one avenue that allows us to understand and perhaps conquer our theological privilege. Michael Blastic, OFM, offers the value of minority as that which is central to the Franciscan charism.[24] The goal of his article is to show what is distinctive about the Franciscan values when compared to other religious orders and, therefore, to assist Franciscan colleges in owning these values. Importantly, the first key to Franciscan values is that they cannot be taken separately from their praxis, to do so is an abstraction that takes away their distinctiveness.[25] Indeed, when Franciscan values are not put into practice, they sound like many other religiously ordered, and even sometimes, secularly human values. Actively living the values is what gives them uniqueness, and this also gives priority to two values that are distinctively Franciscan, the lived values of poverty and minority.[26]

Blastic wryly notes that selling an education around these values is somewhat difficult, but insists that the Franciscan difference is to be found in the value of poverty and minority. From

11 Gutierrez, *Power of the Poor*.
12 Ibid., 3–4.
13 Gutierrez, 4.
14 Ibid.
15 Ibid.
16 Ibid.
17 Jon Sobrino, *The True Church and the Poor*, trans. Matthew O'Connell (Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis, 1984) 140.
18 Pope, 250.
19 Ibid.
20 Ibid. Note, that the other privileged locations he uses as an example are that of a microbiologist and an OB/GYN, two professions that speak from a privileged locale.
21 Vogt, 60.
22 Sobrino, 140.
23 Bryan Massingale, presenting a paper at the CTSA conference in June 2014 during the "Beyond Trento: North American Moral Theology in a Global Church," break out session.
24 Blastic, 20.
25 Ibid., 19.
26 Blastic, 19.

the Franciscan perspective, these values are only understood when reflecting upon the lived experience of the founders of the order. Somehow, the embracing of poverty and minority as exemplified by Francis and Clare shows us a way of living in relation that is profoundly biblical, Christian, and still applicable to our lives today. The Franciscan value of minority might provide a way for theologians of privilege to make room for other, culturally different voices to claim a legitimate part of the "theological pie" as it were. Perhaps, theologians should attempt to make themselves less for the good of the other.

This is, to say the least, a counter-cultural idea. Our whole cultural, intellectual, economic, and even religious perspectives insist that we grow to "be all that we can be" in pursuit of our individual fulfillment and happiness. And yet, that is precisely what the witness of St. Francis of Assisi's life was all about. It is valuable to take the time and space to relate a story of Francis from *The Little Flowers of St. Francis* that points out the importance of this lived value of minority. This is the highly edited story of how Francis taught Br. Leo that perfect joy is only in the cross:

> One day in winter, as St Francis was going with Brother Leo from Perugia to St Mary of the Angels, and was suffering greatly from the cold, he called to Brother Leo, who was walking on before him, and said to him: "O Brother Leo, if the Friars Minor were to make the lame to walk, if they should make straight the crooked, chase away demons, give sight to the blind, hearing to the deaf, speech to the dumb, and, what is even a far greater work, if they should raise the dead after four days, write that this would not be perfect joy…" (he continues in this vein for a while until Br. Leo can't help it and asks,)…"Father, I pray thee teach me wherein is perfect joy." St Francis answered: "If, when we shall arrive at St Mary of the Angels, all drenched with rain and trembling with cold, all covered with mud and exhausted from hunger; if, when we knock at the convent-gate, the porter should come angrily and ask us who we are; if, after we have told him, 'We are two of the brethren', he should answer angrily, 'What ye say is not the truth; ye are but two impostors going about to deceive the world, and take away the alms of the poor; begone I say'; if then he refuse to open to us, and leave us outside, exposed to the snow and rain, suffering from cold and hunger till nightfall - then, if we accept such injustice, such cruelty and such contempt with patience, without being ruffled…write down, O Brother Leo, that this is perfect joy…(They would knock again and again and be treated with worse and worse insults until finally the porter actually beats them) - if we bear all these injuries with patience and joy, thinking of the sufferings of our Blessed Lord, which we would share out of love for him, write, O Brother Leo, that here, finally, is perfect joy. And now, brother, listen to the conclusion. Above all the graces and all the gifts of the Holy Spirit which Christ grants to his friends, is the grace of overcoming oneself, and accepting willingly, out of love for Christ, all suffering, injury, discomfort and contempt; for in all other gifts of God we cannot glory, seeing they proceed not from ourselves but from God.[27]

This story is alternately enough to make us cringe and enough to make us ashamed. The first impulse is to think about the extremes of St. Francis and the poor consideration he showed for his physical self. A large part of us cries out, "what poor self-esteem!" Both of these reactions are a way for us to tame the point that Francis was making in this story.

The reaction of shame to this story requires a little more explanation, for there is something inside of us that says, "Yes, Francis is right about this." This is because Francis' perfect joy of the cross expresses a truth about God that we often seek to ignore or to tame. Francis based his humility/minority in the humility of Jesus on the Cross, in the humility of God. Ilia Delio, OSF, expresses this Franciscan perspective by noting that "the humility of God makes people uneasy."[28] We prefer to think of God in terms of omnipotence, omnipresence and omniscience. But, the perhaps scandalous part of the Gospel is that this same God is a God of ultimate love. What does love do? Love gives itself away, and it is in this gift, that we see the humility of God.[29] For Delio, this is the fundamental understanding of God, Trinity, and the Incarnation. "Humility is not a quality of God; it is the essence of God's love."[30] The Trinity is not "three men at a tea party"[31] but represents the mystery of divine love: the lover, the beloved and the love they communicate. It is in this spirit that Franciscan theology has held that the Incarnation of Christ was not the consequence of and remedy for sin. Indeed, both Bonaventure and Duns Scotus explained that from all eternity God willed Christ's incarnation simply because "God is love and wanted to love a creature who could fully respond in love."[32] Only by focusing on the cross of Jesus was Francis able to grasp the supreme humility of God.

Delio provides a model for us to act out this humility and minority in our lives that is based upon Francis' behavior and writings on the topic of poverty. Here, the key is the poverty of being, not just material poverty. "We fail in love because we live in the spirit of possessiveness and self-appropriation, grabbing for ourselves what belongs to others."[33] Francis urged the members of his order to live without possessing things (not to be confused as living without things). Francis identified three areas that we must live without possessing things: our inner selves, our relationships with others and our relationship to God.[34] In his "Letter to the Chapter General" Francis notes, "hold back nothing of yourselves for yourselves, so that He Who gives Himself totally to you may receive you totally."[35] The purpose of this teaching was to assist the brothers in undoing their self-centeredness so that they might fully model Christ for others.

In Bonaventure's *Life of St. Francis*, he notes that Francis was given an abundance of humility by God. "He preferred to hear himself blamed rather than praised, knowing that blame would lead him to amend his life, while praise would drive him to a

27 Br. Ugolinodi Monte Santa Maria, *The Little Flowers of St. Francis*, trans. Raphael Brown (New York, N.Y.: Image Books, 1958), 58. (emphasis added)

28 Ilia Delio, *The Humility of God: A Franciscan Perspective*, (Cincinnati, Ohio: St. Anthony Messenger Press, 2005), 25.

29 Delio., 25.

30 Ibid., 42.

31 Ibid, 41.

32 Ibid., 50.

33 Ibid., 133.

34 Ibid., 134.

35 Francis of Assisi, "A Letter to the Chapter General," *St. Francis of Assisi: His Life and Writings as Recorded by His Contemporaries*, (New York, NY: A.R. Mowbray & Co, 1959), 189.

fall."[36] Francis' own model of humility is what led him to call the members of his order "Friars Minor" and his admonishment that superiors be called servants. "Jesus Christ, the teacher of humility, instructed his disciples in true humility by saying: 'Whoever wishes to become great among you, let him be your servant; and whoever wishes to be first among you will be your slave.'"[37] To live without possessing things allowed Francis and his brothers to be open to others in a way that is not possible when we take possession of things that we consider "ours." These things can be material possessions or even ideas of which we have claimed ownership. Minority and humility offer us the opportunity to renounce our ownership to truly be present to the other.

What is telling to the purpose of this paper is Delio's insistence that it is only in poverty, humility and minority that we can get over our pride of independence and autonomy. "Can we accept God's goodness in our neighbor who is different from us? Poverty, therefore, relates to our humanity; material poverty is only sacramental of the deeper poverty of being human … Only care for another truly humanizes life."[38] This is the care that has been evidenced in God's bending low to humanity through the incarnation. This is also the care that allows us to move out towards others with compassion; specifically, to move out towards the stranger, the other, with love. Minority, humility and poverty can inform the way that we approach our theology. These values can make it possible to give up the possession of our privileged approach to theology. We must find a way for different ethical perspectives, whether those of liberation theology, or non-European ethics, to be validated as equal to the perspectives of culturally dominant ethical teachings. This is uncomfortable; this means that we must literally move from our seat at the table to allow another to explain their perspective on their own terms.

This same focus on the praxis of the value of minority/humility and poverty in relation to theology itself, demands that we allow the other to be the owner and explainer of their ideas. One is reminded of the delicate, but necessary dance that comes from inter-faith discussions. Those with different beliefs/perspectives must be given the space to educate and explain before true dialogue can begin. Once dialogue begins, perhaps between "traditional" Catholic morality and the moral teachings that come from other from non-European cultures, all participants have to be assured that their perspective is respected and held as being equally valid. It is the value of minority, making ourselves and our ideas "less than" that can assist in viewing the other's thought as equal to our own. We cannot look at "other" ethics with the attitude that they are to be measured by our own stick.

36 Bonaventure, *The Life of St. Francis*, 6:1.
37 Ibid, 6:5.
38 Delio, 134.

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The Importance of Being a Groundhog:

Faith and Science in the Franciscan Tradition

By Joachim Ostermann, O.F.M.

Here is the most minor insight that I gained while attending a graduate seminar on contemporary research in metaphysics at the University of Alberta: philosophers need a favorite animal to use in their examples. And it better not be a dog or a cat; they are too common and using them betrays a lack of aptitude for original thought. Erwin Schrödinger would disagree, but he was an exceptionally creative physicist, so he got away with his cat. We shall return to him, eventually. For now, a more original animal must be chosen. So here is my favorite animal with which to begin my thoughts about physics and its implications for metaphysics: the groundhog. It reminds me of a few weeks during my novitiate when we attended the Franciscan Summer School at St. Bonaventure University. Going to class, I could see the groundhogs sitting under the trees, looking out of their burrows in between the tree roots. They looked very contented and completely untroubled. I felt inspired and supported by them to persevere in my vocation. Therefore, this paper is dedicated to the defense of their existence as real beings, over and beyond what is known about them by mathematical physics.

The Endangered Groundhog

When one looks at the groundhog with the distant, detached and dispassionate eyes of a scientist, one sees an assembly of parts, each with a specific function in the life of the groundhog. We see organs, in other words, and when we look at these more carefully, we see that they are made out of cells. Indeed, once we understand the groundhog from the perspective of a molecular biologist, then the groundhog is really just a very complicated assembly of cells. Their number in a groundhog is rather large, but the already modestly complicated earthworm *Caenorhabditis elegans* requires no more than 959 cells for its functioning. 959 cells are all that it takes to make an earthworm, and each of them is made according the same basic scheme. Cells are the building blocks that make groundhogs and earthworms and all else that lives.

At the level of individual cells, life does not seem like much of a mystery any longer. Cell biologists who study their function work side by side with biochemists who study the chemical interactions of their molecular components. The cell's biology is well within the grasp of chemistry.[1] Reductionism does not stop there. For some time now, since the discovery of quantum mechanics, the chemical properties of molecules are quite readily explained out of the properties of atoms and the laws that govern them. The days when one could believe that chemical molecules had emergent features, features entirely new and not explainable out of the features of the atoms from which they were made, are long over.[2] With this reduction of chemistry to physics, emergentism, or the idea that features of complex systems are fundamentally new and not reducible to the features of constituent parts, has rather lost its appeal. If chemistry is just physics under very complicated circumstances, and if biology is just very complicated chemistry, then the conclusion is not far that there is really only physics.

Of course, physics is far from complete, and the uncertain and preliminary nature of physics justifies a considerable amount of scepticism about its reach. Indeed, nobody knows what we will find at the most fundamental level. Maybe strings are at the bottom, or maybe something else. The search has been going on for some time now, and we are not likely to see its end. Maybe there is no end, and there is an infinite chain of ever more fundamental elements. Nevertheless, there is something that has been rather clear for quite some time: whatever is at the bottom of this, or even if there were an infinite chain of ever more fundamental structures, it is held together by mathematics. For the past 400 years, one insight has stood firm: the book of nature is written in mathematical language.[3]

A mathematical universe finds little significance in groundhogs or anything else that is really just a very complicated application of much more important basic principles. In mathematics, basic principles and their consequences are connected to each other by logical necessity. The logical structure that forms the whole out of basic propositions is more important than the individual and rather arbitrary specific examples that arise of them. If one asked a mathematical physicist for the reason of the existence of anything, the answer is quite simple: it exists because it is logically possible. That is all. Particular existence does not mean anything, except that it is possible, and therefore it exists.[4] What truly matters is not the groundhog but the laws of physics (through their applications in chemistry and biology) that make the groundhog possible. Of course, the groundhog is just the example that I chose out of jest, and what is at stake is really of much bigger importance. As goes the groundhog, so go we. In a mathematical universe, our own existence is not any more significant or on any sounder footing than the existence of the groundhog, even if we are, strangely and rather surprisingly, considering that all is just mathematics, capable of knowing this. How could mathematical formulas and their logical consequences give rise to something that looks at these formulas and discern that they are true? This is all rather odd, and maybe the groundhog deserves a second chance.

Galileo and the Beginning of the Mathematical Universe

Surprise at the counterintuitive consequences of living in a mathematical universe is nothing new. "Your discussion is really

1 Possibly the earliest modern example of this is Erwin Schrödinger, *What is Life: The Physical Aspects of a Living Cell* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1944).

2 For one example of this view, see, for example, Samuel Alexander, "Natural Piety", *The Hibbert Journal,* 20:609-621 (1922).

3 A contemporary example for the argument that the universe is fundamentally mathematical is Max Tegmark, *Our Mathematical Universe: My Quest for the Ultimate Nature of Reality* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2014).

4 Tegmark's book also argues for multiverses. However, the assumption that our universe is not the only one and that there may be others cannot be the consequence of any observation. Any other universes must remain hidden from us; otherwise they would not be another universe. So any belief in the existence of multiverses is only an expression of the belief that existence follows from logical possibility.

admirable; yet I do not find it easy to believe that a birdshot falls as swiftly as a cannon ball" says Simplicio, one of the characters in Galileo's *Two New Sciences*.[5] This concludes the arguments that heavy and light objects will fall at the same speed (which they do, as long as complicating factors, such as drag, are negligible). It is now a classical experiment in physics and what it demonstrates, the equivalence of gravitational and inertial mass, has far ranging consequences. Beginning with Newton's laws of motion, the full exploration of this fact leads all the way to Einstein's general relativity. In the work of Einstein, the equivalence of gravitational and inertial mass is the reason for understanding space and time as four dimensional curved spacetime, with the curvature of spacetime causing the effects known to us as gravity. Different from Newton's mechanics, Einstein's field equations are not laws of motion for isolated objects that interact with each other, but they describe the dynamics of space and time and matter and energy as a whole. They describe the whole universe. They describe a universe that began in a hot dense state 14 billion years ago that has been expanding and cooling ever since. In the process of expanding and cooling, energy condensed into matter, forming the stars, planets and all that lives on them, including human beings and my chosen animal, the groundhog. They also describe a future, and it is not promising. As the universe keeps cooling and expanding, its ultimate fate is cold empty darkness.

This is the intellectual development that began by asking questions about birdshot and cannonballs. The choice of these examples suggests a desire for getting rid of troubling complications, by uncompromising force, if necessary, in pursuit of the most fundamental laws of nature. None of the complicating details of an actual being in the world need to be considered. Galileo abstracted just what is shared by all of them, and then he treats what he has abstracted as the most basic reality. And he is convinced that by looking at the world in this way, mathematics is the language that makes sense of it all. Here is how he shows that heavy and light objects must drop at the same speed: If a heavier stone moved with a speed of 8, and a lighter stone with the speed of 4, then both tied together ought to move with a speed of 12. However, if the lighter stone moved more slowly than the heavier stone, then, when tied together, it should slow down the heavier stone, contrary to what was supposed. To avoid the contradiction, Galileo concludes that they must all move at the same speed, and this is indeed what the experiment shows. The core assumption of this argument is that after abstracting something from the stones that he can treat as a number, the combination of two objects acts as the exact mathematical sum of these numbers, neither more nor less. Combining objects is like combining numbers, and from there on, it is just mathematics. "Philosophy [of nature, i.e. science] is written in this grand book, the universe, which stands continually open to our gaze. But the book cannot be understood unless one first learns to comprehend the language and read the letters in which it is composed. It is written in the language of mathematics, and its characters are triangles, circles, and other geometric figures without which it is humanly impossible to understand a single word of it; without these, one wanders about in a dark labyrinth."[6]

This way of looking at the world is very far from the intuitions of St. Francis about the world. Yet, we cannot dismiss mathematical physics as highly esoteric explanations by specialists and a cause for amused befuddlement for the rest of us. This kind of science has consequences, and we take advantage of them in all aspects of our lives, starting with very ordinary tasks, such as the way we use our cell phones. Global communication networks that depend on satellites must consider the curvature of spacetime around the earth to keep the various clocks throughout the network synchronized to each other. Unless we lived on a self-sustaining organic farm off the grid, just about every aspect of our daily lives depends on the kind of science that can be spoken of only in the language of mathematics. The mathematical structure of the world has very real consequences, and we have long since made up our collective minds to place our trust in this kind of knowledge. Indeed, it may be the only type of knowledge that is really trusted by all, even if this trust is only implicit, expressed in nothing more than the simple act of participating in the scientific-technological culture of our time. However, this exceptional success of mathematical physics in explaining natural phenomena with unrivalled accuracy raises a troubling question: do those who continue to be inspired by Francis's vision simply delude themselves into imagining that there is an entirely different way of looking at the world?

The Book of Nature as a Family Tale

Praise be to you, Brother Wind, praise be to you, Sister Water, praise be to you, Brother Fire, and praise be to you, Sister Earth. Wind, water, fire and earth are the four elements of the natural philosophy of antiquity out of which human beings and their world is made, and Francis speaks of them as brothers and sisters. Indeed, he refers not only to the simple elements but to all that is made from them as brother and sister. His biographers give us examples of how he treats even a lowly worm with fraternal care.[7] His insight that there is fraternity between all creatures, between all that is created, can place the modern sciences in the context of Franciscan spirituality. Recognizing fraternity amongst creatures is how we can find our own place in the world, as creatures in creation, without falling either into the error of reductionism, treating our own existence as less real than the matter out of which we are made, or the error of Gnosticism, separating us from the roots of our existence in created matter.

Speaking of the creatures of the world as brothers and sisters is not merely a figure of speech reminding us that we must give each of them what is their due. It is not condescending. Neither does it ignore the special dignity and responsibility of the human person. The last third of the Canticle of the Creatures makes it clear that creation's crowning achievement is Christ and the human imitation of Christ.[8] However, referring to other creatures, both simple and complex, as brothers and sisters is Francis's reminder to see us together with them *within* creation. They, and we, are real material beings not reducible to the simpler components out of which we are made. When we start with the certain knowledge of our own existence, then the insight of fraternity with other creatures leads us to recognize the reality of other creatures in the world, no matter whether they are complex or simple. Fraternity with other creatures is an acknowledgment that we ourselves are one of many creatures in creation, and that all of them are a real part of the world. However, we are not just *any* creature. We are the kind of creature that can

5 Galileo Galilei, *Dialogues Concerning Two New Sciences,* trans. Henry Crew and Alfonso de Salvio (New York: Dover Publications, 1954), 155.

6 Galileo Galilei, *The Assayer*, trans. Stillman Drake, *Discoveries and Opinions of Galileo* (New York: Doubleday & Co., 1957), 237-238.

7 1C 29, *FA:ED* 1, 250.

8 "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." CtC 10-11, *FA:ED 1, 114.*

ask questions about creation, seek answers and understanding, and most importantly, "give pardon for your love". In other words, our understanding allows us to be merciful, as God is merciful.

This much richer knowledge of nature from the inside cannot be expressed in the language of mathematical physics. This is no surprise, as mathematics is the language of detachment and abstraction from the material. By reflecting on Francis's emphasis on fraternity of creatures, we recognize another language in the book of nature. Indeed, we have learned this language long before we learned the language of mathematics. Fraternity with creatures means being at home in creation. It is the way that recognizes that creation and all its creatures are the self-expression of God, the creator of all. It is the way that knows creation in the way one knows one's family: by being part of it, and by being merciful, recognizing and accepting the other, especially when hurt and needy. The original language of the book of nature is learned by experiencing it from the inside, by being part of nature, as one creature in creation.

A Book in Two Languages

So there seem to be two very different languages in which the book of nature is written. The one that we have known for much longer is the one that was natural to Francis and his brothers. It is the language that recognizes the diversity of creatures in the world and sees in them the purpose and meaning, natural ends towards which they are oriented, and an expression of God's will for creation. It is a view of nature that does not see the world as an arbitrary outcome of chance and necessity but rather the self-expression of a loving God.

In our time, we have come to an unprecedented understanding of the language of mathematics as the language of the book of nature. We have discovered the beauty of the universe in an entirely new way, a way that seemingly grasps the whole of the universe by way of mathematics. We find subtlety in the simplicity of its foundational principles and complexity in the variety in which these principles build ever more complex structures. It is a wonderful accomplishment. It is such a spectacular success of the human mind to discover a cosmological narrative that spans across 14 billion years, even though our own species has been part of this narrative only for the last 100,000 years or so, and even though our ability to share knowledge far across time by writing it down is only a few thousand years old. It is astonishing beyond imagination that we can understand the universe across this vast expanse of time. It rather looks, in spite of our smallness, as if the universe is meant to be understood by us.

Of course, we cannot *really* understand the universe, as tempting as it is to think that we can. The absurdity of losing touch with the reality of the creatures that we find, including ourselves, shows this quite clearly. Nevertheless, even though our view from the inside cannot grasp the whole, we can still recognize something in the world as a whole that is creative beyond our wildest imagination even while maintaining full unity in its development. Its unity is seen in the all-encompassing mathematical structure that we have discovered. At the same time, we recognize creativity in the manifold forms and beings that we observe as the universe develops, from stars and planets to black holes and living beings, including ourselves and the groundhog that inspired me to write this. Human beings have the power to recognize that such beings are true and real, rather than just a temporary arrangement of material parts in the transition from a featureless hot dense state at the beginning to an equally featureless cold emptiness at the end.

Trinitarian Materialism

This self-expression of creatures within the unity of the whole is what reconciles the two languages of the book of nature. It is an image of the Trinity, and can be understood as an analogy of the Trinity.[9] Created matter begets created beings; created beings are begotten out of created matter; matter and each being made of it exists in the unity of the created voice proceeding from it. We cannot truly reconcile the unity of nature revealed by physics with the diversity of its creatures and what is expressed by them any more than we can truly understand the unity of God who is Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Yet, we can understand the book of nature in either of its two languages: the language of mathematics that explains the underlying unity of the world and its creative potential, and the language of purpose and meaning of individual creatures in the world. This is not a dualistic view, a view in which spirit is restricted to the human spirit that somehow sits uneasily on top of a material world. It is a world that reflects the Trinity in every creature and every creature's voice, and especially so in the human person whose voice is a personal response to the personal creator.

In the Franciscan understanding of faith and science, our modern science is a means towards understanding the world and facilitating our stewardship and responsible dominion over creation. Correctly reading the book of nature as mathematics gives us the power to predict the consequences of our actions. However, we must not stop reading the book of nature the old-fashioned way, the way that recognizes the meaning and purpose that is inherent in each creature as an individual. The newly acquired understanding of the book of nature as mathematics provides us with new means and new powers and a new context for what was known to the generations that preceded us, but it does not replace their older knowledge. Francis's insight of fraternity, fraternity with all creatures, is the means towards reconciling the two languages of the book of nature. Only from this perspective of fraternity can we properly read the book of nature, both as the mathematical revelation of the unity and creative power of the world and the purpose and meaning of the creatures of this universe. It gives us an understanding of nature that is truly a view from the inside, as one creature among other creatures, understanding not only of using nature but of being in nature.[10]

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9 The Franciscan literature about the Trinitarian nature of creation is vast and I will make no attempt to survey it. Its origins are found in the work of St. Bonaventure, who begins writing "[o]n the Creation of the World" by saying "[n]ow that we have presented a summary review of the Trinity of God, we need to say a few things about the creation of the world." (*Works of St. Bonaventure: Breviloquium. Dominic Monty, OFM, ed.,* [St. Bonaventure, NY: Franciscan Institute, 2005], 59). Later, he concludes "[f]rom all we have said, we may gather that the created world is a kind of book reflecting, representing, and describing its Maker, the Trinity" (ibid., 96).

10 The author thanks the Centre for Studies in Religion and Society at the University of Victoria (Victoria, BC) for support and Alana LaPerle (Sherwood Park, AB) for editing the manuscript.

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The Fruits of Penance

Secular Franciscan Spirituality

By Anne Millington, O.F.S.

Because we are members of the Franciscan family, Secular Franciscans are called to "rebuild the Church." Within the Secular Franciscan Order (SFO), the lay "secular" branch of the Third Order of St. Francis, we seek to rebuild the Church through our witness as members of the Body of Christ who live and work in the everyday world. In the modern day United States, we certainly hear quite a bit about the decline of many religious orders in the Catholic Church. The SFO is no exception to this decline. I write as both a current candidate for the SFO and as an MDiv student at Boston College. Throughout the course of my MDiv studies, I have had the great fortune of working with Boston College Professor Sr. Margaret Guider, OSF to develop my understanding of the history, nature, and spirituality of the SFO. Both through my studies and as a candidate for the Order, I have grown to deeply care about preserving and strengthening the SFO, as I believe its rich spirituality has much to offer the Church and, by extension, the world. When confronted by statistics that show considerable decline in the SFO, my mind naturally quests to discover the perfect "next step" or "steps" for reversing this decline, a magic bullet if you will.

Indeed, the statistics are depressing. According to SFO National Minister Tom X's 2013 Annual Report to the Order, there are currently 13,000 plus professed SFO members in the United States, representing a steady decline from 15,800 members in 2008.[1] In stark contrast, in 1944, the U.S. had an estimated 100,000 SFO members.[2] Because of considerable Franciscan immigration from Europe beginning in the 19th century, membership in the SFO flourished and peaked from the later quarter of the 19th century into the first quarter of the 20th century.[3] Not only are we shrinking, we are also aging. In the 2010 Report to CIOFS, the SFO noted that the U.S. has less than one percent of its permanently professed members under 35 years of age, only eight percent are 35 to 50 years old, 35 percent are 50-65 years old, and 56 percent are 66 and over. Many members are no doubt far older than 66.[4]

Many thoughtful Secular Franciscans have pursued means to revitalize the SFO. As SFO National Minister Deacon Tom Bello, OFS notes, "I believe the Holy Spirit is challenging us all to offer a spiritual reality, an ecclesial community, sufficiently vital to attract and keep new life, new membership, new fraternities."[5] Currently, a vocations committee works toward heightening parish and diocesan awareness of the SFO through brochures, bulletin announcements, social media and similar methods, and efforts are underway to stimulate a Franciscan Youth (YouFra) movement throughout the United States. Further developments include initiatives to bring the SFO into increasing solidarity with the poor around the world. Moreover, tremendous work has been done to augment formation within individual SFO fraternities. In 2011, the National Formation Committee of the National Fraternity of the SFO introduced a comprehensive formation manual, entitled For Up to Now: Foundational Topics for Initial Formation. Referred to as the "FUN" manual, it offers detailed information regarding the history, nature, spirituality, and governance of the SFO, and it also includes instructional material on Catholic Social Teaching. The FUN manual is now used by SFO fraternities to provide thoughtful and thorough on-going formation both to candidates and to professed members. As a current candidate to the SFO, I can attest to the wealth of helpful assistance the FUN manual provides in deepening Franciscan understanding and spirituality within my fraternity. Many of our longer-term members claim that through FUN, they have learned much about the SFO they had never known before.

Although much has been recently done to improve its formation and visibility, the SFO seems stubbornly stuck in its downward trajectory. As someone convinced of the spiritual value of the SFO, I admit that I have found the evidence of our decline discouraging. Recently, however, I found myself captivated by the words of Sr. Ilia Delio, OSF, "We are dying -- and that's OK. It just means something new is emerging."[6] Both a Franciscan sister and a scientist, Delio sees what may seem like upheaval and uncertainty in the future of religious life as just a perfectly natural stage in an unfolding evolutionary process. "If we attend only to the breakdown," she continues, "we think we're over. We see death. But that's a closed-system way of thinking."[7] God's creation is, for Delio, an open system with a capacity for newness that develops new patterns of life. Because change ultimately leads to new life, Delio claims, "chaos really is a saving grace."[8]

As I write, I am visiting my hometown of Anchorage, Alaska. Since a significant portion of Alaska is above the Arctic Circle, my homeland offers dramatic examples of the adaptive abilities of God's creation. In the more temperate parts of Alaska, including Anchorage, great forests are filled with stately, verdant pine, spruce, and birch trees. North of the Arctic, however, vegetation takes the form of vast plains of tundra, composed largely of different kinds of lichen and moss. While southern Alaskan trees grow quite tall, no "tree" grows over a few inches in height in the Arctic, as the frozen earth underneath only admits shallow roots and strong winds above inhibit upward growth. While southern regions of Alaska are filled with brown and black bear camouflaged amidst thick woods and brush, in the Arctic, the polar bear is completely white, camouflaged amidst snow and ice. Arctic wolves, arctic hares, and arctic terns are also stark white, in contrast to the gray and brown coats of their

1 "National Minister's Annual Report to the Order – 2013," accessed November 16, 2014.

2 William Wicks, SFO. "A Brief History of the Secular Franciscan Order and its Rules," in *For Up to Now: Foundational Topics for Initial Formation* (United States: National Formation Committee of the National Fraternity of the Secular Franciscan Order, 2011), 27 of 34.

3 Ibid.

4 "National Minister's Annual Report to the Order – 2013."

5 Ibid.

6 Jamie Manson, "The Evolution of Ilia Delio," *National Catholic Reporter* (July 16, 2014), accessed November 5, 2014.

7 Ibid.

8 Ibid.

south of the Arctic relatives. Such variety exists, yet none of these Alaskan plants and animals forced or even attempted their own adaptation. They simply lived out their current God-given identities, and the Spirit adapted them to their respective environments over time.

As we are part of God's creation, I believe God also naturally intends to adapt us to changing environments. Unlike the animal and plant worlds, however, God has given us a conscience and free will. We can make our own choices whether or not they are in accordance with God's will. If we focus on discerning and responding to God's call to growth, I believe we will naturally adapt in accordance with God's will, just like the plants and animals of the Arctic. The Gospels model our role for us as responders to God's summons, as Jesus' disciples did not initiate but rather responded to God's call. For example, Peter, Andrew, James, and John were all fishermen busy fishing when Jesus called them to become "fishers of men" (Mt: 4:19). And Mary was preoccupied living her life as a young peasant girl preparing for marriage when the Angel Gabriel called her to bear the Christ child. Did she initiate Gabriel's appearance? No, Gabriel appeared and summoned her. Did Mary refuse or attempt to alter her circumstances? No, Mary had the Holiness of heart to say yes to God.

Notably for us as Franciscans, our seraphic father was living as a big-hearted yet worldly-minded merchant's son when he heard the call from the cross of San Damiano that changed his life forever. Just as the Franciscan spirit was a part of 13th century culture and has adapted to all cultures since then, we can trust that our identity as the SFO can properly evolve within the context of our own culture. I believe this process involves living out our Franciscan identity to its fullest while discerning and responding to God's promptings. Our process of natural evolution, however, requires waiting—waiting for the Lord's summons, which can lead to anxiety. What if we have failed to discern God's call? What if God does not call us at all? We must learn to give this anxiety to God, trusting God to show us the way forward, in God's time. I also believe we can take comfort in Jesus' assurance of the eternity of the Church, as "the gates of hades shall not prevail against it" (Mt 16:18). Because the Church will endure despite change and difficulty, we can have hope that we as perpetual "re-builders" of the Church will endure as well. Moreover, via our free will, we can actively partner with God both in our quest to embrace our identity as Secular Franciscans and to discern and live out God's will for us. The Second Vatican Council urged all orders and religious communities to return to their roots, to rediscover the spirit of their founders.[9] As we must understand who we are to know where we are going, it is important to understand our core identity as Secular Franciscans.

As Secular Franciscans, we are called to follow Jesus in the way Francis did, which means as literally as possible. This is the fundamental call we share with the entire Franciscan family. Jesus chose to be poor, so we choose to be poor. Jesus chose to be humble, so we choose to be humble. As Franciscans, we are peacemakers as we live in faithful communion with the Church and in loving union with all people and all creation. The SFO is, first and foremost, a spirituality and therefore it is not based on a specific social action program, as our Franciscan charism undergirds all of our endeavors. We are free to respond to God's call regardless of form or circumstance. Within Franciscan spirituality, we can identify three main charisms that form three distinct orders, for centuries forgotten but in our own time gradually rediscovered, explained again, and placed in a proper perspective.[10] Within the Franciscan family, the First Order is the order of Preachers, the Second Order is the order of contemplatives, and the Third Order is the order of penitents. In turn, the Third Order is divided into Regular and Secular (SFO) members: Third Order regulars taking vows and living in common, and Third Order seculars living in the world and in their homes with their families. For the SFO, the practice of penance has been the critical and unique component of our Franciscan identity, and, indeed, the SFO was initially known as the Brothers and Sisters of Penance. Through understanding the nature of our penitential charism, we better equip ourselves to live out our calling as Secular Franciscans today.

As Franciscan "penitents," our identity derives not only from the penitential vision of Francis but also directly from the penitential movements of the 12th and 13th centuries. Prior to this time, penitents were largely involuntary: those who had committed serious, public sin and thus served a sentence of public penance imposed on them as a means of reconciliation to the Church and the community. By the 12th and 13th centuries, however, penitential groups had come to be composed almost exclusively of "voluntary" penitents who willingly embraced a life of rigorous penance in the attempt to achieve greater personal sanctity, increasing the power of God manifest in their lives.[11] Just as the penitents in the early Church were eventually reconciled with the community and again brought into living "in Christ," so too these voluntary penitents of the day felt they were united more deeply with God through their penitential practices. As populations urbanized and the feudal system began to break down, the religious perspective of society was changing as well. In this new society, Ingrid Peterson notes, "reform groups and laity believed that Christian perfection was possible not only through monastic life but also by living according to the Gospel and by working for the common good."[12] By the 13th century, non-monastic lay people had secured a place in religious life, and penance had become the central element in that religious expression.[13] Even the burgeoning merchant class, more or less considered damned for their dealings with "filthy lucre," now had the opportunity to grow closer to God. As Stewart notes, "To avoid damnation they embraced the penitential life since there was the expectation that the penitential life in some way could facilitate a participation in the sacred."[14] As they promised a way for every individual to achieve sanctity, penitential movements flourished and grew rapidly during the twelfth and thirteenth centuries.[15]

As a result of his own spiritual conversion, Francis also embarked on a lifestyle of penance in the 13th century, trading his wealth and social standing for a leper's embrace. As Stewart notes, "In seeing the leper Francis began to see; in touching the leper Francis was touched. This holy exchange empowered Francis to exchange his former way of life for a life of penance."[16] As Francis

9 "Decree on The Adaptation and Renewal of Religious Life," accessed November 16, 2014.

10 Fr. Raffaele Pazzelli, TOR, "Franciscan Third Order Regular Spirituality," accessed 11/16/14.

11 Robert Stewart, *The Rule of the Secular Franciscan Order: Origins, Development, Interpretation*, (Rome: Instituto Storico Dei Cappuccini 1991), 120.

12 Ingrid Peterson,"The Third Order Tradition of Evangelical Life: A Prophetic Witness to the Whole of the Gospel." *Franciscan Studies*, Vol 64, *Vita Evangelica. Essays in Honor of Margaret Carney, OSF (2006).* 435–473.

13 Stewart, 120.

14 Stewart, 123.

15 Stewart, 107.

16 Stewart, 89.

began touring the cities and countryside preaching penance, groups of pre-existing penitents were attracted to him and begged him for a more perfect way of life. Francis wrote a rule for them, a simple and flexible rule that could be lived by cleric and lay, single and married, men and women. Within this rule, there are some new elements which were not present in the earlier penitential movements, particularly the adherence to poverty and to minority, as opposed to dominating majority, positions in public life.[17] As Fr. Raffaele Pazzelli, TOR notes, "today we know with certainty that the Third Order is the continuation, with new contributions, of the penitential movement which existed before the time of St. Francis, a movement which was known to St. Francis, a movement which he followed."[18] For Francis, the penitential lifestyle was a journey, not a destination and, as Stewart notes, "the gradual process and maturation of Francis' conversion continued."[19]

Within the SFO, penance is defined by continuous conversion and active charity. Although the notion of penance tends to conjure up images of hair shirts and self-flagellation, in reality, penance embraces any form of self-denial that promotes this conversion of heart and enables works of active charity, works Francis deems "worthy fruits of penance."[20] In this sense, penance requires our total commitment to God, as we strive to give up every claim to our own will and our every allusion of independence and self-sufficiency. Penance, according to Leonard Foley, OFM, Jovian Weigel, OFM, and Patti Normile, SFO "means a daily, perhaps hourly, dying to the pressing impulse of selfishness, self-will, doing it "my way,"[21] Francis both embraced and preached to others this holistic life of penance, a lifestyle that pursues continual conversion to God. External forms of penance such as fasts, sacrifices, mortifications, prayer, and vigils are, as Fr. Raffaele Pazzelli notes, "none other than partial and secondary expressions of an intimate conversion of the heart which implies the supremacy of the spirit, tending toward God, and the consequent avoidance of every form of evil."[22] In doing penance, we strive to reject all that cannot advance the glory of God, as we also engage in works of charity that meet both the spiritual and material needs of our neighbor, especially the most needy or abandoned.

As Jesus said, "you will know them by their fruits," (Mt 7:16) and the SFO has indeed produced a fine harvest. With the beginning of the Third Order, a completely new spirit of charity entered Italian society of the 13th century. Where there had been greed and overindulgence of all kinds before, there was now peace, love, moderation, and renewed love for Christ. As Dietrich von Hildebrand notes, "fighting parties were reconciled, cities at war with one another made peace, the poor looked upon their poverty in a new light, the rich opened their hearts to the distress and need of the poor and the sick."[23] Now, even lepers and other formerly outcast groups received loving care. In the centuries to follow, the SFO have continued their dedication to works of charity. Pazzelli notes: "at all times the poor, the sick, the elderly, the orphans, the handicapped, the emarginated, the illiterate in missionary countries, the afflicted or those suffering in body or spirit have always been the ones beloved by the Third Order."[24] In his Exhortation, Francis claims of those who do penance, "Oh how happy and blessed are these men and women when they do these things and persevere in doing them."[25] For Francis, this is because penance allows the spirit of God to abide and dwell within us which enables us to produce the Godly fruit of charitable works.

Penance increases our power to discern the will of God. While we may truly love God, we are continually assaulted in life by forces that can distract us from keeping God first in our lives. As seculars, we are in particularly close contact daily with all the sensuality, materialism, and injustice of the world. In today's society, we crave freedom, independence, financial wealth, status, power, self-satisfaction, and immediate gratification, leaving little room for craving the values of God. And if we are not careful, we can "catch" our modern disease that often seems to idolize everything except God, as this disease is highly contagious and we are exposed to it daily. Without a built in program of conversion, a program that is rigorous and consistent, we risk finding our lives full of everything except knowledge of God. Unable to hear and discern God's voice, we are at the mercy of the forces of our materialistic culture. In his Exhortation, Francis heartily agrees, claiming, "those who do not do penance are slaves to the world in their bodies, by carnal desires and the anxieties and cares of this life."[26] Penance not only enables us to slay the dragons of our less than Godly passions, it also enables us to understand the sources of our sins. As Lester Bach, OFM, Cap.notes: "Getting to the root of our sinfulness makes us aware of where conversion is needed."[27] Through penance, we are able to confront the sins in ourselves and to free ourselves to see and understand God's vision for our lives. As Foley, Weigel, and Normile note, "through ongoing conversion we let the grace of God open us entirely to God's will. We become free from every constraint except the gentle pressure of God's love."[28]

Penance also increases our ability to respond to God's will. Through our self-centered actions, we often fail at loving God and neighbor, and we all have areas in our lives that we fail to surrender to God. Because penance curbs our passions, we can avoid slavery to creature comforts, public opinion, or our own good reputations, and we thus develop the interior freedom not only to discern the will of God but to also act on it. As Foley, Weigel, and Normile note, "penance is, as we have said, saying 'no' when we need not so that we can courageously say 'no' when we must. Penance is practiced 'yes' to many good things that might have been left undone in preparation for the many moments when a joyous 'yes' is the response God expects."[29] As Secular Franciscans, we have the opportunity to give witness to Gospel living throughout secular society, including in areas hard to reach by the ordained and religious. In the words of Bach, "Without secular presence the gospel would be unknown to many people."[30] As we live our values as Secular Franciscans, we naturally bring them into dialogue with contemporary society.

17 Pazzelli, "Franciscan Third Order Regular Spirituality."

18 Ibid.

19 Stewart, 131.

20 St. Francis, *The Rule of the Secular Franciscan Order*, (U.S.A.: National Fraternity of the Secular Franciscan Order, 2008), 1.

21 Leonard Foley, OFM, Jovian Weigel, O.F.M, and Patti Nomrmile, S.F.O., *To Live as Francis Lived: A Guide for Secular Franciscans* (Cincinnati: St. Anthony Messenger Press, 2000), 48.

22 Pazzelli, "Franciscan Third Order Regular Spirituality."

23 Dietrich von Hildebrand, *Not as the World Gives: St. Francis' Message to Laymen Today* (Chicago: Francis Herald Press, 1963), 47.

24 Pazzelli, "Franciscan Third Order Regular Spirituality."

25 St. Francis, *The Rule of the Secular Franciscan Order*, 1.

26 St. Francis, *The Rule of the Secular Franciscan Order*, 3.

27 Lester Bach, OFM Cap, *The Franciscan Journey: Embracing the Franciscan Vision* (Lindsborg: Smoky Valley Printing, 2010), 114.

28 Foley, Weigel, and Normile, *To Live as Francis Lived: A Guide for Secular Franciscans*, 48.

29Ibid, 51.

30 Lester Bach, OFM Cap, *Called to Rebuild the Church: A Spiritual Commentary on the General Constitutions of The Secular Franciscan Order* (Quincy: Franciscan Press, 1997), 8.

While people around us may or may not agree with our approach to life, they will at least be aware of the Gospel way of dealing with the circumstances of life. This dialogue with society benefits the SFO, for as Delio notes, "What is normative for the tradition—its core theological values, writings, stories, etc.—must be challenged and critiqued in light of the present moment in order that they may be reborn in a new and meaningful way."[31] This dialogue greatly benefits society as well, for as John Burkhard, OFM notes, "the gospel, then, interacts with culture, challenges it, critiques it, and ultimately transforms it. The culture is not entirely rejected, but neither is it accepted uncritically."[32] Those who fail to do penance, ultimately fail to embrace opportunities to witness Christ in the world, and this has both temporal and eternal consequences. During this life, those who fail to do penance trade the heaven of a life lived in God's love for the hell of life lived in separation from God and others. In death, this hell becomes permanent. Francis warns us in his Exhortation of the eternal fate of those who do not do penance, claiming, "the worms eat up the body and so they have lost body and soul during this short earthly life and will go into the inferno where they will suffer torture without end."[33]

Without doubt, penance requires commitment, discipline and effort. As Francis notes in his Exhortation, "it is pleasant to the body to commit sin and it is bitter to make it serve God."[34] Francis practiced penance through numerous fasts, vigils, and bodily deprivations, and by refusing money, property, good reputation, and the "worthy fruits" of his penance included caring for lepers, the poor, the humble, the suffering, the godless, peace-seekers, and others. How are we called today to practice Franciscan penance? As Fr. Michael Scanlon, TOR notes, "it depends on the leading of the Spirit which is renewing the internal life, leading to a deeper and deeper reality of the fundamental choice for God."[35] For members of the SFO, penance almost always begins at home. Foley, Weigel, and Normile recall the words of Pope Paul VI's Apostolic Constitution on Penance, "the Church urges first of all that everyone practice the virtue of penance by constantly attending to the duties pertaining to his state in life, and by patiently enduring the trials of each day's work here on earth, and the uncertainties of life that cause so much anxiety of mind."[36] As practicing Catholics, our penance begins with faithfully attending Mass, receiving the Sacraments, and participating in everything necessary to stay in good standing with the Church. We may additionally cultivate our penance by participating in spiritual direction, retreats, and life review. We may even find ourselves drawn to more traditional penitential practices, including fasting, vigils, and pilgrimages. The journey of penance will look different for each one of us. When God is calling for them, however, all penitential practices will bear the fruit of the Spirit, the holy fruit that magnifies the love of God in ourselves and in the world. As Scanlon notes, the penitent daily experiences the Spirit of God freeing him or her, and the fruit of the Spirit's action is joy. Francis did not proclaim it as easy living; rather, he called it sweet and joyful.[37]

Even in my relatively short time of doing penance as a SFO candidate, I have experienced great spiritual benefits. "Once the penitential charism flows through our lives," Scanlon claims, "we become so convinced of the rightness of this life that we begin to wonder how we could live any other way."[38] As the SFO necessitates penance but does not offer any specific guidelines for penitential practice, I thus needed to rely on the Holy Spirit and the wisdom of others to Guide me in shaping my own penitential journey. While I wish I could claim that I felt called to give up or take on something interesting and extreme, the call led me instead to give up caffeine and sugar. For me, these self-denials were most relevant, however, as I had been attempting to push my body beyond its natural powers of endurance via caffeine, and I had been seeking to medicate and comfort myself with sugar. Both substances were serving as crutches in my life, and giving each one of them up was extremely difficult. Without caffeine, I had to learn to honor my body's need for sleep by giving up the things I wanted to pack in but which interfered with the rest my body requires. Without sugar, I quickly experienced how deeply I truly crave sugary foods, far beyond the cravings of a typical sweet tooth or even physical addiction. I found I was using sugar to medicate myself for all kinds of emotionally related reasons. I had been seeking sugar when I was feeling anxious or vulnerable, or when I needed to feel the love and security only God can provide. Without sugar, I at long last took my emotions to God, where they could actually be understood and satisfied. As a result, God has been able to give me far deeper insight into myself, as I have learned more about what scares me, what wounds me, and what makes me nervous.

Equipped with a deeper knowledge of both my physical limitations and the things that "push my buttons," I have been able to respond in a more loving way to both myself and to others. I have let go of my arrogant attempts to use caffeine to push my body far beyond its God given limits, and, in the process, gained a greater compassion for the limitations inherent to all of us as humans. And equipped by real emotional support from God rather than the empty support of sugar, I feel capable of offering increasing love and empathy to the "lepers" in my life, those people who repulse me or threaten me for whatever reason. By giving up sugar and caffeine, I have been able to "receive a hundred fold" (Mt 19:29) back in the form of increased peace and charity. Will I fast from sugar forever? I have no idea. This is something I do my best to take to The Lord in prayer each day, trusting God to show me when I need to give something up and when I need to take something on. I strive to embrace any form of penance, common place or otherwise, that enables me to radiate more of God's love into the world.

When Jesus' disciples failed to exorcise a demon from a certain boy, Jesus responded, "these come out only by prayer and fasting" (Mt 17:21). As Secular Franciscans, we are called to the "prayer and fasting" of penance as a means to personal sanctification and as a means to serve Christ in the world. As membership in the SFO continues to dwindle, we naturally feel concerned and seek its revitalization and growth. I find comfort and wisdom in the words of St. Teresa of Avila: "Nor is it in any way good for persons to complain if they see their order in some decline, rather, they should strive to

31 Ilia Delio, OSF, "Franciscan Theology, Identity and Community," in *Franciscan Identity and Postmodern Culture: Washington Theological Union Symposium Papers. 2002*, ed. Kathleen A. Warren, OSF (The Franciscan Institute, St. Bonaventure University, 2003), 30.

32 John J. Burkhard, OFM, "Defining Gospel Life in Postmodern Culture," in *Franciscan Identity and Postmodern Culture: Washington Theological Union Symposium Papers. 2002*, ed. Kathleen A. Warren, OSF (The Franciscan Institute, St. Bonaventure University, 2003), 50.

33 St. Francis, *The Rule of the Secular Franciscan Order*, 5.

34 Ibid., 4.

35 Fr. Michael Scanlon, TOR, "A Pastoral Response," accessed November 16, 2014.

36 Foley, Weigel, and Normile, *To Live as Francis Lived: A Guide for Secular Franciscans*, 50.

37 Scanlon, "A Pastoral Response."

38 Ibid.

be the kind of rock on which the edifice may again be raised, for The Lord will help toward that."[39] Through penance, Francis became increasingly holy, and he attracted followers because people intuitively sensed and were drawn to his holiness. In living our penitential charism to the fullest, we too will become increasingly holy, as our penitential practices greatly assist us in discerning and responding to God's will. As people perceive the worthy fruits of penance born both in our individual lives and as the SFO, they will naturally be inspired to join us in following our way of life. Regardless of whether our membership grows, however, we can rest assured that our lifestyle of penance is enabling us to both discover and follow our God-given destiny. As God naturally evolves all living beings that live in harmony with God's will, so too will we evolve according to God's perfect plan. Will we proliferate the earth? Will be become an increasingly endangered species? Will we become completely extinct? The answers, naturally, are up to God. As penance increasingly detaches us from forces of anxiety and concern, we will embrace with "perfect joy" whatever future God has for us.

39 St. Teresa of Avila, *The Collected Works of St. Teresa of Avila: Volume 3, trans, Kieran Kavanaugh, O.C.D. and Otilio Rodriguez, O.C.D.(Washington, D.C.: ICS Publications, 1985), chapter 4, accessed November 16, 2014.*

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Dr. Sean Field (University of Vermont), Dr. Timothy Johnson (Flagler College), Sr. Margaret Carney (St. Bonaventure University), Dr. Jacques Dalarun, (Center for Scientific Research, Paris), Fr. Jeffrey Scheeler, OFM (Provincial, St. John the Baptist Province), Dr. Marco Bartoli (Pontifical Antonianum, Rome), Fr. David Couturier, OFM Cap. (St. Bonaventure University).

The Franciscan Institute at St. Bonaventure University awarded its 2016 Franciscan Institute Medals to two distinguished Franciscan scholars this year: Dr. Jacques Dalarun, Ph.D., and Sr. Margaret Carney, O.S.F., S.T.D.

Dr. Jacques Dalarun is Senior Researcher at the National Center for Scientific Research in Paris. He was awarded the Franciscan Institute Medal for his work in the discovery, translation and commentary on the The Rediscovered Life of St. Francis of Assisi by Thomas of Celano. Dr. Dalarun shared that rediscovery and its importance during his Ignatius Brady Memorial Lecture on July 14th at St. Bonaventure University's Quick Arts Center. Fr. Jeffrey Scheeler, O.F.M., Provincial of St. John the Baptist Province, which sponsors this annual lecture, attended the event.

Sr. Margaret Carney, President-Emeritus of St. Bonaventure University, was presented the 2016 Medal for her contributions to the study of St. Clare. The first woman to be awarded a doctorate at the Pontifical Antonianum University, Sr. Margaret has been in the forefront of the ressourcement of Franciscan studies in the English-speaking world for the past thirty years.

Bonaventure as Mystical Theologian

By Msgr. Frank Lane, Ph.D.

Bonaventure's role in the mystical world has to be more clearly described in order to protect his thought from distortion and marginalization. Certainly, we can begin with the dismissal of the 19th century peculiarities concerning mysticism. His reliance on Pseudo-Dionysius and the Victorines moves Bonaventure into the neo-platonic world of forms and emanations that lend themselves to deeper intuitions of the higher realms of thought and experience.

"When Bonaventure in his *Commentary* states quietly but firmly that Aristotle is a pagan philosopher, whose authority must not be equated with that of the Fathers, we must realize that it is a case of two different metaphysical doctrines confronting each other, not of an uncertain doctrine hesitant and timid in the presence of something it knows not."[1] Etienne Gilson makes it clear that Bonaventure knew Aristotle but rejected him as a suitable intellectual partner in the theological enterprise. He affirmed that Aristotle's misunderstanding of the nature of Light, made it impossible for him to be classified as a metaphysician at all. Since the Light, who is the Christ, was unable to be known as the ultimate reality, there could be no real study of ultimate reality until the Incarnation. Historically, Aristotle, or any other philosopher before the 1st Century, could not be a true metaphysician. The mystical dimension of Bonaventure, distinct as it is from a purely rational approach to God and the mysteries of life, may well reside in his Metaphysics of Light.

Bonaventure, benefiting from the new study of Physics introduced and pursued in the Franciscan School of Oxford, knew that Aristotle was mistaken in calling Light an accident.[2] In what way could an understanding of Light as substance contribute to a mystical dimension of theological speculation? Two sources have to be brought to bear on this reflection: the study of physics, and the Word of God, i.e. Scripture.

We will see how this combination brings forth an understanding of created reality when we look at the role Christ plays in the drama of creation. Suffice it now to say that the Word is the Light, and both are described by John as being God in the *Logos.* Christ is, therefore, the first form of all creation for, as John says, "through him all things came to be. Not one thing came to be except through him." The Word is the Light and it is through the Word as Light that the world and all within it came to be. From this, flows Bonaventure's understanding of the "Vestiges" but also his understanding of human nature. In this deep insight into human nature, Bonaventure can be understood as laying the groundwork for a mystical understanding of God and the created order.

If the foundation of human nature is the Light, i.e. the Christ, then there must exist within the human person some intuition of the divine and some pre-knowledge of the truth of the self. This avenue is opened for us in the *Itinerarium* where reason leads us to the precipice where the "Divine Darkness" draws us beyond and into the mystery of all Being itself.

The root of the mystical is grounded in the word *Myo,* which means to close the eyes. It suggests a secret kept, silence or keeping the lips together. Louis Bouyer explains the "secretiveness" of the *Mystikos* (which is derived from *"Myo")* as a secret that has been told but despite that, remains a secret, because what has been declared cannot be simply grasped since it is God's secret and God is beyond human comprehension. For Bouyer, the phenomenon of mysticism is present in the Fathers and designates the inner meaning of Scripture. In this understanding only in the New Testament can we discover the "secrets" of the Old Testament. For Christians, the secret of course, is Christ, the fulfillment of the hopes of Israel. Hence, the mystical is that which can be intuited but not yet understood.[3] Just as the deepest meaning of the Old Testament can only be understood in its fulfillment in the New Testament, so too the secrets of revelation will only be understood in the opening up of the mystery in time, discovered in the theology of history. We might say that both Ockham's and Ratzinger's "metaphysics of revelation" is an authentic gift from the Fathers of the Church.

The insight that mystery exists can hardly be understood as irrational or non-rational. It is an intuited and existential reality in the whole human experience. For the Fathers it was also, therefore, ecclesial and sacramental. The mystery of Christ emerged through the community of the Church and was able to be approached as present to us in both Church and Sacrament. Sacrament, like Scripture, finds its inner reality is Jesus "hidden" in form and matter. Here, we hear an echo of Francis' understanding of the presence of the Son, Jesus, as accessible through Church and Sacrament. The "Most High God" was the arena of the secret while Jesus emerged from the secret through revelation within the Church and through the sacrament of the Eucharist especially.

We might even argue that the whole of biblical literature is a mystical undertaking since it contains the mystery of the Most High God. De Certeau says that "mysticism is the anti-Babel. It is the search for a common language after language has been shattered. It is the invention of a 'language of the angels' because that of man has been decimated."[4] In biblical literature, each author explores a new language that reveals that which is hidden and moves stealthily beyond the contemporary mythical language that surrounds him and his culture. Comparisons between the Babylonian myth of creation and Genesis is a clear example of a common language infused with a newness of language that pulls from the darkness of myth, the illumination of wonder. Biblical language becomes the language of the angels revealing humanity to itself. Thomas Carroll says, "With the prophets there is revealed, from age to age, the mysterious design of the Almighty, who is the Lord of history, as he is of creation" [5]

1 Gilson, Etienne, *The Philosophy of St. Bonaventure,* (New York: Sheed and Ward, 1938), 9.

2 Meaning that Aristotle thought Light was an appearance and not a substance. Especially after the creation speculation of Robert Grosseteste, it was clear that the created order, without understanding Light as substance, had no rational explanation and certainly none that could be adequately understood. Bonaventure would argue that without an understanding of physics, there could be no adequate understanding of Metaphysics.

3 Louis Bouyer, "Mysticism: An Essay on the History of the Word.' in Richard Woods ed. *Understanding Mysticism* (Garden City, New York: Image Books, 1980).

4 Michel de Certeau, *Heterologies: Discourse on the Other,* trans. By Brian Massumi (Minneapolis:University of Minnesota Press, 1986), 88.

5 Thomas K. Carroll, *Wisdom and Wasteland* (Dublin: Four Courts Press,

Carroll sees the present age, as does Steiner, as an age that has lost the mystery of language that reveals the deeper hidden reality of the "Other." For him and for Steiner, the pedestrian forces of vulgar modernity have emptied language of meaning and depth. He sees our age as a manifestation of Goethe's fourth age, the Prosaic Age, the Age of the Vulgar. Carroll says we need to seek a new grasp of biblical angelic language that will return us to Goethe's first age, that of the Poetic.[6]

Steiner's proclamation that the *Logos* "has broken in our mouths"[7] echo's de Certeau's affirmation that "mysticism seems to emerge on beaches uncovered by the receding tide."[8] The rejection of the Christ is the ultimate barren beach of time. The loss of biblical allusions in modern discourse is the loss of that mystery that lies behind any meaningful communication of reality for it is the loss of all meaning, the Word. Without the Word, there is no meaning in language and no ability to communicate that which lies hidden. The recovery of the Christ in mystery and in symbol is the work of the mystic. Mysticism thus seems to become a search for the One, the "Other" who lies hidden within language and symbol. In Bonaventure's theology, symbol is the "real symbolität."[9] The symbol, in some way, contains that which it symbolizes. For Bonaventure, the underlying reality of all creation is the light, the Christ. By the very fact that he searches for ways to reveal that which is hidden in creation in experience and thought moves him into the realm of the mystical, the symbolic, revealing the secret of all reality. Reason or language alone is incapable of revealing that which is contained in the foundations of the created order. Symbol and language approach the mystery. Wrapped in our encounter with the insight of de Certeau's quest for angelic language, we have a modern tool to grasp the term "Divine Darkness" to describe and propose a reflection of the higher order of Being, the Most High God.

Michel de Certeau began his journey into an analysis of mysticism by peeling back the human layers of the mystical. This certainly can be an insight for us into the deeper meaning of Bonaventure's writing. de Certeau asserts that mystical writing "displays a passion for what 'is', for the world as it exists, for the thing itself—in other words a passion for what is its own authority and depends on no outside guarantee . . . their goal is to disappear into what they disclose"[10] . . . its own authority—revelation needs no justification. It stands as its own authority.

In Bonaventure, there are two arguments and writings that can easily be applied to this reflection on mysticism by a contemporary critic. First is in the *Itinerarium*, an acknowledgement of the world as it is. The role of reason, a reflection of what is graspable by the mind in the world that is, becomes a vehicle into the sublime. The desire expressed in the text is to disappear into what is disclosed as Francis "disappeared" into Christ in the Stigmata, beyond reason into the darkness. The other glaring application is the argument about something "which is its own authority." For Bonaventure, Scripture and Church teaching need no verification from reason. It stands on its own as revealed truth. In the dispute between Bonaventure and Thomas on the eternity of the world, Thomas denied that "authority" could hold a valid place in a rational argument. He therefore rejected Bonaventure's assertion that revelation invalidated the premise of Thomas' argument that it was not unreasonable to maintain the eternity of the world. For Bonaventure, "authority," i.e. revelation, was true and therefore held a privileged place in rational discourse. The authority of the Word, the Logos, needed no rational validation. It stood on its own and was authentically validated in itself. He then pursued by rational argument the conclusion that the world would end. He did this without losing his initial appeal to "authority." Reason could support authority but not replace it.[11]

While the Bonaventurian synthesis was overrun by the Aristotelian juggernaut in the centuries following the canonization of Thomism by John XXII and even *Aeterni Patris* of Leo XIII, it now begins to resurface in a new and interesting way in the modern era. The same scientific discipline that gave Bonaventure the insight into the nature of Light now, in a very advanced state, begins to reflect Bonaventure's understanding of the role Light played as the first form of the whole created order.

David Bohm (1917–1992), a controversial but significant quantum physicist, has proposed a theory of the ultimate universal reality that he calls "the Implicate Order." Bohm's theory comes from a long exploration of the behavior of light as both wave and particle and seeks to explain the strange behavior of sub-atomic particles. He was perplexed by the phenomenon of sub-atomic particles that once having encountered each other "communicate" and respond to each other thousands of light years away and thousands of years apart. It led him to wonder about the relationality of all matter. He believed that "hidden means" exist and went further to speculate that space and time might actually be derived from an even deeper level of objective reality. This reality he calls the Implicate Order. It is an ultra-holistic cosmic view that connects everything with everything else. In principle, any individual element could reveal detailed information of any other element in the universe. It is an unbroken wholeness of the totality of existence as an individual flowing movement without borders. All reality exists in relationship to all else as it flows from a common source. For him, space and time might actually be derived from such a deeper level of objective reality i.e. the Implicate Order. He then affirms that the Implicate Order has been recorded in the complex movement of electromagnetic fields in the form of Light waves. Such movement of light waves is present everywhere and in principle enfolds the entire universe of space and time.

Within the Implicate Order, there is a totality of forms that have an approximate kind of recurrent stability and separability. It is these forms that Bohm claims make up our manifest world. He maintains that the Implicate Order's energy is what he calls the "Holomovement "that is the ultimate ground of, the unknown totality of the universal flux." The Holomovement is the extension of the Implicate Order into a multidimensional reality. It is the interplay between the implicate and the explicate orders. It is the flow of matter manifested and interdependent, towards consciousness".[12] Bohm's sense of the inner-connectedness of all reality is not incompatible with the proclamation of John';s Gospel concerning the Light nor could it be excluded from reflections on Bonaventure's "Emanation, Exemplarism and Return." Bohm saw the particles and waves of light as an inference into the existence of all created matter. Light is not a mar-

2001), 60.

6 Ibid.

7 George Steiner, *Real Presences* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1989), 5.

8 Michel de Certeau, H*eterologies*

9 A term used to imply that the reality and the symbol that contains it is, in some sense, the reality itself as present.

10 Ibid.

11 *The Eternity of the World in the Thought of Thomas Aquinas and his Contemporaries*, ed.by. J.B.M. Wissink (Leiden;New York: E.J. Brill, 1990).

12 David Bohm, *Wholeness and the Implicate Order* (London: Routledge & K.Paul, 1980). See also http:/www.bizcharts.com/stoa_del_sol/plenum/plenum_3.html for a very clear and useful summary of the theory.

ginal element of reality, it lies at the root of all reality, interestingly enough, as both the Gospel of John and the Book of Genesis affirms.

It is incautious to propose Robert Grosseteste's theory of creation as a "Big Bang Theory" so too might it be incautious to portray Bonaventure as a quantum physicist but if we look at some of the ideas that Bonaventure proposed concerning the universe, we might be as drawn to wonder if Bonaventure's ideas like those of Grosseteste's might have foreshadowed major discoveries of modern science.

For Bonaventure, there is an underlying substance that is the first form of all being and enables a progression or multiplicity of forms. It is Light and from this Light all things have existence. For Bonaventure, that Light is Christ as John affirms in the Prologue. All forms exist in the Son as for Bohm they all exist in the Holomovment of the Implicate Order. Nothing is that is not contained in the forms inherent in the "ultimate ground of the unknown totality of the universal flux." Such forms flow as matter manifested and interdependent, towards consciousness." They make up our manifest world. Every particle of the "unfoldment" of the Holomovement reveals something of all other particles and of the whole. Bonaventure's "vestiges" can certainly be seen as parallel to the particles that reveal the whole.

As the similarity of vision moves from theology to physics, it is difficult not to understand that there is a unified intuition within the human mind that moves toward disclosure of reality in different ways and in different times. If we can accept the definition of "mystical" as *an intuition of realities not yet known to reason or contemporary science*, we can say that Bonaventure intuited, through faith, a deeper sense of the universe and the role the ultimate ground of all being plays in our world of sense perception and our faculties of comprehension. He intuited through faith and revelation a truth beyond his own time and place but is unchanging, a truth that only centuries later would begin to be approached by creative thinkers and daring scientists.

Considering Bonaventure to be a "mystical theologian" would certainly credit him with an insight and wisdom unattainable in the world of rationality alone. As Bouyer maintains concerning the "*mystikos*," Bonaventure seems to have touched the "secret" of existence, often intuited but not yet known. The secret that moves through the ages wrapped in Word and Sacrament, in Jesus, the mystery and the "secret" of revelation and experience. Bonaventure seems to have caught a powerful glimpse, at least obliquely, of the Logos of John, the Light of Genesis, which contains all that is and all that can be.

Bonaventure cannot be seen as a prisoner of the 13th Century but a man, a friar, a theologian of the ages. It is no coincidence that both Hans Urs von Balthasar and Karl Rahner leaned on him for insight and even method. For as the modern age moves more deeply into both the mystery of all that is and, on its journey, stumbles toward primeval chaos, there must be voices that can speak of truth and light and wonder. Bonaventure of Bagnoregio was certainly one of those voices and one of the beacons of hope that keep alive the quest for the "secret" of all that is.

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Scholars at the Feast of St. Bonaventure Celebration, St. Bonaventure University

Sr. Margaret Carney, President Emeritus of St. Bonaventure University and Dr. Lezlie Knox of Marquette University

Fr. Wayne Hellmann and Dr. Jacques Dalarun at the annual St. Bonaventure Dinner at St. Bonaventure

Arthur O'Leary OFM. Cap.

Precursor of the Irish Emancipation

By Brian J. Cudahy, Ph.D.

Daniel O'Connell is rightly regarded as "The Liberator," the man who successfully led the 1829 effort that repealed final vestiges of the infamous Penal Laws that had reduced many Irish people to second-class status solely on the basis of their religious convictions, practices and beliefs. But there were earlier intellectual efforts that helped lay the foundation for O'Connell's parliamentary initiatives. This paper will explore the life and writings of one such precursor, a Franciscan Capuchin friar by the name of Arthur O'Leary.

Biography of Arthur O'Leary

Little is known of the early years of Arthur O'Leary in any detail, but some things can be surmised from what is known.[1] He was born in the year 1729 in the ancient parish of Fanlobbus in the district of Iveleary in the rural southern reaches of County Cork, near the current town of Dunmanway. His was a family with long and deep roots in the area and it is thought that as a youngster he tended sheep for his family, the language which he spoke was Irish, and any elements of formal education he might have received prior to reaching the age of eighteen years would have been from the hands of itinerant teachers. An author identified only as "J.O'M." put it this way in 1892: "The few illicit draughts of learning that the hedge schoolmaster carried with him from farmstead to farmstead were thirstily sought after by young O'Leary, who, up in the mountain solitudes where he dwelt, first learned the love of letters, which through life distinguished him."[2] His initial biographer, Thomas England, characterized the educational options open to O'Leary as a youngster thusly: "Unfortunately in Ireland, at the time of his birth, there was no alternative between religious apostasy and partial ignorance."[3]

In the year 1747 at the age of eighteen, O'Leary left Ireland to continue his studies under less stressful circumstances than would be possible for a Roman Catholic in his native country. Peter Guilday has speculated that his travel from Cork to the monastery school of St. Malo in Brittany, France, was "probably in disguise as was necessary since the days of Elizabeth."[4] The monastery school at St. Malo was ran by the Capuchin Franciscan friars, and here O'Leary completed requisite courses in both philosophy and theology, took vows as a Capuchin himself, and was ordained a priest sometime around 1757. It remains unclear as to whether O'Leary intended to enter religious life when first he travelled from Ireland to St. Malo in 1747, but that is, in fact, what happened.

Upon ordination, he "began his ministry amongst the Breton country folk whose Celtic affinities found a ready response in the heart of the Irish Capuchin."[5] Shortly afterward and while still living in the Capuchin friary at St. Malo, O'Leary would make his first foray into what might be called an arena where matters of religion and matters of politics intersected and overlapped, an arena in which O'Leary would feel comfortable and make a profound impact for the rest of his years.

While O'Leary was at St. Malo, a thoroughly Catholic nation, France, was engaged in war with a thoroughly Protestant nation, England. Known as the Seven Years War—despite the fact it lasted nine years, from 1754 until 1763—the conflict saw large numbers of Irishmen serving under the English flag, Guilday even maintaining that most were likely "impressed into British service."[6] When numbers of these Irish soldiers were taken prisoner by French forces, various castles in the seaport town of St. Malo became useful encampments for their detention. Given the Irish background of such Catholic prisoners, newly ordained Father O'Leary seemed an appropriate friar to serve as their chaplain, an assignment he assumed with relish and enthusiasm.

The French military, however, thought these Irish prisoners could represent a unique opportunity for their cause. So O'Leary was asked by the French Foreign Minister, Etienne de Choiseul, to appeal to the Catholic sensibilities of the Irish prisoners and encourage them to join forces with their French co-religionists against the Protestant forces of the British Crown.

O'Leary, however, would have none of it. As he himself would put it many years later:

> . . . in a Catholic country, where I was chaplain of war, I thought it a crime to engage the King of England's soldiers and sailors into the service of a Catholic monarch against their Protestant sovereign. I resented the solicitation and ran the risk of offending a minister of state, and of losing my pension; but my conduct was approved of by the divines of a monastery to which I then belonged, who unanimously declared that in conscience I could not have acted otherwise.[7]

1 There are two important biographies of O'Leary. See: Thomas R. England. *The Life of Arthur O'Leary* (London: Keating, Brown, 1822); Michael Bernard Buckley, *The Life and Writings of the Rev. Arthur O'Leary* (Dublin: James Duffy, 1868). England, a priest of the Diocese of Cork, is the brother of John England, the first Roman Catholic bishop of Charleston, South Carolina. The Buckley volume includes lengthy selections from O'Leary's own writings interspersed throughout the text. Both the England and Buckley volumes are currently available in reprint editions. The England reprint utilizes the original pagination while Buckley's work has been reprinted in a fashion that involves different pagination. (Memphis, TN: General Books LLC, 2012). References to Buckley will cite this reprint rather than the original.

2 J.O'M., "Biographical Sketches; Father Arthur O'Leary," *Journal of the Cork Historical and Archaeological Society* (1892), I, 9, p. 184.

3 England, *Life of Arthur O'Leary*, p. 2.

4 Peter Guilday, "Arthur O'Leary," *The Catholic Historical Review* (1924), IX, p. 533.

5 T.J. Walsh, "Father Arthur O'Leary, a Capuchin of Blackmoor Lane," *Journal of the Cork Historical and Archaeological Society*, LII (1948), p. 89.

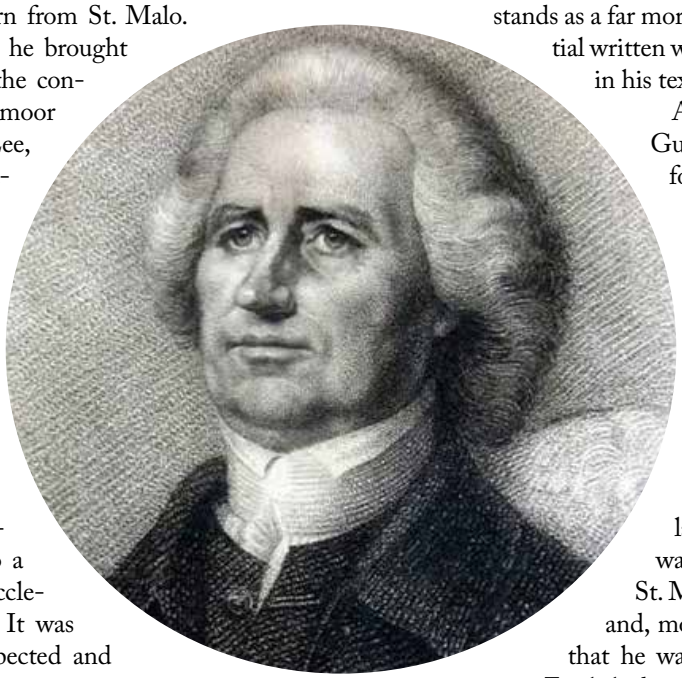
6 Guilday, *ibid.*

7 Arthur O'Leary, "Remarks on the Foregoing Letter and Defense," in *Miscellaneous Tracts of the Rev. Arthur O'Leary* (Dublin: E. & B. Dowling, 1816), p. 119. O'Leary published *Miscellaneous Tracts* in several editions during his lifetime. The 1816 edition, published posthumously, is the most complete.

Two points are worth underscoring in this course of action O'Leary chose to follow. The first is the fact he places obligation to one's legitimate sovereign over any fraternal loyalty a captured soldier might have toward his co-religionists. And second is the fact O'Leary clearly calls out "conscience" as a principal factor in the determination of an important course of action. Each of these two notions will re-emerge as foundational principles throughout O'Leary's career.

There is also a third important point associated with this early action and that is the fact that in later years O'Leary will often cite his own actions in France as an important marker as he began to develop a more formal philosophy that delineated the proper roles religion and politics can and must play with respect to each other.[8]

The Seven Years War had been over for eight years when, in 1771, Arthur O'Leary returned to his native Ireland. Whether this was a matter of choice on his part or a directed assignment by his Capuchin superiors remains unknown at this remove. Capuchin Franciscans had been active in Ireland since at least the mid-1600's despite the rigors of the Penal Laws, and one author cites their arrival in Cork as occurring in 1637.[9] And so it was also in Cork City that O'Leary settled upon his return from St. Malo. Then, using a small sum of money he brought with him from France, he saw to the construction of a small chapel on Blackmoor Lane, to the south of the River Lee, "buried between salthouses and stables."[10] Here, his preaching quickly attracted crowds of interested people and his reputation began to spread. While the strictures of the penal laws were still very much in force, Peter Guilday writes: "No priest of London would have dared to speak as O'Leary spoke during those years in Cork."[11]



O'Leary, though, would soon see his ministry expand from parochial duties on Blackmoor Lane to a more dramatic presence in Irish ecclesiastical, and even political, circles. It was triggered by something both unexpected and extraneous.

A physician from Scotland by the name of Patrick Blair had some time previously moved to Cork City. In 1775, Blair, writing under the pen name Michael Servetus, M.D., issued a pamphlet entitled *Thoughts on Nature and Religion* that "rudely shocked the feelings of Protestant and Catholic alike."[12] While Blair's ire grew from his reading of Voltaire during an extended tenure in France and was primarily directed against John Calvin and both his British and Irish followers, his treatise was equally hostile in its approach to all Christian denominations.

O'Leary's own congregants asked him to consider writing a response to Blair's published treatise, and while he was of a mind to do so, for a Roman Catholic clergyman in Cork City in 1775 to issue such a public rebuke was not without a degree of risk. So what O'Leary did was seek an appointment with the Church of Ireland bishop of Cork and Ross, Rt. Rev. Isaac Mann. The two clerics met, Bishop Mann encouraged O'Leary to rebut Blair's pamphlet, and the finished product served to expand O'Leary's reputation even further. The tract that he produced, "A Defense of the Divinity of Christ; Or, Remarks on a Work Entitled Thoughts on Nature and Religion," is widely regarded as his first published work.[13]

Rather than specific arguments O'Leary advances in this, his first written work, its importance lies more in the fact that he sought approbation from the Church of Ireland bishop of Cork and Ross before undertaking its composition. This sense of cooperation and friendliness between the two sometime rival Christian communions stands as a far more important feature of O'Leary's initial written work than any arguments he advances in his text.

After his exchange with Blair, as Guilday notes: "It was now impossible for the humble Franciscan to remain hidden,"[14] while Thomas England writes: "Once before the public as an author, the active mind of O'Leary soon led him to exert in a more enlarged sphere the power as a writer of which he now became conscious."[15]

One side point must be raised, however, when discussion turns to O'Leary's written work. While the language O'Leary learned as a child was Irish, his education and residence at St. Malo exposed him to scholastic Latin and, most likely, French. But it is doubtful that he was afforded any formal introduction to English during his years in France, or during his earlier years in Ireland.[16] And yet when he published "A Defense of the Divinity of Christ" shortly after 1775 in response to the Blair's pamphlet, he evidences a strong and nuanced command of English.[17] How Arthur O'Leary was able to acquire this skill must

8 O'Leary will refer to his actions at St. Malo often over the course of his lifetime, including in his final published work. See: *Rev. Arthur O'Leary's Address to the Lords Spiritual and Temporal of the Parliament of Great Britain* (London: H. Fitzpatrick, 1800). This work is also available in: O'Leary, *Miscellaneous Tracts*, pp. 360-399.

9 See: Walsh, *op. cit.*, p. 89. In early 2016, the Capuchin friars held a day-long symposium at their Dublin friary to commemorate the 400th anniversary of their order's initial arrival in Ireland. Papers delivered at this symposium are scheduled to be published later in 2016.

10 Walsh, *op. cit.*, p. 88. "Father O'Leary's Chapel," as it was initially known, would later be associated with another Capuchin friar, Father Theobold Matthew, the famed "apostle of temperance," and a full Capuchin friary would eventually be constructed adjacent to the chapel on Blackmoor Lane. The chapel no longer survives, but the friary building appears to have been converted to secular purposes.

11 Guilday, *op. cit.*, p. 536.

12 J.O'M., "Biographical Sketches; Father Arthur O'Leary," p. 185. The full title of Blair's work is: *Thoughts on Nature and Religion, or An Apology for the Right of Private Judgement, Maintained by Michael Servitus, M.D. in His Answer to John Calvin*. (Cork: Phineas Bagnell and Company, 1774). In using the pen name Michael Servitus, Blair was making reference to a sixteenth century physician who John Calvin supposedly had executed for his heretical views. (Blair's full treatise is available in a contemporary reprint edition.)

13 *Miscellaneous Tracts of Arthur O'Leary*, pp. 1-49.

14 Guilday, "Arthur O'Leary," p. 90.

15 England, *Life of Arthur O'Leary*, p. 27.

16 "…notwithstanding all these high endowments and distinctions, he wrote and spoke the English language with great difficulty and reluctance." (England, *Ibid*, p. 15.)

17 England characterized the work as exhibiting "a bold and nervous eloquence, glowing with the effusions of … imagination." (England, *idem.*) For the

remain, at least for now, something of an unknown. But the force of his written work—and his skillful style of writing in an obviously learned language—stands as an important accomplishment.

O'Leary's time in Ireland would not prove to be lengthy, and discussion of some of his other writings—indeed some very important writings—from his time on Blackmoor Lane will follow in the section below. In any event, the year 1789—a mere eighteen years after he returned to the land of his birth from St. Malo—saw O'Leary leave Ireland to assume the position of chaplain at the Spanish Embassy in London. He would never again return to his native land.

As something of a minor but interesting point, shortly before he left Cork O'Leary engaged in transatlantic correspondence with Bishop John Carroll of Baltimore. Carroll had been a member of the Society of Jesus in France when that order was suppressed by Pope Clement XIV in 1773. This action greatly upset Carroll and he did not disguise his anger toward Clement XIV in later years, especially in a tract he wrote in response to charges leveled by a former Jesuit by the name of Charles Wharton. Pope Clement, however, had not only been a Franciscan, but was a man O'Leary had come to know during his years at St. Malo. O'Leary jumped to the defense of his fellow friar, and while the full exchange between Carroll and O'Leary has been lost, suffice it to say it was conducted with good will and humor, and Carroll omitted the comments O'Leary found offensive in subsequent editions of his written exchanges with Wharton.[18]

O'Leary would spend his final thirteen years in England. He continued to write, he saw to the publication of his more important treatises, and while he initially was named a chaplain to the Spanish Embassy, his subsequent ministry in the Soho section of London would involve interactions with Irish emigrants of limited means who had moved to the British capital to better their estate. But his reputation had preceded him and O'Leary also became friends with such important figures in British life at the time as William Pitt and Edmund Burke. Indeed his final published work is an address he delivered to members of the British Parliament in 1800.[19]

O'Leary would die in January of 1802 at the age of 73, and his health had begun to fail during his final years. He found the horrors of the 1798 Rising in Ireland quite disturbing and began to gather material for what he thought would be a lengthy historical account of all Irish rebellions against English rule.[20] But his energy levels were unequal to the task and while he did pass notes he had planned to use along to his friend, Francis Plowden, who incorporated them into his own historical work, it is not possible to identify those elements within Plowden's writings that represent the insights of Arthur O'Leary.[21]

In late 1801 O'Leary's physician recommended that he spend the winter months in the south of France as a possible way of restoring his failing health. He crossed the English Channel and set foot on French soil for the first time since his days at St Malo. But the France of post-Revolutionary 1801 was a very different nation than the country that welcomed him as a student in 1747, and Buckley writes that O'Leary was "shocked by the deplorable contrast which the country presented with the experience of his youthful years."[22] He quickly reversed his direction, re-crossed the English Channel, and reached London on January 7th, 1802. "The extreme fatigue and sea-sickness he had endured aggravated his sufferings, and it was now manifest to his friends that the fatal hour was neigh. He died the following day."[23]

In a sermon delivered at O'Leary's funeral in London by Morgan D'Arcy, a Catholic priest from Dublin, the life and work of the Capuchin friar were effectively summarized in this passage: "Thus, while with one hand he ably defended the sacred cause of God and religion, he was ever ready to lend another to support the tottering edifice of civil society; and thus did he singly effectuate, by the evangelical and merciful weapons of conciliation, what was since, with difficulty, accomplished by the whole armed force of the country, and that only by sacrificing the lives and properties of thousands."[24]

One might well argue that in the Ireland of 1802, while "the lives and properties of thousands" had, indeed, been sacrificed—D'Arcy was undoubtedly thinking about the United Irishmen and the aborted Rising of 1798—such sacrifices produced support for "the tottering edifice of civil society" only by the ruthless action of British forces in putting down the rebellion. D'Arcy's words, however, stand as a most effective summation of the life and work of Arthur O'Leary.

Arthur O'Leary's Intellectual Patrimony

Arthur O'Leary was neither a systematic theologian nor a philosopher in any formal or academic sense.[25] He has written no treatises on disputed points of dogmatic theology and nowhere will one find him speculating about issues involving fine distinctions in metaphysics. But while his writings are not included among the canons of formal philosophy or theology, his work incorporates extensive references to, and evidences familiarity with, Aristotle, Thomas Aquinas, Montaigne, Descartes, Thomas Hobbes, John Locke, David Hume and many others. He was well schooled in Sacred Scripture as well as the writings of the Church Fathers, so much so that Peter Guilday said of him: "In all that he wrote he resembled the ancient Fathers more than any Irishman of his time."[26] The Anglo-Irish statesman Henry Grattan has said of O'Leary: "If I did not know him to be a Christian clergyman, I should suppose him by his words to be a philosopher of the Augustine age."[27] T.J. Walsh has characterized O'Leary's writings

text of O'Leary's work, see: *Miscellaneous Tracts*, pp. 1-49.

18 For a discussion of this matter, see: Peter Guilday, *The Life and Times of John Carroll* (Westminster, Maryland: The Newman Press, 1954), pp. 127, 129. (This edition is a single-volume reprint of a two-volume work originally published in 1922.) See also: England, *Life of Arthur O'Leary*, pp. 141-145.

19 Arthur O'Leary, *Address to the Lords Spiritual and Temporal of the Parliament of Great Britain,* (London: H. Fitzpatrick, 1800). Also: O'Leary, *Miscellaneous Tracts*, pp 360-399.

20 "The disturbances by which Ireland was convulsed in 1798 pained O'Leary's mind. The efforts made by the tools of a base faction, to give the tinge of religious fanaticism to the political distractions of that country excited his indignation." (England, *Life of Arthur O'Leary*, p. 287.)

21 See: Francis Plowden, *An Historical Review of the State of Ireland From The Invasion of That Country Under Henry II to Its Union With Great Britain on The First of January 1801*, 5 volumes (Philadelphia: William F. McLaughlin, 1806). Plowden was initially forced to seek overseas publication of his work because it was judged to treat the British Government unfavorably. A subsequent three-volume edition, which carried the narrative forward to 1810, was published in Dublin in 1811. Both editions are available as contemporary reprints.

22 Buckley, *Life and Writings*, p. 115.

23 *idem*.

24 Quoted in: Buckley, *op. cit*., p. 121.

25 O'Leary fails to rate any treatment in a recent, and otherwise quite excellent, survey of Irish philosophy. See: Thomas Duddy, *A History of Irish Thought* (New York and London: Routledge, 2002.)

26 Guilday, "Arthur O'Leary," p. 530.

27 Quoted in: England, *op. cit*., p. 136. Grattan also characterized O'Leary as "…a man of learning—a philosopher—a Franciscan—(who) did the most eminent service to his country, in the hour of its greatest need." *idem*.

as "an historical and philosophical approach to a scientific sociology."[28] He was, in other words, a serious thinker, even if it is difficult to find a proper academic "niche" in which he might conveniently be placed.

While fully conscious of the philosophical and theological traditions of the west, O'Leary's thought was quite radical and he broke with tradition in a manner fully consistent with overall intellectual themes of the Enlightenment. He spoke of "Aristotle's barbarous philosophy, that kept the world in ignorance for so many ages,"[29] and while he disagreed with the theory of knowledge proposed by John Locke and preferred that of Rene Descartes,[30] many of his political reflections on questions of toleration and freedom of conscience mirror Locke more than any other thinker. Even in political matters, O'Leary was critical of Locke in certain areas, but the fact the Franciscan's seminal work of 1781 is entitled "An Essay on Toleration," while a century earlier John Locke published "A Letter Concerning Toleration" is beyond coincidental.[31] Indeed, at one point O'Leary calls Locke "…the wisest and most moderate of those English writers…"[32]

O'Leary's "Essay on Toleration" can easily be regarded as his most important work.[33] Subtitled "Mr. O'Leary's Plea for Liberty of Conscience," what is remarkable about this short essay is the way he casts his argument. He does not argue against the restrictions placed upon the practice of religion by the Penal Laws instituted by the Crown. Instead, he advances a case on behalf of both toleration and freedom of conscience as basic human values that may never be compromised. And more: while he cites Sacred Scripture liberally in advancing his case, he bases his argument squarely in the tradition of British political philosophy, citing John Locke extensively, Locke's predecessor in the tradition of social contract theory, Thomas Hobbes, and even such an anti-religious thinker as David Hume.

O'Leary's most eloquent plea for religious freedom, in other words, makes use of the unique philosophical tradition of the nation whose practical and legal dictates were themselves the very instruments by which religious freedom was denied to Roman Catholics in Ireland. This must be regarded as nothing less than an intellectual *tour de force*.

Furthermore, in attacking those who he sees as the enemies of toleration, he in no way spares his fellow Catholics whose intolerance in the wake of the Reformation was both scandalous and wrong. Hear O'Leary at some length:

I, in my cell, reflecting on the revolutions that religion has occasioned, not for good but for the destruction of mankind—revolutions in their morals , by inspiring them with mutual hatred and aversion, by making them believe that they had dispensed with the unchangeable laws of love and humanity, and deluding them into a persuasion that the death or oppression of a fellow creature on account of his error was an agreeable sacrifice to the Divinity—I, also, by a feeble attempt to overthrow the altar of an idol that has put Jesus Christ on a level with Moloch, whose false oracles persuaded mankind that the ears of a God of compassion and tenderness were pleased with the groans of victims tied to the stake, or famishing in dungeons or hovels—may enlist others to list under the banner of benevolence, and pave the way for abler hands to raise the structure of human happiness on the ruins of religious frenzy.[34]

Lest there be any misunderstanding as to who O'Leary believed were those within his own religion who represented a departure from the kind of toleration he felt was both a religious and a political imperative, he especially singles out the Counter-reformation figure of Robert Bellarmine (1542-1621). But he also directs his ire toward the Inquisition in general, and among Reformation figures, John Calvin is cited in O'Leary's writings as a proponent of using sword and stake to enforce theological orthodoxy.[35]

While O'Leary cast his argument for toleration and freedom of conscience as desirable for civic and political reasons, he was mindful that among the "opinions" such toleration would enfranchise are many tenets of a religious nature. And while O'Leary was starkly aware of the status his fellow Roman Catholics were forced to endure under the penal laws of Britain, he recognized that persecution of other religions had made inroads in various quarters of eighteenth century Europe. "I plead for the Protestant in France, and for the Jew in Lisbon as well as for the Catholic in Ireland" he wrote in the dedication of his initial published work, his response to the pamphlet of Patrick Blair.[36] He also made the following comment in his *Essay on Toleration*: "In a word, persecution on the score of our conscience, has thinned the world of fifty millions of human beings, by fire and sword. Thousands, who have escaped the sword and fagot, have perished, and are daily perishing, with hunger and want, for their mode of worship. The London riots, occasioned by a pretext of religion, have added about four hundred more, deluded by religious frenzy, to the enormous number noted in the same work."[37]

An interesting point here is that while O'Leary obviously wrote "Essay" as an argument against the British Penal Laws and their impact on the Catholics of Ireland, he prefers to use other examples of intolerance in advancing his case, including many in which his fellow Catholics were the enforces of such adverse conduct.

It was in the aftermath of publishing his "Essay on Toleration," that O'Leary was welcomed into a prestigious Anglo-Irish organization, The Monks of Saint Patrick. Despite its seemingly ecclesiastic title, this society was a totally secular group whose purpose was to foster fraternal bonds among its members, people who represented a variety of professional endeavors. O'Leary himself characterized the

28 Walsh, *op. cit.*, p. 92.

29 O'Leary, "Essay on Toleration," *Miscellaneous Tracts*, p. 184.

30 "In matters more within the verge of his knowledge, I widely differ from Mr. Locke. When he denies any innate ideas, or the least notion of a God implanted in our souls, independent of our senses, I prefer the Cartesian philosophers, Messieurs de Portroyal, the bishop of Rochester, and several others who were of a different opinion." (O'Leary, "Mr. O'Leary's Answer," *Miscellaneous Tracts*, p. 166.) While O'Leary was writing in England and Ireland, a philosopher with whom he surely had no contact whatsoever, Immanuel Kant (1724-1804), was proposing a theory of knowledge in Germany in his *Critique of Pure Reason* that O'Leary may well have found to his liking.

31 While beyond the scope of this paper, a close textual comparison of the two works would reveal many areas of parallel argumentation. Locke's *Letter* was originally written in Latin in 1685 while he was in exile from his native England because his views on toleration were regarded as radical and extreme. It was translated by William Popple in 1689 and is available in as variety of editions. See: John Locke, *A Letter Concerning Toleration*, ed. James H. Tully (Indianapolis, Indiana: Hackett, 1983).

32 O'Leary, "Loyality Asserted," *Miscellaneous Tracts*, p. 75.

33 For the full text, see: O'Leary, "An Essay on Toleration," *Miscellaneous Tracts*, pp. 178-222.

34 O'Leary, "Essay on Toleration," *Miscellaneous Tracts,* p. 184. O'Leary's reference to Moloch, a Canaanite god that demanded the sacrifice of children by fire, underscores his knowledge of the Old Testament.

35 See: O'Leary, "Loyalty Asserted," *Miscellaneous Tracts*, pp. 77-81. In O'Leary's writing, the man's name is rendered Bellarmin.

36 O'Leary, "To the Dignitaries and Brethren of the Illustrious Order of The Monks of St. Patrick," *Miscellaneous Tracts*, p. viii.

37 O'Leary, "Essay on Toleration," *Miscellaneous Tracts*, p. 181. The "London riots" O'Leary mentions are the infamous Gordon Riots that began in 1780 in reaction to passage of The Papists Act of 1778 which provided some relief for Catholics from the restrictions of the Penal Laws.

group thusly: "A society of nobles and gentlemen, composed of the greatest orators and writers in Ireland; who, unsolicited, have done the author the honour of adopting him as one of their members."[38]

Beyond the basic points O'Leary advanced in his "Essay on Toleration," one can discover three other issues as constant themes throughout O'Leary's other writings, and which must be seen as part of the overall philosophy he was developing. While the three are somewhat disparate in character, all find their intellectual roots in his "Essay on Toleration."

The first issue is his total opposition to wanton destruction that was being visited on Ireland by groups known collectively as Whiteboys, and part and parcel with this was his strong support for established political order.

The second issue grew out of an exchange he had with John Welsey and was a reaction to the latter's claim that Roman Catholicism was inimical to a well-ordered society in the late eighteenth century. A short-hand expression for Welsey's position is the infamous slogan: "No Popery."

A third issue that O'Leary addressed involved his belief—not shared by all his fellow Catholics, to be sure—that the Crown's desire to have Catholics subscribe to an Oath of Allegiance was not something his co-religionists had any reason to avoid. Of course as Guilday has noted: "The oath separated many of the best men in Ireland."[39]

As to the Whiteboys: some have defended the activities of such groups on the grounds their actions were directed against vicious landlords who were treating poor tenant farmers in Ireland in a ruthless fashion. The Whiteboys were, of course, secret gangs of men who roamed the countryside burning crops, setting livestock free, and causing general—and sometimes bloody—mayhem.[40] O'Leary asks: "Is it an effectual mode of redressing our grievances to crop the ears of your neighbor's horse, or to destroy a rick of corn, the only resource of a poor industrious farmer who has no other means to pay his rent, and who, thrust into prison by a merciless landlord, will be for entire years, perhaps for life, viewing on the walls of a gloomy prison, the cruel marks of your barbarity?"[41]

O'Leary's strong opposition to the Whiteboys was grounded on three related considerations. One was the fact that destruction of property was wrong. To the extent Arthur O'Leary had read and absorbed the political philosophy of John Locke, the very notion of private property must be seen as an important foundation of political stability. The second reason, though, was more practical and addressed the likelihood that actions of the Whiteboys could easily be regarded as originating in Catholic quarters of Ireland, and would thus impede initiatives to advance Catholic emancipation. In fact Dr. Richard Woodward, the Church of Ireland bishop of Cloyne, had already characterized the Whiteboys as "…a Popish banditti spirited up by agitating friars and Romish missionaries sent hither on purpose to sow sedition."[42] O'Leary's third and final reason for opposing secret societies such as the Whiteboys was his strong belief that the established political order should not be overthrown and challenged except in the most dire circumstances.

A second arena that drew considerable attention from O'Leary were theological debates between himself and John Wesley—although a good argument can be advanced that the Wesley-O'Leary exchanges were far more political than theological. In a very literate and civilized exchange of letters, O'Leary and his Protestant interlocutor debated points of difference that existed between their two communions in a variety of areas. But the one point of dispute that is most interesting involves the belief, advanced by Wesley, that a Roman Pontiff could, if he so choose, depose the rightful secular ruler of a nation state. And because of this, Wesley, speaking on behalf of The Protestant Association, maintained: "It was the opinion of our brave, wise, circumspect, and cautious ancestors, that an open toleration of the Popish religion, is inconsistent with the safety of a free people, and a Protestant government."[43]

In responding to this charge, O'Leary argues for pluralism and mutual respect, and directs his sharpest invective not against Wesley, but against Bellarmine and others of his own religion whose actions Wesley and others used to support a "No Popery" position. Hear O'Leary in his condemnation of such egregious actions by any religious leader, not merely actions to depose a rightful secular leader but to impose punishment for religious convictions: "The most monstrous absurdity, then, that ever met with apologists in church or state, is the misdirected zeal that punishes the body for the sincerity of an erroneous conscience."[44]

The third issue, the Oath of Allegiance, was a delicate matter. O'Leary felt that by professing allegiance to the Crown, Catholics in Ireland would be making a measured statement in support of the respective domains of religion and politics. As in his exchanges with Wesley, never far from this discussion would always be fear that Catholics subscribed to a theology that afforded the pope the right to "depose" the sovereign head of a political state. Catholic emancipation was proceeding along a slow but steady path toward realization, with the Papists Act of 1778 already passed, when O'Leary wrote "Loyalty Asserted" in 1779. Peter Guilday has summarized O'Leary's position on the oath this way: "He felt he needed to make clear—as clear as the noon-day sun in the heavens—the ineluctable fact that allegiance to the Holy See in no way trammeled Catholic allegiance to the Crown."[45]

The Catholic bishop of Ossory, a Dominican friar by the name of Thomas Burke, had declared that the oath "contained a violation of essential Catholic principles."[46] But a synod of the bishops of Munster was held in Cork in July of 1775 and "pronounced the oath to be lawful."[47] A major figure in the Munster synod was Bishop Francis Moylan, of Cork, and it can safely be assumed, as Walsh has suggested, that Moylan was reflecting the "pro-oath" views of his friend, Arthur O'Leary, views that the Franciscan would formalize in his 1779 essay, "Loyalty Asserted."[48]

38 O'Leary, "To the Dignitaries and Brethren of the Illustrious Order of The Monks of St. Patrick," *Miscellaneous Tracts*, p. iii.

39 Guilday, "Arthur O'Leary," p. 537.

40 Perhaps the best treatment of Whiteboys, especially in the context of the United Irishmen rebellion of 1798, is to be found in Thomas Flanagan's novel, *The Year of the French* (New York: New York Review Books, 1979).

41 O'Leary, "Address to the Common People of Ireland, particularly to such of them as are called Whiteboys," *Miscellaneous Tracts*, p. 334. (This essay is an appendix to: "Mr. O'Leary's Defense, Containing a Vindication of His Conduct and Writings During the Late Disturbances in Munster," *ibid.*, pp. 223-360.)

42 Quoted in:"The Rev. Arthur O'Leary," *Irish Quarterly Review*, VII (October 1857), p. 713.

43 John Wesley, "A Defense of the Protestant Association," in: Arthur O'Leary, *Miscellaneous Tracts*, p.115.

44 O'Leary, "Essay on Toleration," *Miscellaneous Tracts*, p.; 196.

45 Guilday, "Arthur O'Leary," p. 537. Guilday would say elsewhere: "Father O'Leary was a loyalist to the British crown, without, however, in any way sacrificing his staunch championship of the Irish nationalist cause."(*ibid.*, p. 538.)

46 Quoted in: Walsh, *op. cit.*, p. 91.

47 *Idem*.

48 See: O'Leary, "Loyalty Asserted; or the New Test Oath Vindicated," *Miscellaneous Tracts*, pp. 50-98. This is one of O'Leary's longer works and it goes through the text of the oath, line by line, and demonstrates its compatibility with

The Impact of O'Leary's Message

Exactly how influential the work of Arthur O'Leary would be as Ireland moved toward full religious emancipation in 1829 is something that has yet to be fully explored by scholars. What is known is that he was a close friend of his contemporary, Bishop Francis Moylan of Cork, and, through Moylan, exercised a profound influence on two slightly younger Catholic clergymen of Cork, John England and his younger brother, Thomas England. As mentioned earlier, it would fall to Thomas England to write a full biography of Arthur O'Leary, and in the preface of this work—which he dedicates to his brother, John, who by then had crossed the Atlantic to assume the post of bishop of Charleston, South Carolina—Thomas England notes that upon John England had fallen the role of custodian of various papers of Bishop Moylan and these would have included correspondence between Moylan and O'Leary. Unfortunately a large quantity of Bishop England's papers were destroyed in a tragic Charleston fire in 1861and, as a result, important details of the O'Leary-Moylan-England relationship may never be fully known.

It may prove to be the case that it was John England who did more than anyone else to carry forth the philosophical and ecclesiological message that was crafted in the quiet of Blackmoor Lane by Arthur O'Leary, for as Guilday notes: "When he laid down his pen, his fellow-citizen of Cork, John England, took it up and carried on the fight for enlightenment in the gloom Calvinism was making in America."[49] This, too, is a line of inquiry that remains to be explored.

Interestingly, however, Thomas England's very first published work sheds light on late eighteenth century intellectual development in Catholic Ireland from a slightly different perspective, while possibly bearing some relationship with O'Leary. A man by the name of Henry Essex Edgeworth was born in County Longford in 1745, the son of a clergyman in the Established Church. When Henry was still a young boy, the family converted to Roman Catholicism and was forced to leave Ireland and take up residence in France. Here Henry pursued his education, was eventually ordained a Catholic priest, and became friends with the future Catholic bishop of Cork, Francis Moylan, while both men were studying in Toulouse. Unlike Moylan who returned to his native Ireland following his studies, Edgeworth remained in France and eventually became the personal chaplain of King Louis XVI. Edgeworth ministered to the king's spiritual needs right up until the day of his execution by guillotine in 1793.

It was from personal correspondence Edgeworth conducted with Moylan—it is this correspondence that Thomas England has edited and published—that the utter horrors of the French Revolution were absorbed into the religious and political consciousness of Ireland as the eighteenth century was becoming the nineteenth.[50] It can be suggested that in recounting the story of Ireland's struggle for religious emancipation—and for that matter in Ireland's efforts to free itself from British political domination—the impact of the French revolution on Ireland's self-consciousness has all too often been ignored.

O'Leary would surely have acquired a sense of the horrors in France that Edgeworth was communicating to Moylan, and he would experience them himself, even if but briefly, on his final visit to France within days of his death in 1802. Buckley has characterized O'Leary's reaction to the French Revolution this way: "While Arthur O'Leary was thus toiling on in the great cause of religion, events were passing in France which saddened and embittered his mind, devoted as that large mind was to the best and truest interests of all mankind. It was the period of the great Revolution, the very memory of whose horrors, after the lapse of three-quarters of a century, still shocks the world—the period when infidelity slew the souls of its thousands and tens of thousands, and when the lust for blood discovered in the inhabitants of a civilized country a depth of savage brutality theretofore unknown in the constitution of the human race."[51]

O'Leary's staunch opposition to, for example, the behavior of the Whiteboys, and disavowal of the United Irishmen and their rebellion in 1798, may well have been influenced in some measure by the picture Edgeworth had painted of what unbridled revolution can produce.

It has often been suggested that O'Leary's writing exercised an influence on the techniques Daniel O'Connell later used to secure parliamentary passage of the Catholic Relief Act of 1829. It is unlikely in the extreme that O'Leary and O'Connell ever met. O'Connell, born in 1775, was "called to the bar" in 1798, mere days before the start of the Rebellion of the United Irishmen and at a time when O'Leary was living in England and his health was beginning to deteriorate, and O'Leary would die in 1802 well before O'Connell had come into his own as a force in Irish politics. Biographies of O'Connell by Sean O'Faolain as well as by Patrick Geoghegan make no mention of O'Leary at all.[52] So one is left to wonder if any "O'Leary influence" on The Liberator was more than likely through some third-party intermediary, and a prime candidate for such a role would be, of course, John England, the older brother of O'Leary's biographer, Thomas England.[53] On the other hand, T.J. Walsh has suggested that once the practical-minded O'Connell appeared on the scene, ordinary politics took over from theoretical speculation and O'Connell, Walsh claims, "succeeded in altering the universe of discourse with the result that the intellectualism of O'Leary became debased currency."[54]

So exactly how and to what extent "O'Leary's message" impacted and influenced subsequent developments in Ireland—or in America—must remain, for now, a question that lacks a satisfactory answer. Suffice it to say that the substance of the Capuchin friar's message provides considerable material for reflection and further study.

traditional Catholic teaching.

49 Guilday, "Arthur O'Leary," p. 544.

50 See: Thomas R. England, *Letters from the Abbe Edgeworth to His Friends; Written Between the Years 1777 and 1807, with Memoirs of His Life*. (London: Longman, Hunt, Rees, Orme and Brown, 1818). Edgeworth's insights into revolutionary France, and their impact on the consciousness of Catholic Ireland, is a matter worthy of further study. This work is also available as a contemporary reprint.

51 Buckley, *Life and Writings*, p. 101.

52 See" Patrick M. Geoghegan, *King Dan; the Rise of Daniel O'Connell 1775-1829* (Dublin: Guill and Macmillian, 2008; Sean O'Faolain, *King of the Beggars; A Life of Daniel O'Connell* (New York: Viking, 1938).

53 For a thorough discussion of John England's relationship with Daniel O'Connell, see: Peter Guilday, *The Life and Times of Bishop John England*, 2 volumes (New York: The America Press, 1927), I, pp. 107-123.

54 Walsh, *op. cit*, p. 94.

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Poetry Corner

Messenger of Ascent

In things of beauty, he contemplated the One
who is supremely beautiful
-St. Bonaventure

*

The Second Founder of the Order, your authority
As inspired author and follower of one lower fellow
Was 'good fortune' indeed (as your name is in word),
And when you were offered York's red, regal galero
Your Franciscan vision, seeing through the prism
Of simplicity, saw fortune's lure (a poor but pure
Bonaventure!) and you felt to rule a city was prison-
Son of Francis in this, and of his humble Rule in general.

*

No heir of Aristotle, who posited a godless nature,
Or one whose god is more Mover than Lover or Son,
Your mind, divinely illumined, soon became God's loom
That united to Him what mind untied, and Nature's thread
You wove into one heavenly tapestry; for the dearth
Of meaning that threatened all earth-tethered minds
Was the back of the tapestry, and the lofty Philosopher
Who saw the shell's well-crafted pattern ever fell short
Of farther shores; and, ever-staring out, was a shell himself.

*

Gaps left by even the rightest reason are felt at last
(Cold reason, a fruit of the apple and trap of the asp,
Man in treason grasped from the tree's lowest branch)
And it asks a Saint's Faith to now experience that gasp
Any pagan would've had if he'd seen Heaven's Breath
Moving as a dove over the water at Earth's earliest dawn.
The wand of wonder, Spirit-inspired, is another sun-
One making King Sun the Brother that danced for Francis-
Whose radiance lifts most life's mists and to each glance
Grants the grace whereby internal eyes become moist
As we internalize Creation, inspiring science-entranced
And sin-blinded minds to see again with single vision.

*

Since we experience the story of existence as a mystery
That math no more than myth will allow us to fathom,
I find all science-adduced proofs can't add up to Truth
(Nothing so odd is reached even by an infinity of evens
And seven in its perfection mirrors Heaven merely).
As I stare far into the starry mystery I stand under
Desiring to understand, and then begin to wonder
(Above all) at my being- so very varied an enigma-
My mind traverses universes both above and within,
And I think (like Bonaventure?) some tome of Augustine
Is as useful to me as either Einstein or Wittgenstein;
For these latter ignored that most mysterious matter
At the heart of our Mass, that matter that matters to all
Whose faith is *catholic*, and thus called universal,
And while we count atoms inside Nature's cathedral-
A Catholic is neither earth-hater nor world-worshipper-
Without devout Faith we amount to Adams outside her.
Though thought intellectually quaint by comparison
To your Parisian acquaintance, Aquinas the Dominican,
Your value now, as then, is in showing how souls ascend
From vale to Heaven (behind the veil); and in my mind
Duns Scouts, for all his genius, was a dunce to you,
And the philosopher-prater Kant, with all his cant
Can't hold a candle to the illumination- brighter than
Any million tapers- you drew from one *Pater Noster*.

*

Pursuing all Truth through five senses and an inner fire,
Your union with the Divine Mind, sinner though you were,
Earned you the moniker 'Seraphic Doctor'; and early
You learned, while adoring God's throne (not, however,
Without adorning your own head with the thorny crown),
How none is wise who desires to rise to enlightenment
Only by a never-ending series of *Whys* and *How comes*,
Or otherwise than through true union with The Triune One:
And Christ, the Uniter of us all, bridging a divine divide,
Desires each soul deeply and so all redeemed to be his bride.

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The Bodiliness of Franciscan Spirituality

By Willem Marie Speelman

The 13th century – the time of Francis – was colored by a bodily spirituality, in which Relics, the Eucharist as the real Body of Christ, and a huge and varied movement of penitents played a leading role.[1] The faithful longed to see, taste, and feel the mystery in their own bodies. They even desired to share in the sufferings of Jesus, so that they could feel one with Him, and through this shared feeling also share in His salvation.[2] The medieval faithful had discovered a possible means to an encounter with Jesus within their own bodies, and through Jesus, with God. As an example, let us turn to the well-known story of Francis' encounter with the leper (italics are mine):

> One day while Francis was praying fervently to God, he *received* an answer: 'O Francis, if you want to know my will, you must *hate and despise all that which hitherto your body has loved and desired to possess*. Once you begin to do this, all that formerly seemed *sweet* and *pleasant* to you will become *bitter* and *unbearable;* and instead, the things that formerly made you *shudder* will bring you great *sweetness* and *content*'. Francis was divinely comforted and greatly encouraged by these words. Then one day, as he was riding near Assisi, he met a leper. He had always *felt an over-powering horror* of these *sufferers*; but making a great effort, he *conquered his aversion, dismounted*, and, in *giving the leper a coin*, *kissed his hand*. The leper then *gave him the kiss of peace*, after which Francis *remounted* his horse and *rode on his way*. From that day onwards he *mortified himself* increasingly until, through God's grace, he won a complete victory. Some days later he took a large sum of money to the leper hospital, and *gathering all the inmates together*, he *gave them alms*, *kissing each of their hands*. Formerly he could neither *touch* nor even *look* at lepers, but when he left them on that day, what had been so *repugnant* to him had really and truly been turned into something *pleasant*. (*L3C,* 11)[3]

At first sight, the impression may be that the errand to 'hate and despise all that your body has loved' turned Francis into an enemy of his own body; and,, at least to the physical tendencies of self-satisfaction and egoism, he was,. But when we read this citation more carefully, it appears that the encounter with the leper is a wholly bodily process. Not a word is spoken. Instead, orientation (*aversion*), position (*riding on a horse*), hearing, looking, tasting (*bitter* and *sweet*), and touching make Francis converse; not by a personal affirmation of a divine truth, but by a bodily and vile encounter with real life. And this is true for the whole spiritual life of Francis. His words are traces of gestures and experiences. If we want to understand him, i.e. *follow* him, we need to stay close to our living body, our flesh.

For how can we understand our living body? It avoids being approached as an object, for it is a subject: when you touch it, it feels you.[4] Therefore, I propose to approach the body as a living presence interacting with its environment.[5] By being bodily present, I am necessarily here and now (a *locus*), sensing both my environment (a *medium*) and a recognizable image (*imago*). My bodily presence interacts with *itself* (being there, growing), its *environment* (moving, sensing, working), and its '*otherness*' (others, myself as another, God). Combining the bodily presence and interactions, I come to nine transformations describing how my body, my environment, and my otherness are mutually shaped. The scheme of these transformations is thus formed that 1-4-7 correspond to destination, 2-5-8 to rendition, and 3-6-9 to communion. I will use this scheme as an instrument to describe how, following a Franciscan spirituality, our body is also shaped in the mutual relationship with the incarnated being of God.

A) Bodiliness as *Locus*	
1) Being I, here, now 2) Breathing in and out 3) Growth and decay	- A presence - A permanent interaction - A becoming
B) Bodiliness as *Medium*	
4) Moving/traveling 5) Perceiving 6) Working	- A vehicle - A sense organ - A working tool
C) Bodiliness as *Imago*	
7) Following 8) Recognizing 9) Sharing as a face-to-face encounter	- An example - Self-awareness - An *Imago Dei*

Following this scheme, we can distinguish Franciscan spiritual practices that transform the body into a *place* for inhabiting God, a *means* to serve the love of God, and an *image* of His beloved Son.[6]

A Dwelling Place for God

1. To Inhabit the World as Pilgrims and Strangers: The first

1 Carolyn Walker Bynum, The resurrection of the body in Western Christianity, 200-1336, New York: Columbia University Press, 1995.

2 Patrick Vandermeersch, *La chair de la passion: Une histoire de foi. La flagellation*, Paris: Cerf, 2002.

3 Abbreviations: 2LtF – Second Letter to the Faithful; Adm – Admonitions; ER – Earlier Rule or *Regula non bullata*; LR – Later Rule or *Regula bullata*; Test – Testament; 1C – Life of Saint Francis by Thomas of Celano; ScEx – Sacred Exchange between Saint Francis and Lady Poverty; L3C – Legend of the Three Companions; 2C – Remembrance of the Desire of a Soul; AC – Assisi Compilation; LFl – Little Flowers. All these documents can be found in *Francis of Assisi. Early Documents* [ed. by Regis J. Armstrong ofmcap, J.A. Wayne Hellmann ofmconv, William J. Short ofm], New York City Press, 1999, 2000, 2001. 3LAg – Third Letter to Agnes of Prague, in *Claire of Assisi: Early Documents* [ed. by Regis J. Armstrong ofmcap], New York City Press, 2006.

4 Maurice Merleau-Ponty, Phénoménologie de la perception, Gallimard 1945, p. 364, uses the image of one hand sensing the other hand, the one being the body subject (corps sujet) and the other the body as an object.

5 For those who read Dutch I refer to my *God aan den lijve ondervinden. Lichamelijke spiritualiteit volgens Franciscus en Clara van Assisi.* Leeuwarden: Discovery books, 2012; others may also read Bodily Presence. A Franciscan Vision, in *Studies in Spirituality* 24 (2014) 179-204.

6 In fact, I started with counting 'typical' Franciscan practices, and developed this scheme from them. Initially, the scheme was open, until I found a certain inner, and therefore closed, structure.

spiritual practice is that I am here and now bodily present in an environment. We can only know what is 'I', 'here', and 'now' by experiencing our bodily presence, for the body *is* the place where I am here and now. Our presence as a living body in the world, however, consists of a permanent interaction, which eventually makes it difficult to draw the line between the body and its environment. Is our breath, for example, a part of the environment or our body?[7] Francis did this in a specific way. After his encounter with the lepers, and the discovery of God's presence in the margins of society, Francis left the world (*Test,* 1-3). He refused to take the world in his possession (*LR,* 1:1). From then on, he committed his life to being a presence wherever was without claiming any particular place as his own. Through this proactive decision, he discovered that we bodily live in a growing community of brothers and sisters. The crown of this spirituality is the story of Lady Poverty asking the brothers to be shown their enclosure:

> Taking her to a certain hill, they showed her all the world they could see and said: 'This, Lady, is our enclosure'. [She said:] 'You are blessed by the Lord God Who made heaven and earth, my sons. You who have received me into your home with such a fullness of charity that it seems to me that today I am with you as in God's paradise'. (*ScEx*, 63-64)

2. To Fast and Pray in Chastity and Poverty: Breathing-eating-drinking is a primary interaction of the body with its environment. This interaction is only possible when the body is willing to let go without taking its environment into possession. The mutual exchange between the body and its environment is natural, as they belong to one another. Possession would be like a body that only inhales: it would not live long. So, in a sense, Francis' *vivere sine proprio* (*LR,* 1:1) is a consequence of following his body's way of living. An example of this is the practice of praying. Like breathing, prayer has a dialogical structure. When Francis is on the road, he asks the brother with whom he is travelling to say something in response to something Francis says; thus, they would be able to pray in dialogue without a breviary (*LFl,* IX). When he asks if God would approve of him praying all the time, Clare and Sylvester answer that the Lord wants him to go preaching among the people (LFl XVI). He does not own God and cannot keep His salvation for himself. In the realm of eating and fasting, Francis' spirituality follows his body's needs and the needs of his brother's body, as the story of eating grapes shows (*AC,* 50).

3. To Carry Christ: One of the most bodily forms of spirituality is the practice of carrying. The body is very capable of carrying: a child, a task, a candle, a blessing, pain, insults, and diseases. An example of this is Francis carrying Christ's wounds as stigmata in his body. Actually, carrying is allowing the other or 'otherness' to be at home in your body, which is a more fixed relation than the previously mentioned interaction. Edith van den Goorbergh and Theo Zweerman call carrying one the main characteristics of Franciscan spirituality.[8] But Francis' *vivere sine proprio* includes not only the practice of carrying, but also the art of letting go, which is the completion of the former..[9] No one and nothing should ever be kept in possession. But when the body allows the other and 'otherness' to be at home, its interaction with this otherness will make it grow. Together with the other, the individual body will start to form a community, a brotherhood of people belonging to each other. Francis, who keeps on carrying that which is not his possession, grows and the brotherhood grows with him. It is only when he becomes afraid of losing 'his' brotherhood that Christ corrects him: it is not 'your' brotherhood (*AC,* 112).

A Means to Serve the Love of God

4. To Travel By Foot: Our body is not only our here-and-now in an environment, but it also has the capacity to go through it, to perceive it, and to work in it. With my thoughts, I may be 'somewhere else', not noticing most things in my environment, but my body is very well aware of the environment, its temperature, its sounds and movements; and the living environment – the bird in my garden – is very well aware of me. As a medium, the body is a *moving* presence, an *attentive* presence, and a *forming* presence. It leaves traces of its presence in its environment, albeit just the lingering scent, thus transforming it into a living place. Of course, Francis' body was likewise present in his environment; but as a penitent, he used his bodily medium in the service of God. He went out in search of God, perceived the world with an evangelical heart, and served in God's garden. A decisive point in his life formation was when he heard the Gospel of Jesus sending out his disciples two by two without any protection or possession, 'to every town and village where he was about to go' (*1C,* 22; *ER,* 14:1-2). Francis decided to take these words as directed to himself: *his* ears listened and *his* feet went where the words and the footsteps of Jesus sent him. As a consequence, Francis and his brothers lived as pilgrims and strangers in this world (*LR,* 6:2), going 'where he was about to go', and calling people to do penance and to praise the Lord (*ER,* 21).

5. To Perceive the World in a Humble Way: As in all bodily practices, the penitential practice is different from others. The penitent is present somewhere, but without possessing the place; the penitent travels, but will walk barefoot. Also, the way in which a penitent perceives the world is different from the general public's perspective. The usual way of perceiving is focused on getting a grip on the environment.[10] How often has our hand grabbed a thing before our eyes have even seen it? If we look at it, how long can we look with a non-possessive tendency before we want to claim it as our own? If we do not want to possess it, is this not usually just because the thing does not seem agreeable to our taste, or we find it completely repulsive? Francis' conversion had been a true change of taste: what had once been bitter suddenly became sweet. From then on, Francis perceived his environment differently: not from *his* point of view, but as through God's eyes.

7 Timothy J. Johnson stresses this fundamental relational nature of the body in Medieval experience, in 'Only the Embrace of Sacred Poverty Delighted Them: Bodies, Possessions, and Franciscan Theologies', in A. Hilsebein, Th. Schimmel, B. Schmies, W.M. Speelman (eds.), *Poverty as a Problem and Poverty as a Path. Armut als Problem und Armut als Weg* (Aschendorff & Franciscan Institute Publications, Münster & Saint Bonaventure 2016) [forthcoming].

8 E. van den Goorbergh & T. Zweerman, *Was getekend: Franciscus van Assisi. Aspecten van zijn schrijverschap en brandpunten van zijn spiritualiteit*, Assen: Van Gorcum, 2002, 62-92. (Translated as *Respectfully yours: Signed and sealed, Francis of Assisi. Aspects of his authorship and focuses of his spirituality*, St. Bonaventure, NY 2001.)

9 Ibid., 83.

10 Merleau-Ponty, op. cit.

He saw nature as God's creation, which was *tob*, good (Gen 1:4); he did not look at the sins of priests but recognized God's Son in them, in the Sacrament, in churches, in the crucifix, etc.; he heard heavenly music (*2C,* 126) and saw devils above a town (*AC,* 108). In Francis' own words, his senses were directed by the Holy Spirit who dwelled in him (cf. *Adm,* 1:12).

6. To Work with Their Hands: The body works, and working it harmonizes its environment with itself. This is a reciprocal process, for the work shapes the body to its environment and the environment to the body. In his work, Francis remained in close connection to his humble self and to his environment. He worked with his hands (*Test,* 20) and he cared for the sick and expelled (*Test,* 2): two examples of the most bodily forms of work. There was no other goal in Francis' works than to serve God and keep the devil away (*ER,* 7:10; *LR,* 5). But work will inevitably leave traces of the self, so that people will recognize themselves in the work of their hands. One time, Francis had made a little vase, and experienced that this vase distracted his attention during prayer. He could not look at it with a simple eye (cf. Mt 6:22), because he saw himself, his vanity (*2C,* 97). It may be good to teach our children to be proud of their own work, but are we not thus raising them to look at themselves? A simple eye beholds the painting, but a complex eye is admiring "a Rembrandt."

An Image of His Beloved Son

7. To Follow the Footsteps of Christ: Having realized that I am bodily somewhere, and that my body moves through the world, I may discover that my body is following examples. Without thinking, children follow the movements of their parents and imitate them. The image of a children's choir imitating the movements of the director comes to mind. The body learns by following, most of all unconsciously. This following strengthens the relationship, for the parents will eventually recognize themselves in the movements of their children, and the children will feel recognized. Indeed, again, this may be a trap, for pride obscures the eye. But penitential spirituality uses this bodily transformation as a way to get closer to Christ, and to strengthen the relations between brothers and sisters. Francis followed the footsteps of Christ (*ER,* 1:1), but he also wanted to be an example himself (*Test,* 20-21; *2LtF,* 53). In the rule of the Friars, the bodily reality of their life practice is turned into a model.[11]

8. To Mirror the Image of Christ: When the perceiver recognizes himself in what he perceives, the perceived thing works as a mirror. People recognize themselves in their environment, and their environment recognizes them. Thus, we become conscious of who we are and how our environment sees us. But the penitential spirituality of Francis, and especially Clare of Assisi, has a different intention. They look in the mirror of Christ not in order to recognize themselves in Him, but to *become* like Him (*3LAg* 10-18). They develop a conscience of evangelical perfection. Ultimately, this evangelical perfection transforms them into who they are in the eyes of God: 'yes, good', that is, an *adam* 'and no more' (cf. *Adm,* 19:2).

9. To Live in Communion: When Adam saw Eve for the first time, he yelled, "Flesh of my flesh!" and later they became "one flesh" (Gen 2:23-24). It is the clearest expression of 'common sense', that when one person hurts his toe, the other *immediately* knows what he feels, because they are one flesh. Flesh is, in itself, oriented towards communion because it is what we have in common. But when we reconsider the previous transformations, we see the same thing: the body is growing, harmonizing its environment, and forming a community. The bodily practice of clothing is, especially in the case of the habit of the Friars Minor and the Poor Clares, connected to living in communion. Eventually, Francis discovered that all human beings are brothers and sisters, and the whole of Creation is a community. But the last two transformations go even further, for they show that Franciscan spirituality is directed towards communion with God, and that this communion is the affirmation that the human being is created in the image of God, who lives in the communion of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. In his *Canticle of Brother Sun*, Francis affirms that the Creation is a communion with God. But note that the Canticle addresses the *elements*, i.e., the *bodiliness* of the Creation: the Sun, the moon and the stars, wind, water, fire, the earth, and bodily death.

We share our bodiliness with other living creatures, but the human flesh is different from other creatures.[12] The human flesh *recognizes* itself as an incarnation of life. In the Christian tradition, the human being is believed to be a creation in the image of God and an incarnation of His Word: we are called to His life. He created us in His image and He shared with us His breath and His Word: in the first story God gives names to the creatures; in the second *adam* receives this task (Gn 2:19). The image, the breath, and the Word of God are connected to one another. The image is the *eikoon*. The *eikoon* is a face-to-face encounter of God and human. God shares His breathing countenance with us. By receiving His *eikoon* we are able to look like Him, *literally*: we lend our eyes to Him and look like He does. If we see the world as He does, we can see the things as creatures and recognize that they are indeed good. By receiving His countenance, we are able to speak like Him, and give names to the creatures (instead of merely driveling on about them).

A consequence of this faith is that our recognition of something as good, and our recognition of the Christ as Son of God must lead to the recognition that God's Spirit Himself is looking through our eyes (cf. Mt 16:17; *Adm,* 1:6.12). People say that beauty is in the eye of the beholder. Francis would respond that true beauty is in the eyes of God.

11 David Flood & Thaddée Matura, *The birth of a movement: A study of the First Rule of St. Francis*, Chicago: Franciscan Herald, 1975.

12 Michel Henry, *Incarnation. Une philosophie de la chair*. Paris: Seuil, 2000, p. 7.

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Franciscan Administration and Gospel Values

By Gregory Cellini, O.S.F.

Two Religious, members of their respective congregations' finance committees, were discussing a potential connection between theology and finances. One commented that a congregation's budget was both a financial statement and a theological statement. In reply, the other hotly retorted that attempting to make a connection between the Gospel and finance was like trying to mix oil and water.

As a Certified Public Accountant (CPA) in a global pharmaceutical company for almost 30 years before entering Franciscan life, I was well aware of how deeply ingrained the absolute separation was between finances and anything having to do with religious values.

But, once I became a Professed Franciscan Brother of Brooklyn and was elected to our congregation's finance committee, I started wondering about the existence of a connection between Gospel Values and the administration of temporal goods by a religious congregation. I realized that if I was going to effectively contribute to our finance committee and congregation, I needed to research the potential existence of such a link.

To determine the impact Gospel Values might have on the administration of temporal goods by a congregation, one needs to address four questions:

What are the key elements of administrating a congregation's temporal goods?

In which economic system should a congregation operate, and what are the Gospel Values of that system?

Should the Gospel Values of the desired economic system direct, interconnect with, and permeate the administrative structures of a congregation and, if so, why?

If the answer to question three is yes, then how do Gospel Values impact the major activities of administering a congregation's temporal goods?

To answer these questions, I assembled a "virtual" team of experts in religious life and the administration of temporal goods in religious congregations. The team consisted of Fr. David Couturier, OFM, Cap., Sister Clare D'Auria, OSF, Sister Nora Nash, OSF, and Sister Sandra Schneiders, IHM. Each of these experts was consulted on the above four questions. The insights of these experts provide the substance of this work.

Pope Francis and Temporal Administration

It is clear that Pope Francis is setting a new context and tone for understanding "temporal admistration" in the Church. His thoughts and personal example provide a humble and prophetic new starting point for all those discerning the form that their discipleship must take today. In an interview in the Italian journal, *La Civilta' Cattolica*, Pope Francis remarked: "Discernment is always done in the presence of the Lord, looking at the signs, listening to the things that happen, the feeling of the people, especially the poor. My choices, including those related to the day-to-day aspects of life, like the use of a modest car, are related to a spiritual discernment that responds to a need that arises from looking at things, at people and from reading the signs of the times." (Spadoro, September 2013)

And again, in a meeting with Religious a few months later, Pope Francis also said: " . . . Religious are men and women who light the way to the future." (Spadoro, 2013) Hopefully, this article will contribute to lighting the way, as we joyfully move together into the future of consecrated life.

Key Elements of Administrating Temporal Goods

In order to determine the link between Gospel Values and the administration of temporal goods by a congregation, we need to define the terms and scope of what is meant by the "administration of temporal goods." We will do this by asking four basic questions:

1. What is meant by "temporal goods?"
2. Which major activities does the administration of a congregation's temporal goods involve?
3. Who typically handles the administration of a congregation's temporal goods?
4. Why does a congregation administrate temporal goods?

First, temporal goods are items that a congregation has available for its use. A congregation's temporal goods include such things as: buildings, cash, equipment, investments, land, real estate, and vehicles.

Second, there are activities associated with the administration of the above temporal goods. These include annual, quarterly or occasional efforts such as: budgeting, funding of houses, fleet management, ministry oversight, collecting stipends of extra activities, financial reporting, facilities management, and helping those who are poor.

Additional activities involving temporal goods include recurring operations -such as paying bills and meeting payroll, human resource management, development and fundraising activities, investing, purchasing and contracting, and all activities related to the funding for the compassionate care of the sick and elderly of the congregation.

Third, these activities and processes must be administered. Religious congregations have one or more of the following offices and officials to handle these operations: a business office (to handle the financial management function of the congregation), a development/fundraising office, and a human resource department to handle personnel issues. An administrator or director may staff each of these offices or departments with appropriate staffs. Financial officers, whether lay or Religious, are usually held accountable by the "Treasurer General" of the congregation (or his/her equivalent), according to the specific norms of each congregation's Constitutions.

Fourth, the purpose of the administration of temporal goods in a religious congregation should be described forthrightly in the congregation's Constitutions and Statutes. In essence, that purpose is usually "to provide for the needs of [the congregation's] members." (Couturier, 2013) And those needs are, first and foremost, religious and theological in nature. D'Auria describes the fundamental purpose of temporal goods: "to further the mission of the Gospel according to the congregation's charism." (D'Auria, 2013) Nash offers that the purpose is to "facilitate and live the Gospel message of love." (Nash, 2013) Schneiders summaries the thought when she states: "The ongoing spiritual well-being of the congregation which enables its members to live Religious Life well and minister effectively, especially to those most in need." (Schneiders, 2013)

The administration of temporal goods has one overarching pur-

pose – to provide resources so the congregation can achieve its goals. As Schneiders remarks, "Administrative structures are means to an end." (Schneiders 2013) They are not ends in themselves.

The administration of temporal goods has two purposes:

1. Provide for the needs of its members, so they can live the Gospel according to the congregation's charism, and

2. Ensure the availability of resources, so the congregation can achieve its goals relating to core activities such as vocations, formation and compassionate care for its older/infirmed members.

Economic System in which Religious Congregations Operate

Every Religious congregation operates within an "economic system," and that system has implicit economic assumptions and a distinct theological vantage point. In her landmark presentation at the International Congress on Consecrated Life, Sandra Schneider discussed economic systems:

The Gospel says much about material goods, about our attitudes and behaviors in relation to them, and about the kind of world these attitudes and behaviors generate. . . . Lewis Hyde proposes that there are essentially two types of economy – i.e., two ways of organizing the use of material goods within a society – namely, commodity economy and gift economy.

In a commodity economy goods are seen as objects of ownership and the primary economic activity is acquisition. The object of economic behavior is to take as much as possible of the available goods out of circulation for private ownership. . . . Greed, covetousness, hoarding, conspicuous consumption, conflict and even the defense of one's goods at the expense of another's life if necessary are virtues in a commodity economy.

By contrast, in a gift economy, material goods are regarded first of all as that which we have received – from God, nature, family and community – and therefore that we, in turn, can give to others. The primary economic activity is keeping goods in circulation, contributing to the well being of the community through one's work, the use of one's talents, the sharing of one's material possessions. . . . The virtues that are admired in a gift economy are generosity, sharing, work, responsibility, simplicity and compassion for the less fortunate.

Needless to say, these economies are not morally equal. From the Christian standpoint, the commodity economy is clearly marked with…divisiveness; the gift economy provides a fertile substrate for the Gospel values of right relationships in a community of shared life. (Schneiders, Religious Life in the Future)

Amplifying the understanding of Religious Life's "gift economy," D'Auria argues that a "gift economy" is fundamentally different from our culture's prevailing "competitive economy:" "The approach of a gift economy is not based on the principle of supply/demand or the measuring of profit margins - two significant components of a competitive economy - nor on gaining or accumulating with the assumption that more is better. We have nothing by right and nothing that we have can really be 'earned.' The gift economy is the one described in the early Christian community as presented in the Acts of the Apostles." (D'Auria, 2013)

The gift economy modeled in the Gospel and Acts of the Apostles is the one in which Francis operated with his Brothers. Couturier offers, "The charism or central purpose of Franciscan life is 'Gospel brotherhood/sisterhood.' That is, Franciscans exist in the world to propose a form of life that is mutual, interdependent, cooperative, collaborative, in truth, charity and solidarity. Franciscan economics must serve and be served by our Gospel form of brotherhood. Our poverty must increase, not decrease, our solidarity with one another and with those who are poor and vulnerable of this world." (Couturier, 2013)

The difference between the two "economies" under consideration is often the difference between dynamics of ownership and the dynamics of usage. Couturier continues, "Gospel brotherhood offers the brothers [and sisters] maximum freedom. By stressing 'use' and not 'ownership,' friars [Religious] are less protective, insular and rigid in their manipulation of the goods of the earth. A Franciscan 'use' mentality unleashes new streams of creativity and generosity. A protection mode gives way to a new manner of magnanimity. The history of religious economics testifies to this burst of creativity whenever Religious reform their lives and return to principles and policies of 'usage' versus 'ownership.'" (Couturier, 2013)

The contrast between the key aspects of commodity and gift economies:

Aspect	Commodity Economy	Gift Economy
View of Goods	Objects of Ownership	Objects to Give Others
Primary Activity	Acquisition	Keeping Goods in Circulation
Object of Behavior	Private Ownership	Ownership Relative to Needs of Others
Social Status/Power	Person Who Owns More	One Who Contributes Most
Values/Virtues	Greed, Covetousness, Hoarding, Conspicuous Consumption, Conflict, Defense of Goods	Generosity, Sharing, Work, Responsibility, Simplicity, Compassion for the Less Fortunate, Use versus Ownership

Link between Gospel Values and Temporal Goods Administration

The Gospel Values prevalent in a gift economy (over an exclusively commodity-based economy) include Generosity, Sharing, Work, Responsibility, Simplicity, Compassion for the Less Fortunate and, in Franciscan congregations, Use versus Ownership.

The next question to address is whether these Gospel Values of the gift economy should direct, interconnect with, and permeate the administration of a congregation's temporal goods and, if so, why? Schneiders states, "congregations should be, even in their administration, models of Gospel Values. The charism of the congregation, its spirituality, should permeate its structures as well as its behaviors, its choices of ministries, its treatment of its members, etc." (Schneiders, 2013)

Couturier delves specifically into Franciscan congregations. He states, "All administrative structures are run by tacit assumptions (either implicit or explicit). Franciscan administrative structures can run by the 'assumptions of the market' or they can be guided by sound Franciscan principles. Policies informed by Franciscan principles should govern all financial decisions." (Couturier, 2013)

Couturier elaborates in this regard. "Why use Franciscan principles and Franciscan spirituality? The original intent of Francis was to create a community of brothers (and sisters) who would be freed from the debilitating greed and violence of the economy of his day. He wanted to create a brotherhood and a model of society that was more secure, not less secure, in the face of the dangers he had experienced. Franciscan values protect the dignity of the human person, recognize the goodness of God, advance freedom, encourage creativity, and make for a more peaceful and secure world. The aggressive and competitive economic models today do not." (Couturier, 2013)

Nash echoes these thoughts by boldly proclaiming:

Franciscan spirituality must absolutely direct, interconnect and

permeate even the administrative structures of its congregations! We need to be Franciscan and proclaim our Franciscan values in everything we do, every position we hold, every entity we administer. Though many of our structures at this time are facilitated by lay folks, the mission of the congregation remains. We need to remind ourselves that, in a Gospel text from Mark 10, we find a story that can leave us very uncomfortable.…'There is one more thing you must do. Go and sell what you have and give to the poor; you will then have treasure in heaven.' Both Jesus and Francis warned us about the dangers of riches; the dangers of letting worldly goods become our treasure. (Nash, 2013)

From both Biblical reference and an understanding of what Francis intended to create, it appears Franciscan congregations should be reflecting on the Gospel Values of the gift economy to direct, interconnect with, and permeate all actions and processes - in particular, the administrative ones - which drive so much other action.

Impact of Gospel Values on Major Activities of the Administration of Temporal Goods

Now that we have established there are specific "gospel values" that adhere to the temporal administration of goods, we ask how these values apply specifically to the core activities of that administration.

Budgeting: A congregation's budget is not only a plan of how it is going to spend available resources, but a litmus test of its priorities. D'Auria states, "Any family knows its priorities by how it spends its money. We know what is important by where and with whom we choose to spend our resources." (D'Auria, 2013)

Schneiders points out a congregation's budget must reflect its values "The same way any budget does. That's a fundamental principle of Catholic Social Teaching. A budget (that of a nation, a company or business, a school, a family, an individual, etc.,) reflects an individual's or a group's values. If the budget is structured by selfishness, greed, anxiety, etc., it says that this is what this person/group values. If it is structured by responsibility for the use of material resources for ministry, care of members, generosity, sharing, etc., it says that these are the values of the person/group who constructed that budget." (Schneiders, 2013)

As part of the budgeting process, a congregation needs to hold the mirror up to itself to ensure its budget reflects Gospel Values. Nash states, "It has been said that, to know what your ultimate values are, examine how you will spend/use your resources. So…does my/our spending speak to Gospel living and furthering the Word of God among God's people? If not, why not…and what does that say about us." (Nash, 2013)

A budget rooted in gospel values is both financial and theological. Couturier explains this duality:

> The budget is both a financial statement and a theological statement. It is a financial statement in that it is a record of the expenses and revenues of the congregation - in that sense, it is a simple document of economic 'facts' and 'figures.' But, budgets are also about discretion and decision. They reflect where the congregation decides to spend its money and to use its resources. It tells the tale of a congregation's activity (both in its revenue and expenses). Therefore, it is a theological statement of priorities – how the congregation spends its time and its resources. It is a record of its pastoral priorities and its theological emphases. (Couturier, 2013)

Funding of Houses: The majority of congregations provide funding to their houses based on the budgeted needs of the occupants, so they can live the Gospel according to the congregation's charism. Excess funds are returned to the congregation at the end of each fiscal year; if needed, the congregation covers a funding shortfall from its savings. A few Franciscan congregations have decided to allocate funds to each House based on the salaries of the occupants.

Couturier questions this strategy:

> The fundamental question of money in a Franciscan house is this: Whose money is this? Does the money belong to the individuals who earn it? Or does the money belong to the whole congregation? If money belongs only to the individuals who earn it, those who earn more become entitled to a better lifestyle and have more access to the 'things of this world.' They are more privileged. They may (or may not) be more benevolent, but the system itself creates and maintains zones of dependency and artificial forms of largesse. In essence, the inequality embedded in the system increases insecurity and competition, the very opposite of what Francis intended. (Couturier, 2013)

Nash and D'Auria both concur that the salaries of a house's occupants should not influence funding received. Nash offers, "As Franciscans, we are called to share all in common, so I believe that to allocate funds based on income would be out of alignment with Franciscan values. Some, because of ministry, might need more, e.g., the CEO of a hospital may need more clothing, money for ministry, etc. This would, I believe, be in line with our values. Were this to be the policy, I believe it could cause dissension and set some apart from others." (Nash, 2013) D'Auria succinctly expresses her sentiments by stating, "Thankfully, our congregation has not done this for years." (D'Auria, 2013)

Fleet Management: Many congregations use a centralized fleet strategy by which the finance department responsible for their administration handles vehicle acquisition and disposal. When a member needs a vehicle, the fleet is reviewed to see if an existing vehicle can be transferred to him/her.

Sometimes an assumption is made that every driver in a House needs a vehicle; however, this may not always be the case. During Novitiate, I attended a course taught by Brother Don Bisson, FMS, who lived in a Friary housing four Brothers. Although his congregation could afford for each to have a car, they decided to intentionally request only three. Bisson recalls, "We decided that having to negotiate cars would be a higher value than the convenience of each of us having our own. This proved to be true - we had to talk, not identifying any car as mine. We were not borrowing cars from each other, as we did not own our own. This is very important, for sharing and caring for community goods." (Bisson, 2013)

Some Franciscan congregations allow members to purchase cars with their own money and have exclusive use of the vehicle. This can impact fraternal life.

Couturier passionately points out the implications of having such a policy:

> Purchasing a car can simply be an administrative act on behalf of the congregation. Use of cars in a Franciscan community allows an individual to carry out the mission of the congregation. Private ownership includes the danger of setting up and maintaining a competitive system based on artificial access which points to wealth and privilege. Ownership allows some to have and

> others to go without, all in the name of 'Gospel brotherhood.' It is the shame of those Franciscan congregations around the world that are divided not only by culture and language, but by imbedded structures of 'economic disparity' that Franciscan Orders themselves maintain. Ownership holds the danger of developing tiers of the haves and the have-nots within a congregation. It reduces the incentives to work with and among those who are poor. (Couturier, 2013)

Allowing vehicle ownership can also hamper relationships between congregation members. D'Auria states, "Permitting ownership of cars lessens our need for one another — our healthy inter-dependency on one another. We become individuals with unarticulated rights and privileges which, when threatened, become sources of tension and conflict within the congregation." (D'Auria, 2013) Bisson adds, "I believe that in congregations in which a member is allowed to own their own car and enjoy exclusive use, the quality of community life plummets." (Bisson, 2013)

Ministry Oversight: Ministry done by a Religious has little to do with earning money and much to do with sharing the talents loaned them by God. In the gift economy, work should not be an option for those who are capable.

Religious may need to occasionally remind themselves why they work. An excellent framework regarding work is contained in The Franciscan Third Order Regular Rule. Fr. Anthony Criscitelli, TOR, suggests this Rule offers the following five guidelines or principles that should always be present in ministry:

1. Work is a way we identify with those who are poor.
2. We should be willing to engage in manual/menial work.
3. By our work, we give good example.
4. We work to provide for ourselves, others and our ministries.
5. Whatever we have over and above our needs we should give to those who are poor.

Collecting Stipends from Extra Activities: Most congregations treat earnings from extra activities, e.g., coaching a sports team, as it does "regular" income earned by its members. The money goes to and remains with the congregation.

A few congregations allow their members to keep a portion of these monies.

Nash concurs with these funds going to the congregation. She offers, "If the money earned were to be put back into the needs of the coach, e.g., transportation, special clothing for himself/herself or one of those on the team who has no resources for these things, it may be acceptable. So unless there are extenuating circumstances, I do not think it aligns with our values." (Nash, 2013)

Schneiders validates this position. According to her, "If it results in people developing money-making projects on the side that impede their ministries or their participation in community life or if it creates a sense of proprietorship or inequity among members, etc., it could be problematic." (Schneiders, 2013) D'Auria proclaims, "Thankfully, we have never been allowed to keep these monies." (D'Auria, 2013)

Financial Reporting: Experience as a CPA taught me that information is not a finished product, but an intermediate in the decision making process. The financial reporting system is established to support key decisions the congregation needs to make.

One essential attribute of a financial reporting system is transparency. Couturier explains, "Transparency is a principle of openness and trust. It is fundamental for a just system that promotes mutual accountability. A religious system is 'transparent' or it is not. There are not degrees of transparency." (Couturier, 2013)

Transparency in its financial reporting is a microcosm of the transparency which should pervade the entire congregation. According to Schneiders, transparency in financial reporting has, "The same role it should have in everything in a congregation. A congregation should be a trust-based social system of people who love one another. If secrecy or dissimulation or withholding of information (all of which are power tactics), etc., are endemic to a congregation, it has much more serious problems than money. It needs to learn what it means to be a congregation of mutual trust and openness." (Schneiders, 2013)

The annual report is an important component of financial reporting and source of transparency. D'Auria notes, "It is essential that members receive an annual report from the congregation which makes clear both the sources of income and how this income has been used. Such information offers both confirmation and challenge to the kind of life style members live on a daily basis." (D'Auria, 2013)

Transparency with temporal goods has non-financial positive by-products for the congregation. Nash points out "I firmly believe that people will respond more readily and more positively when they have a handle on situations and resources available. We are well informed of decisions made by the congregation in relation to property, housing, etc. We also have input into the annual financial report and the details in this report are very transparent and truly call us to ongoing accountability and Franciscan awareness of our way of life." (Nash, 2013)

From my experience on our Finance Committee, I discovered the budget is another financial tool that can increase transparency, collaboration and trust. Sharing the approved budget with all members provides a clear indication on how the congregation plans to allocate its resources during the upcoming fiscal year, reducing speculation and rumors.

Facilities Management: The Gospel Value of Use versus Ownership especially applies to facilities. Although Jesus and his Apostles were pilgrims and strangers in this world with nowhere to lay their heads, it can be easy for Religious to become attached to where they live, especially when they reside at the same location for 10 years, 20 years or even longer.

Shortly after my First Profession, I found myself often saying, "my house," and "my room". To remedy this, I had to resort to putting a "Guest" sign on the door to remind myself this was the room I currently occupied in a house where I currently lived, and I could be transferred at a moment's notice. Congregations may wish to consider setting a limit on the duration of time a member can live in the same residence to reduce development of an ownership mentality.

Congregations sometimes find it difficult to decide whether to purchase or rent a facility. According to Couturier, purchasing versus renting "needs to be balanced by the question of long-term savings. It is often more economical to buy versus rent." (Couturier, 2013)

Regardless of whether a facility is owned, it needs to be properly used and maintained. Nash believes, "It is in keeping with our values and our call as Franciscans to care for creation that we would take very good care of any property that we use; in addition, it would be critical that the use of our property be in line with our values." (Nash, 2013) D'Auria adds, "Such property should be administered in a way that evidences good stewardship while maintaining simple beauty." (D'Auria, 2013)

Serving Those Who Are Poor: With Pope Francis' emphasis on a transformed Church being of those who are poor for those who are poor, assisting those who are less fortunate is expected to become an even higher priority for congregations. According to Nash, "Jesus

called us to serve our brothers and sisters who are poor and He used parables, e.g., the beggar at the pool, to teach us how to serve others. These stories call us to conversion and motivate us to take on the attitude of Christ, Francis and Clare, and to 'Gaze upon the Lord.'" (Nash, 2013)

Therefore, each congregation will need to rethink its process by which it can best utilize temporal goods to serve those who are poor. Nash continues, "Congregations have always been active in many aspects of community needs. Pope Francis' emphasis on being with those who are alienated in any way is 'further raising the bar.' Congregations are energized by this because it gives greater witness to those areas of being Church, which they have always embraced. Pope Francis will expect congregations to get outside of their comfort zones by responding with new emphasis on charism and be reaffirmed in serving those who are poor." (Nash, 2013)

Nash believes in the Franciscan adage, 'In God's Kingdom, money grows by giving it away.' There are several ways a congregation can accomplish this. One is to make monetary contributions to those who are poor in appropriate circumstances, with the knowledge there will be no abuse of the funds and proper accountability. A second way is to establish a foundation by activating donors to contribute to the various needs of the congregation's ministries - the assets from the foundation are distributed according to the promotion of a particular ministry or need. Finally, a "Mission Fund" can be established which enables members to minster in a variety of ways. The Fund allows the member to participate in a ministry that doesn't have the money to pay his/her salary.

In all these major activities of administrating temporal goods, member participation is a critical success factor. Participation helps build member interest, buy-in, accountability and communion.

Communion comes from relationships which come from conversations. Couturier offers, "If one agrees that the resources of the congregation belong to the congregation, then participation and dialogue are critical for trust, fairness and justice. In order to obviate pockets of privilege, the congregation must institute greater levels of accountability." (Couturier, 2013) D'Auria adds, when consultation and collaboration with the members is appropriate, the congregation needs to have processes in place to facilitate this kind of conversation, e.g., when deciding to purchase or sell significant properties. (D'Auria, 2013)

Nash concurs by stating, "Participation in administrating temporal goods is critical, particularly when the issue involves a large amount of money, property, or affects the entire congregation. It is becoming more important as members age and find it necessary to be in tune with the needs of our congregation. Being aware of trends and planning for the future is the responsibility of all congregation members and, when each person participates, each has a stake in the future." (Nash, 2013)

Nevertheless, a congregation must be careful to balance participation with trust. Schneiders points out "Full participation is the default position in a community of free people in a voluntary society (which is what a congregation should be). It is a value that has to be balanced with other values. Congregations choose, elect and appoint people to administration on the basis of common need and talents and those so appointed should do what they are appointed to do without making their work everybody's work. Members should be able to trust that those they have elected to various offices are carrying out their duties honestly, openly, and responsibly." (Schneiders, 2013)

Leadership must be careful to not make all decisions without consultation with membership. Schneiders warns, "When it comes to major decisions like selling the motherhouse, closing a major ministry, buying large properties, going into joint arrangements with other groups or entities, etc., 'best practices' suggests that as many of the congregation's members as possible should be involved in the decision making process." (Schneiders, 2013)

Conclusion

As a result of the above findings, it is apparent a connection exists between Gospel Values and the administration of temporal goods by a congregation. This is not surprising.

What may be unexpected is the impact the administration of its temporal goods can have on the congregation's culture, i.e., values, behaviors and norms. Decisions made by congregation regarding the administration of its temporal goods can facilitate creation of a culture of fairness, harmony, interdependence and trust….or one of tiers, dissension, independence and insecurity.

A congregation integrating Gospel Values into the administration of its temporal goods can help bring about its desired results. This perfectly aligns with the saying, "All organizations are perfectly designed to get the results they get."

The Franciscan Morning and Evening Praise book contains the petition: "For all Franciscans – may their commitment to gospel values help them to be lights of hope in the world." Committing to Gospel Values when administrating its temporal goods will help congregations ensure Religious men and women continue to light the way to the future.

Endnotes:

America, September 30, 2013. From an exclusive interview with Pope Francis by Antonio Spadoro, S.J., of *La Civilta Cattolica*.

"Wake Up the World!" pg. 5, *Conversation with Pope Francis about the Religious Life*, Antonio Spadoro, S.J., original text in Italian *La Civilta Cattolica* 2014 I 3 -17, translated into English by Fr. Donald Maldari, S.J. From a conversation of the Holy Father with the Union of Superiors General of religious men at the end of their 82 Assembly in November of 2013.

Passion for Christ, Passion for Humanity, International Congress on Consecrated Life, pages 197 – 199.

Interview with Father David Couturier, OFM, Cap. was conducted on April 5, 2013. Father David's many writings include Franciscans and their Finances: Economics in a Disenchanted World (St. Bonaventure, NY: Franciscan Institute Publications, 2015).

Interview with Sister Clare D'Auria, OSF was conducted on April 2, 2013. Sister Clare is a Sister of St. Francis of Philadelphia and serves on the retreat staff of the Franciscan Spiritual Center in Aston, Pennsylvania.

Interviews with Sister Nora Nash, OSF were conducted on May 27, 2013 and again on September 24, 2013. Sister Nora is the Director of Corporate Social Responsibility for the Sisters of St. Francis of Philadelphia.

Interview with Sister Sandra Schneiders, IHM was conducted on April 7, 2013. Sister Sandra's latest book, Buying the Field, published in July 2013.

Quotes from Brother Don Bisson, FMS obtained June 24, 2013.

Quote from Fr. Anthony Criscitelli, TOR obtained January 18, 2014.

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