



the CORD

A FRANCISCAN SPIRITUAL REVIEW

VOL. VII, NO. 1, JANUARY, 1957

the CORD

A monthly magazine specifically devoted to Franciscan spirituality is published under the sponsorship of the Franciscan Educational Conference by The Franciscan Institute, St. Bonaventure University, St. Bonaventure P. O., New York. Editor: Eligius Buytaert, O.F.M., Assistant Editor: Sister Mary Frances, S.M.I.C. Managing Editor: Innocent Daam, O.F.M. Editorial Board: Ignatius Brady, O.F.M., Columban Duffy, O.F.M., Allan Wolter, O.F.M. Annual subscription, \$2.00.

Entered as second class matter on November 25, 1950, at St. Bonaventure P.O., New York, under Act of March 3, 1879. All communications, whether of a business or a literary nature, should be addressed to The CORD, St. Bonaventure University, St. Bonaventure P. O., New York. *Cum permissu superiorum.*

VOL. VII, NO. 1, JANUARY, 1957

CONTENTS

✓RENOVATIO ACCOMMODATA.....	1
<i>Fr. Pius J. Barth, O.F.M., Minister Provincial</i>	
✓THE MONTHLY CONFERENCE.....	5
<i>Fr. Allan B. Wolter, O.F.M.</i>	
✓FRANCIS, APOSTLE AND CATHOLIC.....	14
<i>Fr. Barnabas M. Kannenburg, O.F.M.Conv.</i>	
✓SYNTHESIS OF THE THEOLOGY OF DUNS SCOTUS.....	17
<i>Fr. Marianus Mueller, O.F.M.</i>	
DIEGO DE ESTELLA: HOW LOVE BEARS US TO GOD.....	25
<i>By E. Allison Peers (Transl.)</i>	
✓DISCUSSION.....	27
<i>Fr. Joseph Montalverne, O.F.M.</i>	
FIFTH EDUCATIONAL MEETING.....	31
POEMS:	
✓Francis in Ecstasy <i>By Sr. Anthony Marie, O.S.F.</i>	4
✓Parched Land <i>By Robert Lax</i>	30
✓Triolet <i>By Sr. Florian Eggleston, O.S.F.</i>	32

THE CORD

A FRANCISCAN SPIRITUAL REVIEW
Volume VII. 1957

RENOVATIO ACCOMMODATA

(RENEWAL AND ACCOMMODATIONS)

Sermon given by Very Rev. PIUS J. BARTH, O.F.M., Minister Provincial of the Province of the Sacred Heart, St. Louis, Mo. at the High Mass opening the Fifth National Meeting of Franciscan Sisterhoods at the Cathedral of St. Raymond Nonnatus, Joliet, Ill. November 23-24, 1956.

"Let us begin now, brethren, for as yet we have done nothing" (St. Francis).

At the direction of His Eminence Valerio Cardinal Valeri, the major Religious Superiors of the United States met in Washington, D. C. on September 27, 1956 and set up a permanent organization. While there are many obvious advantages to such an organization, it seemed to your participant that the major purpose of the new organization is to exchange ideas and practices on the renewal of the spirit of our Holy Founder and to determine areas and levels of accommodating that spirit to modern times. As Pope Pius XII told us, "You must serve the cause of Jesus Christ and His Church as the world today requires." But charting the "renewal" of our spirit and determining "acomodation" to modern conditions is not enough. Above all there must be renewed motivation.

Saint Francis adopted the Gospel!!! Then only did he adapt the Gospel (vetera) to his own day (nova). In his day of knight-hood and chivalry he thus gave the Gospel an original freshness. To us study Franciscan history, we also find that the history of Franciscan reforms was one of adaptation of perennial spirit of the Gospel to new conditions. Thus from the very day of Saint Bonaventure who organized a loosely-knit body of men into an Order which he called the "Ordo Studentium" until the present day, the Franciscans have been able to adapt themselves to changing demands of Mother Church as true ministers of Christ. There is no special law to work the Mother Church's will. It is the will of the followers of Christ, the Lord, who is the source of all life and grace.

The Holy Father wants us to be "healthily modern". A reasonable authoritative adaptation of our manner of life and living in these United States is in no way a compromise of our religious principles, nor a compromise of our Franciscan spirit. Rather it is a progressive development and intensive application of those principles and that spirit to the contemporary scene. Let us listen to our Supreme Pontiff. On December 8, 1950 Pope Pius XII clearly and emphatically admonished the religious assembled in Rome as follows:

"When young people hear such expressions as 'We should be modern' and 'Our labors should be adapted to the times', they begin to be on fire with unusual enthusiasm and fervor, and if they are worthy fighters in the ranks of the religious state, because of this fervor they desire most intensely to transform the great endeavors of their future religious work. In a certain sense this is indeed reasonable. For it has generally happened that the founding fathers of each religious institute have thought out their own new system in order that they might come to grips with those pressing obligations and needs of the Church which admit of no delay; thus their undertakings were in accord with their times. If you wish to follow their example, as they have done so do you also. Study the trends of thought, the decisions, the conduct of your contemporaries with whom you live and whatever you find good and profitable make use of as something precious; otherwise you will not be able to enlighten and help to life up and lead on your fellowmen."

Personally, I was amazed at this startling exhortation of the Holy Father and I made doubly sure it was authoritative (Acta Apost. Sedis, 42, pp 26-36: Transl. by Grail Press p. 22).

Father Connell reminds us that historical facts confirm this admonition of the Vicar of Christ. "When a religious institute is excessively conservative, when accidental elements of rule and custom are treated as equally important with the basic principles on which the Order or Congregation was founded, the organization will decline either in spirit or in numbers, but most probably in both. It is most undesirable to have ordinances and rules which are only theoretically binding, yet are out of touch with reality so that they cannot be observed and perhaps become an object of ridicule to the members. Customs, rules and ordinances should be observed, or modified, yes, but not abrogated lest all regulation and each provision for order be lost in low esteems and of no moment."

As promising as a new day and as hopeful as a second Spring is the spirituality of our Holy Father Saint Francis. Not only in nature but also in the supernatural realm our Founder sought renewal of

that spiritual freedom which places responsibility squarely upon the individual religious.

Our Franciscan theological synthesis teaches us that the greatest motivation to use freedom of the spirit responsibly is the love of God, both the love of God for Himself and the love of friendship whereby we love God for what He has done for us. Who loves God will wish that God be loved by others. Motivation for spiritual renewal is well expressed by Saint Paul, "The love of Christ impels us" (2 Cor. 5, 14).

Discussions at Rome, Notre Dame, Washington and Santa Barbara may arouse headlines stressing external adaptation in dress, modern equipment and buildings, use of modern means of transportation and communication, academic and professional degrees, but more important and fundamental is the provident free renewal of the religious spirit. The Holy Father wants us to be healthily modern. That means, in the mind of Montalembert, that we should meditate on the spirit of our Founder to determine how his spirit would have influenced twentieth century living. We cannot be Saint Francis, we cannot live in his time, but we can practicalize, reduce to action and particularize for our second half of the twentieth century the spirit and ideals of our Seraphic Father.

The history of religious orders through the centuries reveals modification of primitive and reformed rules, adaptations to meet varying conditions in diverse nations, cultures and geographic regions. The secret of lasting success is the permanence of the original ideal but flexibility in the application of that religious ideal. The Franciscan spirit breathes universal and immortal life but worship of form and letter under changing conditions may lead to externalism, hypocrisy, inactivity and even decadence.

The primary purpose of the movement called "Renewal and Accommodation" must be to deepen the religious life. It is no mitigation of community discipline; it is a corporate movement led by duly authorized superiors. Doing what our Founder would do if we were alive today means that we must be contemporary in our poverty and in our lives of sacrifice. The spirit of the world must never be confused with accommodating religious spirit to modern times. They are directly opposed to one another. Our religious must be well-balanced in intellectual piety and in love with the beauty of God's truth. Spiritual formation, professional and technical preparation must dovetail to produce the complete religious person whose sense of values is developed and power of choice sufficiently mature to stand the pace of modern active life. The apostolate today requires depth in spirituality but also height in the shining light of professional leadership.

Religious life in the supernatural order enables the generous person to attain complete self-realization through genuine growth in maturity, wisdom and balance. Holiness is its fruit and develops through character improvement as the soul is inspired by grace as it aspires to spiritual perfection.



FRANCIS IN ECSTASY

"My God and my All!"
 Earth falls away along a comet's path,
 He kneels on air, on mist,
 His heart locked in Thy Hands,
 Divinely being kissed.
 "My God and my All!
 Who art Thou—there—my Lord?
 Who am I—here?"
 His angel wonders what is love
 And what is flaming fear.
 "My God and my All!"
 It is not night nor day,
 (Was there ever a sun or moon?)
 There is only a fiery urgency,
 A sigh, half-mute, half-importune:
 "My God and my All!"
 He would return Thy kiss,
 And dwindle in Thy arms, lost
 In his All, whelmed in such bliss
 He must lean back, so great
 The sweet ethereal weight
 Of all Thy joy!
 And that loud cry mounts up
 Among the Sanctuses of Heaven:
 "My God and my All!"

Sister Anthony Marie, O.S.F.

THE TWO FINAL BEATITUDES

Fr. Allan B. Wolter, O.F.M.

We centered our series of conferences about those words of John, "God is love and he who abides in love abides in God and God in him" (I Jn. 4:16). As a human being and still more as a child of God and intimate friend or religious bride of Christ, you are the product of love's creativity and your very need to love in return betrays both the mark of your maker and the nature of your destiny. Through sin, creative love is scorned and we catalogued the consequences of this refusal to abide in love. For the individual it spells misery and death in this life and creates hell and purgatory in the next. Socially this selfishness crucifies both God and man, and its ravages present us with a continual challenge to change our world for the better. It was Christ's redemptive love that first met this challenge of sin. He died that we might live, or better, that He might be reborn in each of us through sanctifying grace and habitual charity. But if this new Christ-life is seeded in our soul at baptism, only our cooperation will permit it to mature "to perfect manhood, to the measure of the fullness of Christ" (Eph. 4: 15). As Paul puts it, "We are to practice the truth in love and so grow in all things in Him who is the head, Christ" (ibid, 13). The basic truths which if practiced in love can effect this transformation are given in the beatitudes. In the poverty of our spirit lies our only real claim to His merciful love. Through the meekness it engenders we shall possess the promised land. If the sight of our sinfulness makes us mourn, Christ Himself will be our comfort. And the warmth of His love will thaw our cold hearts and stir up in us a fierce hunger and thirst for holiness. Purity of heart which is nothing else than the interior life of love, enables us to see God in everything we do and to live for Him alone.

The two final beatitudes remain to be considered. The seventh reflects the external fruit of the soul's hidden love life. "Blessed are the peacemakers for they shall be called the children of God" (Mt. 5:9). Francis, we know, considered peacemaking his special mission, for he lived in a day when province warred against province, city leuded against city, the nobility with the townsfolk, the *majores* with the *minores*, the Church with civil authorities. Bishop Felder describes his crusade as "the greatest peace movement ever launched" (Ideals of St. Francis, ch. 14).

We too must be peacemakers if we would be called the children of God and Francis. From its very beginnings, however, the Franciscan peace crusade has always been a natural consequence of seraphic charity. The little poor man of Assisi dates his own conversion from the day he kissed the leper and discovered the real meaning of those words of Christ: "And all you are brothers!" (Mtt. 23:8). "Brothers," *fratres minores*, was the official name he gave his first order, for he wished it to recapture in a signal way the charity Christ made the characteristic mark of His own. "By this will all men know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another" (Jo. 13: 35). The peace Francis desired them to bring to the world was simply the Christ in their midst, for as Paul told the Ephesians, "He Himself is our peace" (2:14). And what is the Franciscan apostolate but to make peace in the sense of that apostle, "to re-establish all things in Christ" (Eph. 1:10), to restore the bonds of love between man and his fellowman, between mankind and God, which sin's selfishness had severed? That is why we can identify the task of peacemaking with the practice of fraternal charity.

Much more could and should be said on this important topic. But since this is the last conference of this series and we have yet to consider the final beatitude, we shall content ourselves with these few observations. Earlier (April issue) we indicated that our destiny as a Franciscan community is to love one another "even more earnestly than a mother nourishes and loves her child in the flesh" (Regula O.F.M., ch. 6). Now we become peacemakers precisely to the extent we extend this charity towards our religious confreres to all our brothers in Christ. "Let no one be roused to wrath or insult on your account," says Francis. "Everyone should rather be moved to peace, goodwill and mercy as a result of your gentleness. For we have been called for this purpose, to heal the wounded, to bind the bruised, to recall those gone astray" (Tres socii, n. 58).

We are counseled by our Holy Founder to approach all with the "greeting of peace" (Rule). Even more important perhaps than any fixed formula or verbal salutation is that wordless greeting of peace we should have for everyone we meet—a warm and friendly attitude born of genuine interest and Christ-like concern for their welfare.

If our peace greeting, especially in this last form, is to ring true, however, we must carry Christ's peace in our own heart. "Even as you proclaim peace with your lips," cautions Francis, "be careful to have it more fully in your heart" (Tres socii, n. 58).

And this brings us to the last beatitude: "Blessed are they who suffer persecution for justice' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heav-

" (Mtt. 5:10). For "they are truly peacemakers," explains the Poverello, "who amidst all they suffer in this world maintain peace in soul and body for the love of our Lord Jesus Christ" (Admonitions, n. 15).

One of the effects of sin, we said, was to make the practice of virtue difficult. In striving for the justice or sanctity that is perfect love, we shall invariably meet with opposition, resistance, persecution, both from the selfishness of our own nature as from that of others. Heaven is not won without a struggle. As Christ tells us, "From the days of John the Baptist until now, the kingdom of heaven has been enduring violent assault, and the violent have been seizing it by force" (Mtt. 11, 12).

Indeed, can we ever claim to have truly loved Christ until we have embraced Him on the cross and felt the nails pierce our own flesh? Of the just Scripture says: "God tried them and found them worthy of Himself, as gold in the furnace, He proved them, and as sacrificial victims He took them to Himself" (Wisdom 3, 5-6). In truth this beatitude represents the culmination or perfection of the love we have been studying. "Greater love than this no one has that one lays down his life for his friends" (Jn. 15:13). Seraphic charity, we know, reaches its perfection in the desire for martyrdom. This is the significance of that final chapter of the First Order Rule. Having traced successively the steps of spiritual growth from the moment one first wished "by divine inspiration to embrace this manner of life", to the stage where he has "the spirit of the Lord and his holy operation, praying to Him always with a pure heart, with humility and patience amid persecution and infirmity," Francis speaks of those who "wish by Divine inspiration to go among the Saracens and other infidels." We know in his own case it was much the desire for martyrdom as zeal for souls that prompted Francis to visit the Sultan. It is often easier to die for Christ, however, than to live for Him. And if we are not all called to a martyrdom of blood, we are invited to that white martyrdom that is inseparable from the perfect service of God. "Unto this, indeed, you have been called, because Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example that you may follow in His steps" (I Peter 2: 21). This was the truth Christ longed to share with His apostles that night before He died. "Many things yet I have to say to you, but you cannot bear them now. But when He, the Spirit of Truth, has come, He will teach you all the truth" (Jo. 16:13).

We can almost detect a note of wistfulness in Christ's voice. He wanted to open His heart to them. He wanted to show them what they would really have to go through because they were His friends,

His apostles. Yet until they would receive the gift of fortitude on Pentecost day they could not bear the full truth. I wonder if Jesus did not long for a real man among them at that moment, one who would stick with Him through thick or thin. Someone more courageous than the twelve who would barricade themselves in the Cenacle when He was gone, blanching every time a group of Jewish merchants began a brawl in the street below for fear His crucifiers had come to seize them also.

There was such a man,—among His enemies! A young Pharisee, hotblooded, zealous for the law. Saul of Tarsus! True, he hated the very name of Jesus, but only because he never knew Christ, or felt the radiance of His divine personality. Yet even in his hatred, he was so open, and courageous that he won the manly heart of Christ.

And so Christ arranged a meeting. At noon, on the road to Damascus! There was a blinding light. The young Pharisee was hurled to the ground. And when he picked himself up from the dust, he found himself face to face with Jesus. In that moment he realized his mistake and did what only a courageous man could do. He admitted it, to the whole world.

If you think that was easy, put yourself for a moment in Paul's place. Were there not times when you saw with the clarity of a light from heaven that there was but one proper, decent thing to do so far as God was concerned, and then came the paralyzing thought, What will others say? think? How could I bear the ridicule? For Paul too human respect talked loud and fast. If not at that precise moment, then certainly in those hours that followed while he awaited the baptism of Ananias. Paul, remember, was a respected Pharisee. Unlike the many who were hypocrites, he was sincere. He took his religious obligations seriously, serving God the hard way (Gal. 1:14). He fasted twice a week, gave ten percent of his income to support the temple, and carried out the law letter perfect. Even the old men who sat about the city gates criticizing the younger generation could find no fault with Saul. The high-priest praised him openly. His friends were many and influential, like the learned Rabbi Gamaliel. He was, in short, a young man with a future.

Yet Christ asks him to turn his back on all this, to become a fool. And Saul, better than anyone, knew what it meant to be a Christian. To be driven from the synagogue, to be flogged, publically disgraced and excommunicated, forbidden to communicate with his former friends,—this was the reward for choosing Christ. There are some things more bitter than death, and for a man of his temperament, disgrace was one of them. Yet Christ knew His man. He didn't ease the

conflict in Saul's soul, but only reminded him that if to follow Him was hard, it is still harder to "kick against the goad" (Acts 9:6). And Saul's courage conquered human respect. "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" (ibid.).

From that moment on, those words became the theme of his life. He asked no handicap, begged for no quarter. He did not plead to be dealt with gently, to be spared hardship. No, it was always: "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?"

Christ took the man at his word. He never babied him as He had done with the others. From the very start, he let Saul feel the full brunt of the Jewish hatred for Christ. His former friends snubbed him, he was booed in the streets, called a traitor to his country, a disgrace to his race. For one of his natural sensitivity it must have cut cruelly. But matters became even more serious. When Saul preached Christ, we read in the Acts of the Apostles (9:23-24), "the Jews made a plot to kill him. But their plot became known to Saul. They were even guarding the gates both day and night in order to kill him." Only by being lowered over the walls of Damascus by night did he manage to escape from the city. Truly the neophyte needed a friend. We might think, the apostles and Christians of Jerusalem at least would welcome him to their midst and throw open their homes to him. But did they? Even three years later, "on his arrival in Jerusalem he tried to join the disciples," says the Acts, "and they were all afraid of him, not believing that he was a disciple" (9:26). If he was popular, it was like "typhoid Mary." Of course, we cannot blame Peter and the others completely. They suspected a clever ruse. Saul might merely be pretending to be one of them until he could discover their hiding places and ferret out their leaders to betray them to the highpriest.

Only after some time did Barnabas succeed in convincing them Paul was sincere. But even then, his troubles were only beginning. Because his fighting courage made him dispute "boldly in the name of the Lord" with even the most learned of the Jews, "they sought to kill him" and he had to be spirited away to Tarsus for his own safety.

It was that same courage that caused him to be singled out for the great missionary project of the Church at Antioch. For otherwise, Paul had not much to commend him. His constitution was not too strong. He had none of the elegance of the great Christian orator Apollo. He lacked many of the talents of the other Apostles. But he had one thing that made up for it all. His soul was on fire for Christ, and nothing could stop him, neither sickness, threats of death, ridicule, imprisonment, scourging, shipwreck, the devil himself.

His greatest cross, however, were the "Judaizers." These were the Jewish converts who considered their racial pride at stake. They demanded that Christians first become Jews before being admitted to baptism. They tried to shackle the new converts with all the obligations of the Mosaic law. They were so powerful a group that even Peter feared to oppose them openly (Gal. 2, 11). But Paul, courageous for the truth, insisted boldly: "Here there is not 'Gentile and Jew,' 'circumcised and uncircumcised,' 'Barbarian and Scythian,' 'slave and freeman'; but Christ is all things in all" (Col. 3: 11; also Gal. 3:28). As a result, his life was in constant danger. These Judaizers followed Paul from city to city, poisoning the minds of his new converts against him (Acts 13ff).

Recall, for instance, that incident at Lystra. Paul's preaching left the populace agog with admiration. "The gods have come down to us in the likeness of men!", they cried (Acts 14:10). Converts to Christianity began to pour in. But then one evening before the city gates were closed a group of Jewish agitators arrived from Antioch and Iconium. That night they rounded up their friends and their friends' friends, filling their minds with vicious propaganda against Paul. Next day, when the apostle rose to preach, he was pulled down by the angry mob, dragged through the city streets and out beyond the walls where the lynching party stoned him and left him for dead. At least they thought he was dead. But hardly had they returned to the city, than Paul dazed and dirty picked himself up. Did he flee Lystra as one of the other apostles might have done? Not Paul, the fighter. In what might almost be considered a masterpiece of understatement, we read in the Acts: "He got up and re-entered the city" (14:19).

What could you do to stop a man like that. Three times he was beaten with rods. Five times that we know of, he was scourged until his back was a mass of bloody ribbons. He went hungry, shivering, naked. Thrice shipwrecked, he once was a night and a day adrift on the sea (2 Cor. 11, 24vs). Time and again he was imprisoned, lied about, his motives misunderstood. Day after day he would force himself to face a crowd that he knew might be calling for his blood a few moments later, for Lystra was but part of a pattern. There was the persecution in Antioch in Pisidia, the plot of the Jews and Gentiles of Iconium to have the public authorities "insult and stone them," the uprising of the silversmiths of Ephesus. Truly in Paul, Christ had found a real man.

If we tried to sum up Paul's character in a single word, we might be tempted to say he was fearless. But we would be very, very wrong.

At least if we understand fearless as Webster defines it: "free from fear." If Paul had felt no fear, he would have been stupid, not strong. By his own confession, he declared: "Our flesh had no rest; we had troubles on every side, conflicts without and anxieties within" (2 Cor. 7:5).

What were some of these fears and anxieties? One undoubtedly was human respect, as we have indicated, for Paul was sensitive by nature as we discover if we but read between the lines of his epistles. But he faced this fear as he will face all others. "If I were still trying to please men, I should not be the servant of Christ!" (Gal. 1: 10). If religious let what others think or say or do, keep them from doing what they know to be right, can they be called a servant, or still less a friend or bride of Christ? Have they not already divorced Him in their heart.

Then there was the fear of obstacles. Naturally speaking, Paul could not have failed to fear the future. How often he must have been tempted to wonder where all this would end! Day after day to confront a crowd that might try to lynch him before he was through was enough to give the man ulcers. Yet it was Timothy rather than Paul who got them. What was Paul's secret. For one thing he lived from day to day, firm in the conviction that "I can do all things in Him who strengthens me" (Phil. 4:13).

There was the fear of weakness. We might be tempted to think, Paul after all was a saint. He never experienced the weakness of human nature like ourselves. But was he a saint, or did he become one? No one ever felt the weakness of will, the strength of passion, perhaps, as acutely as Paul. "I am carnal—sold into the slavery of sin. The good that I will I do not and the evil that I will not, that I do. Unhappy man that I am—who will deliver me from the body of this death" (Rom. 7, 14-24). But where Paul differed from so many others was in this. Despite his weakness, and the sense of futility, he kept struggling on. Poverty of spirit or the sense of one's profound spiritual need is not the same as cowardice; neither is it incompatible with courage. Like all the poor in spirit, Paul had God's assurance: "My grace is sufficient for thee, for strength is made perfect in weakness." Consequently he could say: "Wherefore I am satisfied for Christ sake, with infirmities, with insults, with hardships, with persecutions, with distresses. For when I am weak, then I am strong" (2 Cor. 12, 8-10).

But you might object that Paul was spared that most depressing fear, the fear of failure, for on the testimony of the Holy Spirit he could say: "In fact I have labored more than any of them [the Apostles], yet not I, put the grace of God with me" (1 Cor. 15:10). He never

saw the work of weeks, months, years tumbling down about him. He never sweated and slaved for others to have them turn against him. Here, at least, is one cross he did not have to bear. If we think thus, how little we know Paul. How little we realize the anguish that tore his heart to shreds. His appearance and speech was ridiculed, his epistles criticized, the sincerity of his motives doubted (Cf. 2 Cor. 10:10). And this, not by the Jews or pagans, but by his own Christians! Even his converts turned against him. Take the church in Asia Minor to which he had given twenty five of the best years of his life, sparing himself no effort to be all things to all men. And then broken in health from his very labors among them, he finds these men and women he would gladly have died for calling him a hypocrite, a traitor to Christ, a spreader of false doctrines. Surely there were tears in his eyes as he wrote to Timothy from his Roman prison: "This thou knowest that all in the province of Asia have turned away from me" (2 Tim. 1:15). Can we believe that bitterness did not flood his soul when he himself confesses to the Corinthians of "the affliction which came upon us in Asia" that "we were crushed beyond measure—beyond our strength, so that we were weary even of life" (2 Cor. 1:8). Was the great apostle finally broken? No, for almost in the same breath he goes on to write: "We do not lose heart. On the contrary, even though our outer man is decaying, yet our inner man is being renewed day by day. For our present light affliction, which is for the moment, prepares us for an eternal weight of glory that is beyond all measure" (ibid. 4:16-17). Here we see what it means to be a man after the heart of Christ.

The secret of such strength is either a great hatred or a great love. Paul's hatred of Christ had made him the terrible persecutor that he was. It was his love for his new found Lord that made him the irresistible Apostle. In this scientific age of analysis we like to take a saint apart "to see what makes him tick." But we should remember that while we may at times speak of the "science of the saints", sanctity is not a science but an art. It is not something that can be dissected and preserved any more than one can cut up a painting and discover from a minute analysis of the bits that remain what made it a masterpiece. Every great work of art is the genial expression of one great idea. And a saint is a saint because he or she has just one overpowering idea that works its way out in every phase of life. That one great obsession of a saint is the love of God, the complete and unconditional surrender of himself to his creator. Reduced to its simplest mechanics, fortitude like that of Paul is the fruit of love, a great love, a tremendous love whose attraction is so compelling that no obstacle on earth or in

heaven can resist it. No wonder Paul could write: "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or hunger, or nakedness, or danger or the sword? . . . In all these things we overcome because of Him who has loved us. For I am sure that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature will be able to separate us from the love which is in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Rom. 8: 35-39).

To be a true religious requires courage. As we read in the Imitation: "It is no small thing to live in a monastery." And the same can be said of a convent. It is no place for one who wants to be "babied". Christ said something about becoming childlike, it is true, but nothing about becoming a baby. Even the Little Flower, that most childlike of the saints, learned this from the start. Recall how she told our Lord at the outset she would not bother Him with her troubles or come weeping on His shoulder, but would always cheer Him with her smile, even if He banged her about as a baby does a rattle. In her own way, Teresa had learned the lesson of Paul. If she was a "flower", it was certainly not the hothouse variety.

Did we but dare like Teresa or Paul to seek out suffering with somethings of Christ's own impatience (Lk. 12:50), or search for martyrdom like Francis among the Saracens, how quickly the likeness of our Love would appear in us! "O Lord Jesus Christ." Francis prayed, "two graces do I ask of Thee before I die; the first, that in my lifetime I may feel as far as possible both in my soul and body, that pain which Thou, sweet Lord, didst endure in the hour of The most bitter passion; the second, that I may feel in my heart as much as possible that excess of love by which Thou, O Son of God, wast inflamed to suffer so cruelly for us sinners" (Fioretti. "On the Stigmata," 3). Indeed, can these two graces be separated? Or can we ever hope to say with Paul: "It is now no longer I that live but Christ lives in me," if we cannot add his preface to those words: "With Christ I am nailed to the cross" (Gal. 2: 19-20).

FRANCIS, APOSTLE AND CATHOLIC

Fr. Barnabas M. Kannenburg, O.F.M.Conv.

The liturgy acclaiming St. Francis of Assisi as a "vir apostolicus et totus catholicus". (1) The Franciscan heritage of evangelical preaching is tangible evidence of his zealous seeking after souls. His capacity for recognizing truth and beauty everywhere, in the flight of a lark and even in the incoherence of a Brother Juniper, has stamped him as the "wholly Catholic man".

Like all the better representatives of medieval thought, St. Francis was an eclectic. Rather than lessen our esteem for the Seraphic Father it makes us more appreciative of his wide interests to recognize that he often borrowed his ideas and ideals from others. Ability to grasp truth and to employ it beneficially is a far rarer gift than a hit-or-miss type of originality. Sensitive to the counsels of Christ's Vicars, Francis found a storehouse of valuable preaching-hints in an opusculum of Guibert, Abbot of Nogent (1053-1124). This small work, a preface to the abbot's *Commentary on Genesis*, was recommended to all preachers by Pope Alexander III in 1172 so that it became the vademecum of many a twelfth and thirteenth century missionary. The title, *Liber quo ordine sermo fieri debet*, is disproportionate to the length of the work which fills only six, two-column pages in Migne's *Patrologia Latina*. Brief though it is Guibert's libellus is the source of many of St. Francis' admonitions on preaching. P. A. Beecher writing about the work in the Catholic Encyclopedia says that "St. Francis gave to his friars the same directions as are herein contained." (2)

Since the *Commentary on Genesis* is intended as a source of preaching material the *Libellus* is a logical companion to it. Although the work is not divided into topical headings, we can see a continuous development throughout. Before entering into a discussion of methods, the author enumerates those motives which are unworthy of a preacher of the Gospel, such as envy of another's success or ambition. There follows at this point a condemnation of those who neglect the duty of preaching attached to their office.

By way of contrast he next proposes quite masterfully the exemplar of the ideal preacher and the esteemed place his preaching holds in the life of the Church. "If anything", he tells us, "is vital to pastoral preaching it is to speak only of God, for he commits a sacrilege who speaks of divine things to gain personal acclaim." (3)

In the following pages where Guibert discusses the characteristics of effective preaching we find striking parallels between the *Libellus* and the Rule. One is amazed to find here an anticipation of Francis' recommendations for brevity, of accommodating one's thought to one's audience, of stressing vice and virtue, of prayer before preaching. Allegorism, so delighting to the medieval auditor and so vexing to the modern, is treated with admirable restraint. There is, by the way, a mention of the four wheels supporting the chariot of Holy Scripture used by St. Anthony of Padua in his *Sermones*. Canonist and Franciscan that Anthony was, it is legitimate to surmise that he must have been acquainted with the Abbot of Nogent's monograph.

Guibert then closes his work by exhorting preachers to penetrate the hearts of their listeners and not be content with mere words. "For what is more futile than to train a soldier in the use of arms if he has not the heart to withstand the enemy?" (4)

The Rule is of necessity brief. It outlines the Franciscan ideal; it is not meant to be a specialized treatise on anything except the Gospel life as envisioned by St. Francis. So if we see in the Rule abridgments and recensions of Canon Law we should not be surprised. Francis was a man of his times, loyal to the Church and to the Holy See.

If, having read this little work, we compare the Rule of 1209 with that of 1223 we come upon a most startling fact. In both rules there are the well known passages with their timely insistence on preachers seeking approbation of the Minister General and the Holy See—the latter as directed by Innocent III. (5)

But the Rule of 1209 lacks the famous description of the Franciscan sermon which reads, "I further warn and exhort these same brothers that in the preaching they do, their words be fire-tried and refined, to serve for the benefit and edification of the people, telling them about the vices and virtues, the punishment and glory in few words, for a speedy word did our Lord make on earth." (6)

St. Francis' deep personal devotion to the Holy See would of itself readily lend weight to an incorporation of Guibert's suggestions. And in addition to this well known loyalty which Francis so perfectly exemplified and so diligently strove to impress on his followers, we must also take into account the part played by Cardinal Hugolino, Francis' advisor. The Cardinal was well versed in papal policy and he was already in orders when the *Libellus* was given quasi-official status.

In Chapter Nine quoted above the friars are urged "that their words be fire-tried and refined." Guibert says similarly, "Let prayer

(which perceives God and tells us of him) precede a sermon. Thus the soul aflame with divine love will as it burns enkindle the hearts of its hearers." (7) That a sermon "serve for the benefit and edification of the people" is one of Francis' cardinal principles. Was this not his way of reiterating the complaint that "some preachers have less interest in urging their listeners to do good than in boastfully displaying their own talents." (8) And certainly Guibert's plea for a delivery "so clear and clever that what is being said be understood even by the uneducated and the simple," (9), could not have been overlooked by the Saint.

The moral awakening which Francis envisioned is mirrored in his urging the friars to tell the faithful "about virtues and vices." This is in keeping with the *Libellus*' insistence on not stressing "the source and observance of the virtues in preference to the dissonance and avoidance of the vices." (10) Finally regarding the admonition to preach briefly we find several paragraphs which show us that the temper of Sunday morning audiences has changed little from the fourth to the twelfth to the twentieth century. For the Abbot complains with St. Ambrose that "a full sermon arouses anger." (11)

The better we know the mind of our Seraphic Father, the more we should be inclined to admire him, though we may be disappointed to discover that he was not an originator, this should be more than compensated for by the fact that whatever he borrowed was so well adapted to his apostolate. Few still entertain the pious belief that the Rule was dictated verbatim by Christ. But all can be edified by the fact that in the instance it is based largely upon the recommendations of Alexander III, Christ's Vicar. The friar of today can see in these directions to preachers not the personal innovations of a carping Waldensian but rather an insistence on tradition so dear to the heart of every loyal son of the Church.

- (1) Romano-Seraphic Breviary O.F.M. Conv., Rome: Marietti, 1951, p. 104; (2) Catholic Encyclopedia 1910 VII p. 446; (3) PL 156, 22; (4) *ibid*, 32; (5) Scudder, V.D., *The Franciscan Adventure*. New York: E. P. Dutton & Co. Inc. 1931, p. 48; (6) Meyer, James O.F.M., *The Words of St. Francis*, Chicago: Franciscan Herald Press, 1952, p. 292; (7) PL 156, 24; (8) *ibid*, 21; (9) *ibid*, 25; (10) *ibid*, 26; (11) *ibid*, 24.

A GENERAL SYNTHESIS OF THE THEOLOGY OF JOHN DUNS SCOTUS

Fr. Marianus Mueller, O.F.M.

The central truth around which a man forms his view of the universe, his outlook on life, in his concept of God. Each distinct notion of God gives rise to a corresponding concept of the world and of life; but the man who denies God shapes for himself, in a kind of self-assumed autonomy, a universe without God. Now the idea of God that was born of Franciscan life and thought attained its highest and most perfect development in Scotus's theology of love. Consequently, a general synthesis of Scotistic thought is at the same time a general view of Franciscan thought.

To recognize the distinctly Franciscan coloring of the Scotistic synthesis, we need but turn to Saint Francis himself and examine his idea of the Creator. It is generally recognized that Scotus's concept of God—the immediate point of departure in his theological synthesis—is in general a scientific formulation, realization, and presentation of the more direct, almost lyrical concept of Francis himself. Once we realize that from every individual mode of life there springs a corresponding culture and science, we have *a priori* grounds for accepting the essential harmony between Scotistic theology and the Franciscan ideal in general.

I. OUR SERAPHIC FATHER'S CONCEPT OF GOD

Saint Francis's concept of God sprang from a Pauline-Augustinian spirit. He thought of the Deity as Wisdom, the Light of Creation, the Giver of Knowledge—and consequently the Teacher of Man. It is well known that this Platonic-Augustinian idea was accepted by the early Franciscan theologians, including Scotus, and has always characterized Franciscan thought.

But for Francis, God was also the Great King, the Omnipotent King, the King of Heaven and Earth, and Mary was the Daughter and Handmaid of the Most High King. Franciscan hagiographers tell us that after Francis had so nobly renounced his possessions before the Bishop of Assisi, he left the court clothed in a tunic adorned with a white cross, singing the praises of the Lord and declaring to all who sought to restrain him: "I am the herald of the Great King."¹

Francis was truly the Ambassador of Christ, the Herald of the King of Love Who revealed His love through His Sacred Heart, His

*This article, presented here with slight adaptations, first appeared in *Wissenschaft und Weisheit*, 1 (1934) 110-140.

sufferings and death on the cross, and His gift of the Eucharist. In this ideal we also find the historical and religious character of those many saints, martyrs, and mystics who trod in the fiery footsteps of our Seraphic Father. But above all, this affective and effective veneration of Christ called into play the obeisance of the intellect and lent a distinctive coloring to Franciscan metaphysical thought. So it came about that in the course of the thirteenth century the Franciscan masters of Paris and Oxford erected to Christ the King a theological monument of vast proportions.

But for Francis, God was not only Creator, Teacher, and King; He was above all Love—love in His deepest being, love that inflames His creatures. "Thou art charity, love. . . inflaming to love, because Thou, Lord, art love."² God's deepest being is loving Kindness, highest Goodness, the essence of all Good. "Thou art the triune and one Lord, God, all good. Thou art good, all good, highest good."³ It was to this God Who is all goodness that Francis preferred to pray, for he felt indebted above all to the *good* God Who, with love's characteristic impulse, had given Himself to men that they might participate in His own bliss of love: "*Our Father* most holy, our Creator, our Redeemer, and Saviour, our Comforter. *Who art in Heaven*: in the angels and the saints, giving them light to know Thee, since Thou, O Lord, art Light; setting them afire to love Thee, since Thou, O Lord, art Love; abiding in them and filling them for their bliss, for Thou, O Lord, art the sovereign Good, the eternal Good, from Whom everything good has its being and without Whom there is nothing good."⁴ Francis looked upon God as a liberal Benefactor to Whom we, as children of poverty, should return endless thanks for His unspeakable gifts to us. It is to grateful recognition and praise of the divine goodness that Francis urges when he writes to his brethren: "And whatever is good let us refer to the most high and sovereign Lord God, and let us acknowledge everything good to be His, and for it all let us give thanks to Him from Whom all good things come."⁵ In these words we find the expressed the vital principle, the soul and the heart, of the Scotistic theological synthesis.

II. DUNS SCOTUS'S CONCEPT OF GOD

We now turn to Scotus's concept of God. This is the heart of his synthesis and without an understanding of it his system is incomprehensible. It is not our purpose here, however, to present in full Scotus's teaching on God and the Trinity, but rather to select the specific aspects of his concept that pertain to our present study. These aspects concern God's absolute independence, selflessness, and generosity.

Therefore we shall lay strongest emphasis on the Scotistic doctrine that God is the highest Love, that He is selfless, overflowing Goodness.

1. *The Person of the Father*

Goodness in giving is all the more excellent the more selflessly it acts. Scotus, therefore, feeling it necessary to exclude from God everything that could in any way impair the disinterestedness and independence of the divine endowing Goodness, emphasizes in the most striking manner this selflessness and independence even within the Blessed Trinity. He begins first of all with the Person of God the Father. He denies everything that could render the Father in His life of infinite happiness dependent upon the other two Persons of the Trinity as persons. He seeks to exclude from the concept of the Father any increase in bliss and glory not emanating from the divine Essence. For only by such exclusion can the Father's absolute selflessness and disinterestedness be maintained in regard to all that is not His divine Essence. God the Father is selfless and independent, and that absolutely, only if His life of bliss experiences its fulness and completion in the possession and enjoyment of His own Being, and if this Being is in itself sufficient for Him.

Logically then, Scotus is opposed to the thought that anything other than the divine Essence itself can be the source of the bliss of the divine Persons. He holds the divine Essence to be the root and fundament of every divine perfection. In the last analysis, therefore, it is only this divine Essence, and not any formal perfection of God—and certainly not of any creature—that is the source of God's life of bliss: "For what primarily makes the divine intellect and will happy is not some perfection which is only rooted, so to speak, in the divine essence, but rather the divine essence itself as such, that is, the divine essence in so far as it is the basis for every divine perfection."⁶ This divine Essence is the ultimate source of all amiability, and is, accordingly, worthy of love for Its own sake, and not for the sake of something else. Thus It is the original object of all love; indeed, It is the very first object, even of divine love, and of the divine bliss of love.

In this love of His divine Essence God is perfectly happy: "God . . . first wills the end, and in this His act is perfect, and His intellect is perfect and His will is happy."⁷ The fact that God is perfectly happy in the knowledge and enjoyment of His divine Essence and therefore perfectly happy in the enjoyment of Himself and that consequently He needs no one else for His happiness and sufficiency, is the point of departure in the Scotistic theological system. Klein has correctly observed this fact. Interpreting Scotus, he writes: "God wills first

of all Himself, His Essence, the proper Good, the End, and the Goal of all things. The perfect act of love consists in this willing and loving. By this act, the divine will is infinitely perfect and happy."⁸ Here we are speaking of the Person of the Father with regard to that knowledge and love of the divine Essence which precedes the Son. "The Father," says Scotus, "precedes the Son and the begetting of the Son by priority of origin. He is happy in this existence in Himself and not solely in consequence of begetting the Son. He is happy, as it were, even before begetting of the Son. But He is happy in knowing and loving His own Essence: consequently He wills and desires His Essence even before He wills and desires the generation of the Son,"⁹ and in this knowing and loving He is happy. This strong emphasis on the independence of the Father even within the Blessed Trinity has as its end to bring out the selflessness of His living as well as the perfection of His personality. The Father is a perfect person and is perfectly happy in Himself even before He begets the Logos. The begetting of the Son means for Him as a person no increase of perfection. It is true that the Father begets the Son necessarily, but even if He were not to have begotten the Son—a case purely hypothetical because impossible—nevertheless as a person He would be already perfect in knowledge and love, and therefore perfectly happy. This teaching avoids all danger of misconception and clearly delineates the Person of the Father, to Whom all personal consciousness belongs.

2. The Generation of the Son

In spite of the perfection and bliss that He enjoys in Himself, the Father does not content Himself with a blissful repose in the enjoyment of His Essence, but rather begets the Logos and together with the Logos breathes forth the Holy Spirit, and through the Son in the Holy Spirit produces innumerable creatures. So we come to ask the meaning and motive of this communicative activity of God both within and without Himself. Were God to have begotten the Son, breathed forth the Holy Spirit, and even produced creatures out of some need of further perfecting Himself or of rendering Himself still happier, then the "purpose" (*ratio*) of the Son and of the Holy Spirit and of creatures would be to augment God's perfection and bliss; and this new increase in perfection and bliss would be the motive for begetting the Son as well as for breathing forth the Holy Spirit and for producing all creatures. But with such a postulate we should completely destroy that concept of God which is the point of departure for the whole Scotistic theological synthesis. This concept holds the divine Essence as the object of God's perfect bliss, and thus main-

tains God's absolute independence and selflessness. Accordingly, an increase of God's perfection and bliss to be derived from the existence of the Son, the Holy Spirit, and creation cannot be the motive for their respective begetting, breathing forth, and creation; for the divine Essence alone is the first, only, and adequate motive and object of all divine knowing, willing, loving, and activity: "Only the divine essence can be primary reason why God knows and loves for if anything else could be the primary reason for these operations, it would detract from the perfection of His intellect and will."¹⁰

God the Father has an exhaustive knowledge of His Essence and wills it in every respect. Accordingly, He knows and wills it as to be communicated to the Son (*communicando Filio*). "Before the generation of the Son, [the Father] knows and wills His Essence, but not only in so far as it is His Essence, but also in so far as it is to be communicated to the Son."¹¹ This urge to communicate Himself is rooted in the Essence of God and pertains to the concept of God. Here we have the doctrine which makes the begetting of the Son understandable. For knowing and willing the divine Essence as an essence to be communicated to the Son means simply to know and will the begetting of the Son, since the begetting of the Son is nothing else than the communication of the divine Essence by the Father to the Son by way of the intellect.¹² Since the reason for this desire to impart Himself is founded in the being of God, the Father is directed in everything by the divine Essence, and accordingly follows all the motives and urges rooted therein; and the Father's knowing and willing of the divine Essence, as it were, becomes productive. This first knowledge (*intelligere*) is perfected in pronouncing a Person, in speaking a word, (*dicere*) and the Word so spoken is the *Verbum Divinum*, the Divine Word, the eternally begotten Son of God. It is in the Son that the tendency of the divine Essence to communication, to the imparting of self, is fulfilled by the Father by way of knowledge (*intelligere*). The Father freely and selflessly gives over to the Son His whole being.

3. The Procession of the Holy Spirit

A relation similar to that existing between the Father and the Son exists also between the Father and Son and Holy Spirit. The divine Essence is ordained not only to be expressed in the Son as the Eternal Word but also to be expressed in the Holy Spirit. This 'Speaking the Word', as it were, is followed by a gasp of love, the breathing forth or "spiration" of the Holy Spirit. Just as the Father's knowledge *intelligere* which preceded, as it were, the begetting of the Son, in being spoken (*dicere*) become the generation of the Son, so also the mutual

love (*diligere*) between the First and Second Persons which precedes, as it were, the breathing forth of the Holy Spirit is completed through the act of 'spiration', which produces the Breath of Love as the Third Person of the Trinity. The Father and Son already possess in their divine Essence all perfection and bliss before they breathe forth the Holy Spirit. Consequently, the breathing forth of the Holy Spirit means no increase of personal bliss either for the Father or for the Son; because this breathing forth likewise takes place only out of liberality. In order rightly to emphasize the proper subsistence and the highest possible independence in the divine Persons, and at the same time not to intellectualize¹³ unduly the breathing forth of the Holy Spirit, Scotus, differing from Thomas Aquinas,¹⁴ teaches that the Holy Spirit does not come forth from the mutual love of the Father and the Son as persons, but from that love with which both, as a single source of the 'spiration' love the divine Essence.¹⁵

4. *The Relation of the Divine Persons to One Another*

The communication of the divine Essence to the Son and to the Holy Spirit is effected with complete selflessness, since the Persons communicating in the production of the new Person receive no new perfection. On the contrary, they communicate to the new Person their entire being and their essential perfection. Still, it would be false to draw the conclusion that the Father is not happy in the Holy Spirit or that the Father and the Son are not happy in the Holy Spirit because they are already perfectly happy in Themselves. Rather, the Father is perfectly happy in the Son and the Father and Son are perfectly happy in the Holy Spirit. To say that the Father is perfectly happy in the Son means that He is happy in His own Essence in that He has communicated it to the Son and now recognizes and loves His own Essence in the Son. Likewise, the Father and the Son are happy in the Holy Spirit not only in the sense that They love and enjoy Their own Essence inasmuch as they bear it within Themselves, but also inasmuch as in the Holy Trinity there is preserved integrally the principle that God and each divine Person is perfect and happy in the possession and enjoyment of the divine Essence.

5. *The Divine Essence as the Center of Charity*

From what has been said thus far, it can be concluded that the infinite intradeistic communication, the Father's giving of self to the Son and the joint surrender of both to the Holy Spirit, is founded in the divine Essence Itself as an essence to be communicated (*essentia communicanda*). God knows nothing and wills nothing other than His divine Essence and all things for Its sake alone. It is the *ratio* and the

motive of all divine activity, especially of this communicative activity, both within and without the divine Being. The divine Essence tends to the communicating of Itself, and because God consents to all the tendencies rooted in His Essence, the divine Essence Itself becomes the motive for the Father's communication to the Son and Their joint communication to the Holy Spirit. The divine Essence of its very self is the cause of the divine movement, and this property belongs to it simply because it is formal Goodness, the highest Goodness. It is the property of goodness lovingly to communicate itself. Every goodness wishes to give in a manner and measure befitting its own richness and fullness. Accordingly, in the divine Being as infinite Goodness there is that striving to communicate itself infinitely because "summe activum est summe diffusivum sui."¹⁶ The Father, therefore, by reason of His Essence, is moved to communicate Himself infinitely to the Son, and by reason of their Essence Father and Son are directed to impart themselves infinitely to the Holy Ghost. Scotus thus gives his synthesis a characteristically Franciscan coloring by asserting that the essence of the Godhead is love: "God is formally love and formally charity, and not only effectively so."¹⁷ God, therefore, finds love immediately in His Essence and has no need of another person to experience what love is. His divine Essence, goodness itself, urges Him to impart Himself disinterestedly; and He does well to impart Himself, not to supply any deficiency in His own perfection nor to obtain full and ultimate happiness for Himself, but simply to have others participate in His overflowing riches of perfection and bliss. He wills to give for the sake of giving, not for the sake of receiving anything in return. Hence in communicating Himself, God is ruled by His Essence which is formally love. Love is the motivating force in the Godhead. It is the final reason and deepest meaning of all divine activity. Therefore, in living according to His divine Essence, God loves in the highest degree.

Scotus characterizes the divine Essence as the center of love, not only of divine love but also of creature love. Divine love adheres most perfectly to this center of all love. Hence it is utterly impossible for it to deviate from this highest object of its love, and in this sense it is a necessary love. This necessity, however, does not mean a lack of freedom, and therefore does not imply any imperfection. On the contrary, it is the highest freedom and consequently the highest perfection. God remains so faithful and firm in loving Himself as the highest and most lovable Good that this love can never be perverted into its opposite. Every perfect lover must love above all the highest Good which, as the highest value, is objectively the most lovable Good. Every perversion of this right order of loving is disorder and sin, for perversion

means that a lesser good binds and chains the loving will more than the highest Good. The possibility of such perversion is not formally a prerogative of liberty. Rather, it is a lack of freedom which yields to a lesser good and thus becomes its slave. The very possibility of such a deviation from the right order of loving is lacking in God. And in this sense His first and absolute intention of love is necessarily directed to the center of charity, the divine Essence. Precisely because of this necessity, it is in the highest measure free. "The divine will of necessity wills its own good, and nevertheless in willing it, it is free."¹⁸

Since the Scotistic concept of God so emphatically stresses the correct ordering of values and love in God, as we intend to show later, it is especially fitted to give rise to a view of the world and of life in which the ruling factor is a right evaluation of all things. Karl Adam asserts that the free will of Western man "has never more consciously, ever more energetically and completely withdrawn itself from the supernatural goal, with the consequence that its whole striving tends to a deification of natural ends and of values far removed from the final values, so that at last it has invaded the Holy of Holies and begun to blaspheme Christ."¹⁹ If he is correct, we shall do well to turn to John Duns Scotus for a means of coping with this perverted idea of values.

Fr. Elias Koppert, O.F.M. (Transl.)

(To be continued)

REFERENCES: ¹S. Bonaventure, *Legenda S. Francisci*, cap. 2, n. 5, *Opera Omnia*, VIII, 509; ²*Opuscula*, 124 and 119; ³*Ibid.* 124; ⁴*Ibid.* 119; ⁵*I Regula*, 17; ⁶*Oxon.* 1, d. 13, qu. un. n. 23 (9, 907a); ⁷*Oxon.* 3, d. 32, q. un. n. 6, (15, 433a); ⁸Klein, J., *Der Gottesbegriff des Johannes Duns Scotus* (Paderborn: 1913), p. 136; ⁹*Rep.* 1, d. 6, q. 2, n. 5 (22, 142); ¹⁰*Oxon.* 3, d. 32, q. un., n. 5 (15, 432a); ¹¹*Rep.* 1, d. 6, q. 2, n. 5 (22, 142a); ¹²*Loc. cit.*; ¹³*Oxon.* 1, d. 12, q. 1, n. 10 (9, 860). Longpre emphasizes in general the fact that Scotus has stressed the sovereignty of love over all much more energetically than other theologians, and that he has defended it to the farthest possible limits and defended it against the pretensions of the intellect and the intellectualism which is found not only in Aristotle but also in Saint Anselm and Saint Bernard. cf. *La Philosophie du B. Duns Scot*, (Paris: 1924), p. 139; ¹⁴*Summa theol.* P. 1, q. 37, art. 2; ¹⁵*Oxon.* 1, d. 12, q. 1, n. 17 (9, 869a); ¹⁶*Ibid.*, d. 2, q. 7, n. 8 (8, 528); ¹⁷*Ibid.*, d. 17, q. 3, n. 31 (10, 93a); ¹⁸*Quodl.*, q. 16, n. 8 (26, 194a).

HOW LOVE BEARS US TO GOD, AS TO OUR CENTRE

DIEGO DE ESTELLA (1524—1578)

Diego de Estella, a pure ascetic in his *Book of the Vanity of the World* (1562), belongs to the history of mysticism by virtue of his *Devout Meditations on the love of God* (1576), which immediately after publication went into three more editions and is still being republished today. The *Mediations* are essentially a 'Book of the Lover and the Beloved'. Their author has 'fallen in love with God'; they have the formlessness and prolixity, as well as the sincerity and ardour, of lover's outpourings, and it is by that lover that they will be most read. The following text is taken from *Devout Meditations on the Love of God*, Chapter IX.

Very true is it, Lord, and very clearly proved by experience, that, as Thou art the Good of men, so by its nature the force of love inclines and bears man to Thee, as to its source and centre, though oftentimes he is borne against his nature towards other things contrarily to his true welfare and honour. For, as our nature ever leads us to one thing, though through our power of free choice which we have it is capable of following many, and can turn, by its own power, in whatever direction it desires. For there is no constraint in the will as there is in nature—would that there were, my God, would that we were bound by constraint to Thee, so that even if we willed otherwise we could not help ourselves, and so might be united with Thee, even as, by Thy great mercy, we shall be united with Thee, even as by Thy great mercy, we shall be united with Thee after this life!

Alas for the great miracle that I see among men—a disastrous miracle, sorely to be lamented. Wouldst thou not perchance think it a very great miracle if thou wert to see a huge cliff suspended in the air, or supported by a force and a scrap of paper were seen to be sufficient to impede it? Who could look upon such a thing without crossing himself for fear? Who would not be amazed and astonished? When how can I be other than amazed at seeing men whom trivial things suffice to hinder, my Lord, from attaining to Thee? Strange is indeed, my God, that a man whose nature there is so great a force of gravity bearing him to Thee should be weighted down by such volities as those of earth!

We are pilgrims in this world, for so the Holy Scriptures call and we journey toward Thee, O Lord, as toward our own country, to our souls' true native land, wherein, as the Apostle says, we

live and move and have our being. And, whenever we sin, we are hindered and halt on the way; the great marvel, and the great wonder, is that such trivial things can hinder us. My love is the force that moves me. By love I am borne whithersoever I go. Wheresoever my love rests, thither goes my soul; and even as Thou, O Lord, hast given a stone such force that, as it falls, it will go toward its centre and natural place, even so hast Thou given the same force to our souls—namely, a desire for the highest Good, to the end that it may the more readily be drawn to Thee by this attraction. If this be so then, O my good God, how can it be that every soul that Thou hast created doth not go toward Thee with great speed? And yet we see souls hanging and suspended from a breath of wind, bereft of all good thereby, yet laughing and content and at rest.

How is it possible that any creature capable of union with Thee should not go toward Thee with all its strength, O infinite Center in finitely good, and hence of infinite attraction? What can detain a creature capable of reaching so great a Good? O great weight of sin which, laid upon the neck of mankind, weighs it down and causes it to sink to the ground, that it may not rise to its rightful sphere for which it was created!

Of a truth, it is a greater miracle that souls should not mount up to their God by love, than that rocks should be raised up and suspended by a breath of wind that they may not fall to their Centre, or than that a mere slip of paper should impede the course of a rapid torrent rushing toward the sea. Who, indeed, could endure his life patiently if he knew clearly and distinctly of what great good he is being deprived and how much good he is losing? O most ungrateful veil of my flesh, of how much joy dost thou deprive me! Who can hinder me from tearing and rending thee with my own hands so that I may go and behold my God, and enjoy Him, and find my rest in Him? Oh, of how many pleasures and of what great happiness am I bereft because of thee! And, what is worse, how do I suffer thee, how do I laugh and remain at ease, well knowing, and seeing and perceiving all this, and do not rather weep and groan, for day and nights, as would be just, over this my exile and blindness and pitiable plight?

How can I practise so evil and ungrateful a form of patience but that the veil is set between me and God, and that a fleshly cloud obstructs the sun's brightness from shining in my soul? Remove this veil which hinders me, and thou shalt see with what force my soul will travel toward its centre. Consider the souls of the saints, that

are already loosed from this veil and are free: with what swiftness and lightness do they journey toward their God! Who can hinder them? Who can keep them back? Who can exile them from their rightful place? For therein is full and perfect rest; therein is eternal satisfaction for all the soul's restless desires.

E. Allison Peers: *THE MYSTICS OF SPAIN*, London 1951, pp. 91-93

DISCUSSION

Fr. Joseph Montalverne, O.F.M.

Question: *Nesta de Robeck's monograph on the history of the Christmas crib, starting with a chapter entitled "In search of the Pre-Franciscan crib", seems to deny the popular tradition that St. Francis of Assisi and his Friars introduced the custom of the Christmas crib in the Western World.—Would "The Chord", please, tell us who's right?*

Nesta de Robeck's research on the Pre-Franciscan Christmas crib is too superficial to enable anyone to decide the controversy (cf. N. de Robeck, *The Christmas crib*, London, n.d., Copyright 1937, chapter 1, p. 1-44). Other tracts on the matter, more recent and based on better historical information, have proved that the Poverello of Assisi did revive the devotion to the Mystery of Nativity, in such a popular and pious way, that he deserves being honored as the effective "introducer" of the popular Christmas crib in the Western World (cf. Van Hulst C., *Creche in Dict. Spiritualite*, col. 2520-2526, who presents also a selected bibliography on the subject until 1953; Lavagnino E., *Presepe in Enciclopedia cattolica IX* col. 1972; Stefanucci A., *Storia del presepio*, Roma 1944, p. 65-67, often prejudiced however by his lack of historical sense in the interpretation of facts; etc.).

Nevertheless, even Nesta de Robeck suspected the historical importance of St. Francis of Assisi, when at the end of that shallow chapter on the "Pre-Franciscan crib" she seems bound by external evidence to the following statement: "With the mention of St. Francis we come to a turning point in the history of the Christmas crib; the originality of St. Francis was at once lesser and greater than is sometimes realised, for it lay not in inventing these things but in being able to take the old customs and the old traditions, and hand them to an expectant world, renewed and for ever bearing the stamp of his own irresistible genius" (cf. above, p. 44). She did not, however, discover the secret of Francis' genial touch: the Eucharistic symbolism of the Christmas crib.

All historians of Christian spirituality in the Middle Ages admit the fact that on Christmas eve 1223 Francis of Assisi assisted as deacon at the solemn Mass celebrated at the grotto of Greccio, with a realistic representation of the crib below the altar, including the ox and the ass, "thus inaugurating a custom which very quickly became general" (Pourrat P., *Christian Spirituality*, II, transl. by S. P. Jacques Westminster Md., 1953, p. 168). Not all, however, stress sufficiently the Eucharistic approach, which constitutes a pious innovation in the Franciscan revival of the hindred devotion to the Mystery of the Nativity symbolized by the crib, and which is sufficiently testified by the early biographers of the Saint.

The first biographer of Francis of Assisi, Thomas of Celano, describes us the dramatic celebration of Christmas 1223 at Greccio as something new in awakening a forgotten devotion. May it suffice to quote expressions such as: "the people came and rejoiced with a new delight about the new mystery"; "Nor was this performance unbecoming, because the Child Jesus had been forgotten in the hearts of many"; "and thus, by means of Francis, Jesus was risen from the dead and printed in the memory of those who love Him" (Thomas de Celano *Vita prima S. Francisci*, pars 1 c.30, Quaracchi 1926, p. 90-91, n. 85-86). No one has ever doubted about Celano's testimony, which confirms the tradition that Francis had in his mind the Eucharistic symbolism of the mystery of Bethlehem, and had the midnight Mass celebrated on an improvised altar above the crib in the grotto of Greccio. In the early fourteenth century a permanent altar, and two frescoes of an unknown Umbrian painter perpetuated the living representation of the crib in the grotto of Greccio during the Christmas Mass of 1223 (cf. Joergensen J., *Il libro del pellegrino francescano*, Siena 1914, p. 67; Bernarreggi A., *Le fonti del Presepio di Greccio*, in *Scuola Cattolica*, 1924, p. 7ff.—The primitive sanctuary was recently restored by Architect Prof. C. A. Carpicci, at the expenses of H. Exc. M. Rev. Bishop Terzi, OFM, and his friends).

Celano's testimony is confirmed by the Apostolic privileges granted to the sanctuary of Greccio (cf. *Bullarium Franciscanum* I, Roma 1759, n. 17. 19, p. 20-21), and by the official life of St. Francis written by St. Bonaventure, who besides the description of the fact tells us that Francis had desired this peculiar Christmas celebration "to increase the devotion of the people", and gave us a very precious detail: "That his (Francis') plan might not be considered revolutionary, he requested and obtained permission from the Holy Father" (St. Bonaventure, *Vie de St. Francois d'Assise*, trad. par D. Vorreux, Paris n.d., around 1951, p. 178). This second item, cautiously quoted by

Bonaventure, who against the misleading interpretations of the "Fratelli", constantly reminds us that Francis was most obedient toward the Holy See in the extraordinary originality of his way of living, may explain us why Celano calls the crib of Greccio an innovation. The Nativity representations were no novelty for Francis, even before he had been in Holy Land. Brought up in a country-place of shepherds, the traditional iconography of the Nativity, as well as the Christmas rhymes based on the announcement of the Angels to the shepherds of Bethlehem, must have been familiar to him. Besides this folkloric knowledge of the crib, he must have visited in Rome the marvelous chapel of "Sancta Maria ad Praesepe," newly restored by his friends and protectors, Pope Innocent III and Pope Honorius. And yet, if we consider that the crib of Greccio was only realized in the latter years of Francis, and that he had to request the permission of Pope Honorius "not to be considered a revolutionary", as Bonaventure attests, we may understand that the Christmas crib was something unheard-of in the Liturgy of the time; Francis of Assisi did start a practice which became universal in the time of the Renaissance, and which has greatly contributed to give the people a better understanding of the mystery of Bethlehem constantly renewed in the Holy Sacrifice of the Altar in view of the rebirth of Jesus in our souls.

Other historical sources confirm the importance of the innovation of Greccio. For over a century, before Francis of Assisi, Bishops and Preachers of the West had fought the dramatic performances of the mysteries of the Lord in the churches, of which the earliest and most popular were the "Passion" around Easter, and the "Nativity" between Christmas and New Year. An example of these reformatory views is given us in the excessive zeal of the Austin canon Gerhoh, at the time provost of the monastery of Reichersberg, in Bavaria, who in 1160 denounced the license of the liturgical dramas imported from the East by the Crusaders. A letter of Pope Innocent III, addressed in 1207 to the Archbishop of Gniessen, forbade such performances in the churches and excommunicated whoever took part in them. No wonder therefore if Francis, after begging permission from the Pope, carefully laid out the performance with a spirit of reverence and of Eucharistic devotion, which were really an innovation at the time.

The celebration of the midnight Mass at Christmas with the crib became a privilege of the Franciscan Churches still in the time of St. Clare (cf. *Legenda S. Clarae Virginis* n. 29, ed. Pennachi, Assisi 1910, p. 40-42); before long the Friars had carried the story of Greccio all over Europe and in their missions (cf. *Bullarium*, quoted above). The

later Franciscan writers did not often care to claim the success of the Order in the revival of the devotion to the crib, and in instilling in the mind of the people its Eucharistic symbolism. But the timidity of the Franciscan historians is largely set off by the world spread iconography of the mystery of Greccio and by the many historians who cannot be suspected of partiality toward the Franciscans, as for instance the learned Jesuit Raynaud in the seventeenth century (Theophilus Raynaud, *Gradaria spiritualia*, Lugduni 1624, p. 130).

We may therefore conclude that the Christmas crib in the Western popular devotion was efficiently revived by the innovation of the Liturgical "Presepio" of Greccio. In the mind of Francis of Assisi and his Friars it was not only an authorized revival of the dramatic Middle Age performance of the Mystery of the Nativity, but also a picture of the rebirth of Jesus either on the altar or in our souls. Both the revival of the devotion to the crib, and its Eucharistic symbolism are an historic legacy which we owe to the seraphic piety of Francis of Assisi, and which mark a *turning point*, as Nesta de Robeck has admitted (cf. above, p. 44), in the history of Christian devotion.

PARCHED LAND

Pray as the parched land prays for rain,
 Wait as the land waits, thirsting.
 Strike no rock;
 Throw no hail:
 Pray as the land prays, thirsting.

Robert Lax

FIFTH NATIONAL MEETING OF FRANCISCAN TEACHING SISTERS

Over a thousand Franciscan educators from all over the United States met during the Thanksgiving weekend to discuss "Franciscan Life Today." The fifth national meeting of Franciscan Teaching Sisterhoods was held at the College of St. Francis, Joliet, on November 23 and 24, under the auspices of the Franciscan Educational Conference.

The two-day session was opened at the Cathedral of St. Raymond Nonnatus with High Mass celebrated by the Very Rev. Pius Barth, OFM, Minister Provincial of the Sacred Heart Province, St. Louis, Missouri. In his sermon Father Barth underlined the need for a renewal of Franciscan spirit and the necessity of accommodating this spirit to meet the demands of modern times. Like Christ and like Francis the modern Franciscan must first adopt the Gospel and then adapt it. Father Barth told the assembled Franciscan educators, "The Holy Father wants us to be 'healthily modern'. A reasonable authoritative adaptation of our manner of life and living in these United States is in no way a compromise of our religious principles, nor a compromise of our Franciscan spirit. Rather, it is a progressive development and an intensive application of those principles and that spirit to the contemporary scene."

Other sessions of the convention were held at St. Francis Academy, Larkin and Ingalls, Joliet. Reverend Mother M. Borromeo, OSF, Superior General of the Sisters of St. Francis of Mary Immaculate, attended a welcome to the delegates. President of the Franciscan Educational Conference, the Rev. Father Maurice Grajewski, OFM, Christ the King Seminary, West Chicago, keyed the general tenor of the program for this conference. "As

St. Francis met the challenge of his time, so too, we must meet the challenge of the twentieth century in the spirit of St. Francis."

The Rev. Gabriel Buescher, OFM, Holy Family Seminary, Oldenburg, Indiana, defined the terms of renovation and accommodation. "Renovation implies a renewal and deepening of the interior life and an adaptation of external observances to the need and demands of the present time." Following Father Gabriel's presentation a discussion was led by Sisters of the Third Order of St. Francis, Oldenburg, Indiana.

Primacy of Contemplation in the Franciscan Life was treated by the Rev. Aidan Carr, OFM.Conv., St. Anthony-on-the-Hudson Friary, Rennselaer, N. Y. He stated that "the work of Franciscans is to remind the world that the most important element of human living is the love of God. Even though engaged in many and varied fields of labor, the Franciscan must ever be a person of prayer." Sisters of the Congregation of School Sisters of St. Francis, Milwaukee, served as discussion leaders.

A Capuchin friar from Brooklyn, the Rev. Anselm Leahy, O.F.M.Cap., presented a paper on the adjustment of religious to the active life. He described haste in sending young religious out into today's demanding apostolate and stressed the need for solid training in asceticism and Franciscan spirituality during a Sister's formative years. The subsequent discussion was led by Sisters of St. Francis of Penance and Christian Charity, Stella Niagara, New York.

Saturday's sessions were opened with High Mass and sermon by the Rev. Cyril Shircel, OFM, Chaplain of the College

of St. Francis. Father stressed the need for Franciscan theology, philosophy "as an armor in defense against the contemporary reality of our day." The Rev. Myles Schmitz, O.F.M.Cap., of the Capuchin College Washington, D.C., analyzed the place of the religious state in the Church. He contended that "public worship is implicit in the performance of all the acts of a religious with public vows." Discussion leaders were Sisters of Mercy of the Holy Cross from Merrill, Wisconsin. "The vow of obedience perfects personality," stated the Rev. Nathaniel Sonnte, O.F.M.Cap., of St. Felix Friary, Huntington, Indiana. Following Father's paper the floor was opened to the discussion.

Final paper of the conference was given by the Rev. Valerius Messerich, OFM, of Our Lady of the Angels Seminary, Cleveland, Ohio. He spoke on the value of the Common Life, pointing out that "by living together as one family and acting as one family, Franciscans pre-

serve their spirit and ideals." The subsequent discussion was led by Sisters of St. Francis of Mary Immaculate. Joliet Sister *Muriel*, OSF, from St. Francis Academy, Joliet, summarized the two-day meeting.

In connection with the two-day convention Franciscan librarians met to discuss problems and projects in their particular field.

The Executive Board of the Franciscan Educational Conference met to plan time, place, and theme for next year's conference. It was decided to hold next year's meeting at Queen of Angels Retreat House, Saginaw, Michigan on August 20 through August 22, 1957. Discussion will center around Franciscan doctrinal synthesis.

The closing Benediction was given by the Most Rev. Martin D. McNamara, D.D., Bishop of Joliet. Bishop McNamara told the delegates that theirs was an important work.

TRIOLET

I walk the woodlands in the spring,
And hear Love sing in every tree,
Sure of God in everything,
I walk the woodlands in the spring,
Though May holds much nostalgic sting
Yet Eden is such a part of me,
I walk the woodlands in the spring
And hear Love sing in every tree.

Copyright © 1957 by O.S.F.

THE NATIONAL CATHOLIC ALMANAC

are interesting and more than ever, even our increased printing
will go quickly. All Catholic information you are seeking is in the
4 pp., indexed. \$2.50

OUR LADY'S DAILY HOURS

OUR LADY'S DAILY HOURS edited by Dominic Unger, O.F.M.Cap. A
handsomely produced and highly valuable assemblage of materials essen-
tial to understanding the life of Mary. Basic texts are the new Latin
Vulgate and CCD texts of the Psalms. Each prayer separately con-
sidered. Complete text of over 300 pages gives valuable intro-
duction to liturgical prayer. Frontispiece. 560 pp., 2 colors. \$3.00;
luxure, \$7.50

Anthony Guild 33-3 Marshall Street Paterson 3, N. J.

Bonaventure's

in Mentis in Deum

with an Introduction and Commentary by Philotheus
Kahn, O.F.M.

This is the second in our series WORKS OF ST. BONAVENTURE
in English with Latin text.

134

\$2.00

CATHOLIC INSTITUTE

Bonaventure

St. Bonaventure, N. Y.