

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., Columba Duffy, O.F.M., Allan Watts, 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. 2, FEBRUARY, 1957

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Let Us Sing the Praises of 'Brother Book'!

Welcome Address by *MOTHER M. BORROMEO, O.S.F.*, Superior General of the Sisters of St. Francis of Mary Immaculate, at the Fifth National Meeting of Franciscan Sisterhoods, Joliet, November 23-27, 1956.

There is a popular song—or at least a song that was popular not too long ago—entitled, "You'll Never Walk Alone." I am reminded of that song now as I welcome you to this conference of Christian, Franciscan Educators. Just a glance about us, a counting of heads, will give us the assurance, if we ever needed it, that in this work to which we are committed we "never walk alone." In fact, it is to achieve an even greater solidarity of purpose that we have convened during this brief breathing space of a Thanksgiving holiday.

I need not tell you that you are welcome here at St. Francis, and that we are honored to have you with us. The facilities of St. Francis Convent, of the College of St. Francis, and of St. Francis Academy are at your disposal. The sisters of the Motherhouse and of the College and Academy faculties have but one ambition during the days of this conference: to make you visit a pleasant and memorable experience, to make the days of the Conference warm with Franciscan hospitality. Please let us achieve that ambition by letting us know how we may serve you.

I am sure that among other things you will want to tour our new St. Francis Academy. You can have seen only a portion of it in the short time that you have been here. A more extended tour will be possible before the close of the Conference. The Academy Sisters will be on hand to show you around and to answer your questions.

As to the Conference itself, it will prove to be both a stimulation and a challenge, I am sure. It will be a stimulation, a refresher course, as it were, the exhilarating experience of meeting others dedicated like ourselves to a common ideal and enkindling our light from the spark of another's fire. It will provide a challenge, an honest appraisal of the work we are doing and the further work that still must be done.

And I think we will all agree that there is much, much work for Franciscans to do in this frenzied world our twentieth century has spawned. There has never been a time since its 13th century beginnings when there was not a need for the gospel of Francis. Certainly, our streamlined age cannot repudiate it, anachronistic as it may appear under the blinding neon lights of Big Business. Successful today. The need for Franciscanism cannot be outdated until the world returns to form and since that possibility is extremely remote, there

will always be a place for the practical romantic Troubadour who happened also to be a saint.

The children of Abraham must do the works of Abraham, and the progeny of the Poverello down the ages must, in very truth, personalize Franciscanism. A Franciscan must do more than point with pride to the Umbrian hills; the larks of Umbria must sing anew his own life. He cannot content himself with pious reflections on Greccio and Alverna; the swaddled Christ and the crucified God must be for him compelling realities. That was the way of Francis; it must be the way of the Franciscan if the world is to be better because of him.

Christ gave the universal command when he said, "Go ye forth and teach." In a certain sense, then, every Christian must be a teacher, even those who are not professional educators. For the latter there is the double obligation of personal and professional excellence. Christ's work in the Church is to be carried on. Our present Holy Father only recently commented upon the necessity of religious keeping abreast of the times educationally. We must not make Catholic education an inferior product by inadequate preparation for or shall interest in our teaching profession.

Some commentators on the life of Francis give the impression that the Poverello, although perhaps not of a foe to learning, at least took a dim view of it, tolerating it when found in an Anthony of Padua, for instance, but giving it only backhanded encouragement and certainly never singing the praises of "Brother Book."

I think that such a conclusion is a definite misreading of the character of Francis. I cannot believe his poetic soul was oblivious of any avenue of beauty. I believe that his saintly vision perceived the God of Knowledge as well as of Love. I do not believe that indifference to learning is a part of the Franciscan heritage.

True, Francis recognized that learning is a fertile soil for prayer. But where ideals are true, when one works in the shadow of the Eternal, seeking always to *be* as well as to *do*—when, in short, one dramatizes his work, his time, his talents—learning will not be a stranger to be suspected, but a friend to be embraced and shared.

Under the leadership of Our Holy Father, then, with him in the midst, let us spend the days of this Conference, confident that our efforts will know his smiling approval. For we are going to connect ourselves with our Franciscan heritage. We hope to deepen our appreciation of our spiritual birthright and to see more clearly the part that Franciscans must play in the atomic age which rumbles uneasily about us.

I believe our age offers us a challenge that Francis himself would have hastened to accept. He would be the first to snatch up the gauntlet of our weary, war-torn world. He would meet its challenge as he met the challenge of his own troubled times and with the same weapons. Since the Poverello cannot personally enter the 20th century, we, the children of Francis, must do battle in his stead. It is our duty to equip ourselves better for the combat that we are gathered here to face. May the happy warrior of Assisi be with us as we plan our way ahead.



I MAY NOT SAY HIS LOVE IS THRUSHES

I may not say His love
Is thrushes to the ear,
Or days draining off the hills
In red processions. I fear
To say again that He is joy
In the counting of stars on the fingers
Of the soul. Rather, He is a wall—
He is a wall where lingers
Thought that could not surmount
The height of Love,
For the heart is fashioned as broad as Calvary
And swept with thorns and shaped with eternity.
I will not say His love is the high
Sweet things I thought before.
As Judas knows and Mary knows and I begin to know
It is—
His love is
Eternities more.

Sister Florian Eggleston, O.S.F.

The Liturgy of the Sacraments

Fr. Martin Wolter, O.F.M.

The International Liturgical Congress in 1956 took place in Assisi, the birthplace of our Seraphic Father St. Francis. This fact should serve to draw our attention once more to the great love that St. Francis had for the liturgy of the Church as well as to the important role that he and his Order played in developing and promoting this sacred liturgy. This role can be explained adequately only by the historian and the liturgist. In this conference we intend to point out merely some of the reasons why the sacraments in general are important in the Franciscan way of life. In subsequent conferences we hope to consider Franciscan sacramentalism and the individual sacraments.

"In the Church of God there is nothing more holy, nothing more useful and nothing more excellent or more divine than the sacraments instituted by Christ the Lord for the salvation of the human race." Thus does the Roman Ritual briefly but eloquently eulogize the role of the seven sacraments in our Christian life. St. Francis had the same high regard for the sacraments, especially the Holy Eucharist. Thus, for instance, he says in his Letter to All the Friars: "I exhort you to show reverence and all honor possible to the most holy Body and Blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, in whom the things that are in heaven and the things that are on earth are pacified and reconciled to Almighty God."

But let us now consider some of the reasons why the seven sacraments are so holy and so useful—and why St. Francis was so strong in his devotion to them. For the sake of clarity we may consider the nature and value of the sacraments under three headings: (1) Christ, (2) the Church, (3) creation. Christ is the one who instituted the sacraments. The Church is the custodian and administrator of them. Creation, or, better, creatures are the components and instruments of the sacraments.

Christ

The sacraments are most intimately bound up with the person of our Savior, Jesus Christ. All of the sacraments were in some way—though some in detail or in general—instituted by our Lord. Says the Council of Trent: "If anyone says that the sacraments of the New Law were not instituted by Jesus Christ our Lord; or that there are more than seven or fewer than seven. . . let him be anathema (condemned)." The

sacraments therefore come to us as a personal gift from our Savior, an inheritance that he left us before ascending into heaven. It was this thought that made St. Francis, the ardent lover of Christ, so full of gratitude for the gift of the sacraments.

But Christ is not only the efficient cause or institutor of the sacraments. He is also the meritorious cause, since the value of the sacraments lies in the grace that they confer. And this grace is a result of the redeeming death of Christ on the cross. That is one of the reasons why the Church employs the sign of the cross so frequently in the administration of the seven sacraments. She wishes to remind us that we are receiving the fruits of Christ's sacrificial death on the cross. Perhaps we could best express the attitude of the Church in administering to us the sacraments by paraphrasing the words St. Francis used when he entered a church: "We adore thee, most holy Lord Jesus Christ, (in this and in all thy sacraments), and we bless thee, because *by the holy cross* thou hast redeemed the world." Yes, the Church realizes full well that the sacraments owe all their value and power to the grace of Christ that flows from Calvary. The Church tries to teach us that each time we receive one of the sacraments we are, as it were, plucking a ripe fruit from the tree of the cross. St. Francis had learned well that Catholic doctrine concerning the sacraments. That is why he, the lover of the cross, he who wept so bitterly over the sufferings of the Savior, loved also the sacraments and sorrowed at the manner in which they were despised and neglected by so many of his fellow Christians. "There are few who wish to receive him and be saved by him," he laments in his Letter to All the Faithful, and then he goes on to say, "We ought indeed to confess our sins to a priest and receive from him the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ." And so the Franciscan soul, following the lead of the Founder, has always been devoted not only to the holy cross, but also to the sacraments of the Church which are the fruits of the cross.

The sacraments confer upon us the grace of Christ and thereby bring us into intimate contact with him. St. Thomas Aquinas points out that the sacraments are "commemorative signs" that remind us of the historical Christ and of his suffering and death because the grace conferred upon us flows from his cross. The sacraments are "demonstrative signs" which give outward manifestation of the interior holiness they confer, and thus they link us in intimate union with Christ our Savior and his holy Church. The sacraments are "prophetic signs" in that they point out our eternal destiny; a "pledge of future glory" is thus given us and we are destined for eternal union with the glorified Christ and the Church triumphant in heaven.

We have said that Christ is connected with the sacraments because he instituted them. We have noted the manifold connection of Christ with the sacraments in so far as they confer upon us his divine grace and indicate our relationship to him past, present and future. But the sacraments are also related to Christ in so far as he is in some mysterious way present in the minister of the sacrament. It is true that a human being, usually a priest but occasionally a layman, actually administers the sacrament by pouring the water, for example, or anointing with oil. But the sacrament is administered by the authority of Christ in the name of Christ. Thus we baptize "in the name of the Father and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit." St. Augustine therefore tells us that it is not Peter or Paul or Apollo or Judas who does the baptizing but it is "Christ who baptizes." In absolving from sins the Catholic priest uses the words "by the authority of Jesus Christ I absolve thee." And St. James says that the priests of the Church should give the sick man Extreme Unction by "anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord." St. Francis expresses his belief in Christ present in the minister of the sacraments when in his Testament he says of the priests: "I see them I see the Son of God. . ."

Church

This brings us to the second reason why the sacraments are important for the Franciscan spirit and tradition. It is the intimate connection that exists between the sacraments and the Church. The sacraments are visible, tangible signs by which Christ wishes to confer grace to the souls of men. The Catholic Church is the visible organization commissioned by the same Savior to carry on this work of administering the sacraments. Thus he told his Apostles: "Make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit" (Mt. 28, 19)—"Whose sins you shall forgive, they are forgiven them" (Jo. 20, 22)—"Do this in remembrance of me" (Lk. 22, 19).

The Church herself has seen fit to define solemnly this dependence of the sacraments upon the ministry of the official Church and its properly authorized ministers. The Council of Trent declared that "the Church has always had the power to determine or to change things in the administration of the sacraments when it judges that such a procedure would be more useful for those who receive the sacraments or would contribute more to the honor of the sacraments themselves. . . . This same council also condemns the opposite error. 'If anyone say that all Christians have power over the formula and administration of all the sacraments: let him be anathema.' The Church has also clearly pointed out that this official administration of the sacraments on her

point is authoritative, objective and definite, not subjective, vague and therefore uncontrollable. Wycliff and Hus in the late Middle Ages revived the old heresy of Donatism in so far as they made the efficacy of the sacraments depend upon the personal sanctity of the one who administered them. The Council of Constance bluntly replied that "an evil priest who has the correct matter and form and the intention of doing what the Church does, truly effects the Sacrifice, truly absolves, truly baptizes, truly confers the other sacraments."

Of course we do not like to speak about such an unedifying topic as "an evil priest." The Church certainly does not want her priests, who are doing the baptizing and absolving, to be evil persons. But she does want it clear that if there should be such priests administering the holy sacraments, these latter will lose none of their essential efficacy because of the sin in the priest. This is an important point for at least two reasons. One, it sets at ease the minds of the faithful, who might otherwise at times doubt the validity of the sacraments they receive. Two, it counteracts carelessness or even stubborn rebellion on the part of those who might otherwise claim, either justly or arbitrarily, that they need not obey their spiritual shepherds or receive the sacraments from them because of some alleged sin or fault in these priests. History and experience have proven only too well that reception of the sacraments is often the dividing line between believers and heretics.

In regard to this administration of the sacraments, as in so many other things, St. Francis showed himself truly a "Catholic man." In his Testament our holy Father speaks to his friars on the question of being Catholic in connection with the Divine Office. In his Letter to All the Faithful he exhorts the laity "to be Catholics. . . to reverence clergy not only for themselves, if they are sinners, but on account of their office and administration of the most holy body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ." When a village priest was accused by the local heretics of being a sinful man unworthy to be their spiritual shepherd, Francis dramatically portrayed the true Catholic doctrine, emphasizing that the sacraments of Christ come to us through the Church of Christ. "These hands have touched my Lord, and no matter what they be, they could not soil Him or lessen His virtue. To honor the Lord, honor his minister. He can be bad for himself, but for me he is good."

If our attitude the Church and the sacraments is a truly Catholic and Franciscan attitude, then we will be practicing many virtues as we receive them day after day. Our Faith in the Church is developed as we see Christ present in the minister of the sacraments. Our obedience to the Church is exercised when we accept her decisions regarding the time, place and manner of receiving the sacraments. For

instance we must receive Holy Communion at least one a year; we may not receive it more than once a day. *Charity* is fostered when we associate ourselves with our fellow Christians publicly receiving the same sacraments.

Creation

Our Divine Savior was very good to us in giving us his supernatural grace through the visible channels of the seven sacraments. He as God had formed man out of the slime of the earth. As the Second Person of the Blessed Trinity he had himself assumed a true human nature. Hence he was fully aware of the intimate connection between the body and soul of man; he knew that we are taught and influenced through sense perceptions. So it was that Christ came to give us his grace in a visible garment, as it were, that serves as identification. The water of Baptism tells us that our sins are being washed away and we are being immersed into Christ. The absolution of the confessor indicates that we have been judged and acquitted. The white host spells spiritual nourishment for our soul. In all these things we see the merciful goodness of God conforming his operations of grace to the condition of our human nature.

St. Francis of Assisi, ever the lover of nature, was quick to perceive this aspect also of the sacraments of the Church. He was filled with wonder and gratitude that God had thus condescended to show his graces upon us through sacramental forms. Particularly Francis was impressed by the fact that Christ himself used material elements to enshrine his own bodily presence. "I see nothing bodily of the most high Son of God himself except his most holy body and blood," he says in his Testament. Certainly the fact that God himself had made use of created things in instituting the sacraments tended to draw Francis into even closer comradeship with nature and to feel justified in bursting into songs such as his "Canticle of the Creatures."

But we must not overlook a certain element of punishment and ironic revenge, if we may use the term, on the part of God when he selected material creation as a means by which man must be saved. Recall how God had placed Adam and Eve in the most beautiful garden of paradise. Here everything was theirs; all creatures served the good pleasure of man. Only one tree was forbidden to our first parents. But Satan tempted them saying, "Disobey God and eat of that tree; then you will become like gods knowing good and evil." In their pride and ambition our first parents took up the challenge—and were properly punished. Now they had to struggle with earth and its elements, fighting an endless battle to survive and to dominate nature.

Now when Christ came to undo the work of Adam and—instead of making us gods knowing good and evil—to give us the "power of becoming sons of God" (Jo. 1, 12), he resolved to humble man and to make him realize that "dust thou art and unto dust thou shalt return." If anyone wishes to share in Christ's redemption he must obey the conditions set down by Christ and receive the grace of redemption through visible forms. "Unless a man be born again of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God" (Jo. 3, 5). "He who believes and is baptized shall be saved" (Mk. 16, 16). The Garden of Eden was to be a prelude to heaven. In the Christian law heaven can be entered only if we dwell in the garden of the sacraments where we learn over again to humble ourselves and to use material things as the Lord commands. Then these things truly serve us, not merely for temporal welfare, but for eternal happiness as well.

On this point too, St. Francis gives us an excellent reminder. In his Admonitions (No. 5) he recalls that humiliating fall by which the "king of creation" (man) lowered himself by his proud disobedience to the Creator. "Consider, o man, how great the excellence in which the Lord has placed you because he has created and formed you to the image of his beloved Son according to the body and to his own likeness according to the spirit. And all the creatures that are under heaven serve and know and obey their Creator in their own way better than you." Yes, and in the sacraments especially the elements of the earth, bread, wine, oil and water willingly serve the Lord as the instruments of his grace. And if we are equally willing to obey the Lord we shall be the recipients of his grace. How well does the Sacred Liturgy teach us not only the value of material creation, but also the necessity of always using it according to the will of God and not as though we were the absolute lords and masters of his creation.

Let us conclude with a few words about the ceremonies with which the Church surrounds the administration of the sacraments. The Roman Catechism informs us that these ceremonies have a double purpose: to teach and to edify. "They express more clearly and, as it were, permit us to see with our eyes what is effected by the sacraments. . . They impress more deeply upon the hearts of the faithful the sanctity of these things. Besides, they elevate the minds of those who behold and observe them carefully, to the consideration of heavenly things and increase in them faith and love." How like an echo of the earlier words of St. Francis: "I want to observe the memory of that Child who was born at Bethlehem, and in some way see before my bodily eyes the discomforts of his baby needs, how he was laid there in the manger, and with the ox and the ass standing by, he was placed there on the

hay." (*I Cel.* 84) And again in his Letter to All the Friars our holy Father tells us that we ought "in order to *impress* upon ourselves the greatness of the Creator and our subjection to him, to watch the vessel and other objects which contain his holy words." If the sacraments and their accompanying ceremonies are intended to instruct and edify us, then let us like our holy Father Francis show ourselves eager to be instructed and to be impressed by these holy sacraments.

Christ, Church, creation—we have considered the nature and value of the sacraments from these three aspects. And in all of them we have found St. Francis vitally interested. We cannot be a Catholic unless we participate in the sacraments of the Church. We can hardly call ourselves good Franciscans unless we share something of the Seraphic Saint's understanding and appreciation of these sacraments of Christ and his Church.



BLESSED SACRAMENT EXPOSED

Not simply blazing gold
 Diamonded by light,
 Not clouds of incense only
 Nor ritual, nor rite. . .
 Not these alone to me:
 He is a Living Love,
 My Tender Cruelty,
 My Goldsmith of the Monstrance
 Who heats and hammers me
 Into a vessel polished
 For His Divinity.
 He is the Fire that burns me
 Into a holocaust
 Until I drift—a cloud to Him—

Till in Him, I am lost.
 Not simply blazing gold to me.
 The Love is sweetly Real
 Who knows me from a CRUCIFIX. . .
 And I know Him. . .

and kneel. . .

Sister Florian Eggleston, O.S.F.

The Great Bequest

Fr. Thomas Plassmann, O.F.M.

"Now there were standing by the cross of Jesus his mother and his mother's sister, Mary of Cleophas, and Mary Magdalene. When Jesus, therefore, saw his mother and the disciple standing by, whom he loved, he said to his mother, "Woman, behold thy son." Then he said to the disciple, "Behold thy mother." And from that hour the disciple took her into his home." (Jn. 19:25-27)

The scene before us is deeply moving and has tremendous significance for all mankind, especially for those who believe in Christ and His divine message. In order fully to understand the meaning of the Saviour's Third Word in its true significance and far-reaching effects, it is necessary to grasp the momentous import of the occasion.

The Divine Master had completed His journey. Only moments were left before He would return to His Father. The incomprehensibly tremendous work of redemption was coming to a close and only a few moments hence the parched lips of the dying Saviour would close and seal the work He had done by exclaiming, "It is consummated"—a cry that was to ring through the immense spaces of the universe and resound at the Throne of the Almighty.

The three hours on Calvary were precious and each of the Seven Words had a special significance. They were not of the routine or casual type: each one had a definite bearing on the drama before us. The First was a word of mercy for the executioners; the Second, an invitation to the Good Thief. The Third Word, however, applies to mankind in its entirety. It is the great bequest of the Saviour to man. On the Feast of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, we read in the lessons of St. Bernardine of Siena that on this occasion the heart of St. John became a depository of two loves: the love of the Saviour for His Mother, and the Mother's love for her Divine Son. No more appropriate place could be found in all the world for these two loves than the heart of the "disciple whom Jesus loved." Surely, the Saviour on the Cross felt a natural sympathy for His Mother, but all natural considerations seemed to be submerged by the supernatural atmosphere that prevailed on Calvary's heights during the Saviour's last moments on earth.

Our translation renders "Woman, behold thy son." This sounds somewhat harsh in our language, and surely it did not have the same force in the original. It was the way that dutiful sons addressed their mothers. The usual name was "Martha" which means Mistress Lady. At the same time this designation may have been chosen by the Lord because from now on His Mother stepped forth as the rep-

representative of all womankind. In reality, as the Fathers tell us, she was the Second Eve, "the Mother of all the living."

We must remember that in this twentieth century we have learned far more about the Blessed Mother than the early Christians knew explicitly. They believed Mary to be immaculate virgin, assumed into heaven, mediatrix of all graces. Now we know these truths more clearly for they have been so declared by infallible authority.

The scene on Calvary brings home to us a most significant event. As the Fathers and Doctors of the Church tell us, when the blood flowed from the Saviour's side, our Church was born. The Church, however, according to explicit teaching of sacred scripture, is the Mystical Body of Christ. And even as Mary was the natural Mother of the Saviour in the flesh, so she remained the Mother of the Saviour in the Church of which He is the invisible Head. Mary, therefore, became by every right title the Mother of the Whole Christ, that is, the Mystical Body.

To the all-knowing mind of Christ on the cross all this was clear and His words should be interpreted in the light of these truths. Therefore when on the cross He said to His Mother, "Woman, behold thy Son," He spoke to her not merely in her natural motherhood, but also in her mystical motherhood. He did not resign for a moment His Sonship. No, it was His delight to remain the Son of Mary for all eternity, but His Sonship was broadened out into a larger sonship for it was to embrace all the brethren, that is, all the sons and daughters of God by divine grace.

In this sense we must understand our Saviour's Word to John. He does not address Him as son, but simply "Behold thy mother." Saint John plays a significant part in the gospel story and in the early Church. When all the apostles had departed this life, Saint John alone remained as the venerable prelate of Ephesus. Saint John wrote the magnificent prophetic work, the Apocalypse, which tells the story of the Church of Christ. He wrote the Last Gospel which places the seal of divinity on the fundamental truths of our religion, namely the Divinity of Christ. No wonder Our Lord said to Peter, "If I will have Him remain until I come, what is it to thee?" Yes, Jesus wanted Saint John to remain until the Church had arrived at full growth. He was the pillar and mainstay of His promises and His love for the Church. From the cross the Saviour saw prophetically the Son who would raise the entire Church and who would foster, nourish, and fulfill all her aspirations. In this way Saint John would stand by Mary's natural Son and become His apostle and champion. In this sense he became Mary's son in two ways, first as her support and

helper in her natural life, and secondly as her friend and promoter in her mystical motherhood of Christ's Mystical Body, the Church.

It should be remarked, incidentally, that the Blessed Virgin fully renewed and filled her role. She stayed in the home of the disciple whom Jesus loved, but in her larger role she remained with the apostles in the Cenacle until the day of the Ascension. During this time, so Saint Bonaventure tells us, she instructed the apostles in the many things that her divine Son had said and done and which are not recorded on the pages of sacred scripture. In this way Mary may be regarded as the primary source of apostolic tradition, which is one of the two sources of our holy Faith.

It is also to be noted that the new son who was given to her under the cross, Saint John, the Apostle, set his new Mother a glorious monument when in the Apocalypse he describes her as "a woman clothed with the sun, the moon at her feet, and twelve stars around her brow."



Love
is
the light air and
emanation
of
power
and
wisdom
at
play.

Robert Lax

When The Spirit And Flesh Meet

Fr. Manfred Schexnayder, O.F.M.

Amidst the turbulence of seventeenth century Europe, one voice was clearly heard. "Il santo is coming." Nations stopped in mid-stride to turn and look. A little man clothed in the brown of the Capuchins appeared. But only seventy-five years ago this call was repeated. The vaults of St. Peter's resounded with its echos. This time "Il santo" was uttered, not only as an exclamation of enthusiasm, but also as an official and canonical statement. For in 1881, December 8, Lawrence of Brindisi was declared a Saint. Saint he was, a man of the spirit, a man of God. And such a man the seventeenth century needed.

Gray and muggy that century dawned. Goblin-like, the Reformation had grown, devouring Europe. Over and above this, the spirit of nationalism and independence permeated the very fibers of the continent. Look at Spain. Externally a picture of health, but internally Philip II and Philip III were as autocratic and self-sufficient as any European prince. And France, a country once Catholic in every sense of the word, now was cut asunder by Huguenots and Catholics. At the same time, all was not well in the Holy Roman Empire. Such were the conditions that at any moment open war could flare. Catholic and Lutheran princes held matches to a powder keg. Meanwhile, further east in the slavic states, more trouble loomed. The Moslem Turks seeking revenge for their former defeats again marched on Christian Europe.

Against these forces of the flesh St. Lawrence of Brindisi constantly fought. First quelling his own worldly tendencies, he set out to turn men back to God. To those who sought the things of the spirit St. Lawrence was a herald of Truth and Life. And to those who thought only of their own selfish interests, this saint was a stumbling block. Prophet-like St. Lawrence condemned these men. But, immersed in his smugness, they only smiled their cynicism.

In 1599 St. Lawrence of Brindisi set out from Venice for Vienna. Arriving in the Austrian capitol he and his companions walked into a hornet's nest. The Catholics looked askance at these barefoot, brown-robed Capuchins. As for the Protestant reformers, they seldom allowed an occasion to pass without mocking and ridiculing them. On one occasion they attempted to throw St. Lawrence into a river, but were thwarted by the timely arrival of soldiers. Hearing of this incident the Duke of Bavaria suggested that a guard of soldiers accompany the friars. To this favor St. Lawrence replied, "My lord Duke, the clash of arms and a pure faith do not well agree."

Until better times St. Lawrence and his companions had to endure the Catholics' indifference and the Protestants' jibes. Soon however, these men of the flesh would change.

Two years later, in 1601, the Moslem Turks began their march on Europe. Even then they were battering at the frontier doors. Seeking means of defense, Catholic and Protestant princes hastily called councils of war. With one purpose in mind, stop the Turks, they laid aside their bigotry to take up arms. An army of 18,000 assembled. And right in its midst four Capuchins worked. Zealously and untiringly St. Lawrence of Brindisi and three confreres heard confessions, offered Masses, distributed communion, counseled and consoled the worried and troubled.

Watching these friars work, the Protestants were silent. Occasionally one of them made a wise-crack. It was not long before they expressed their disdain. With a note of derision they coined a name for St. Lawrence—Wolf-priest. Little did they know how well the name fitted. For he saw in life one purpose, the dominance of the spirit over the flesh. Like the wolf seeking its prey, St. Lawrence never deviated from this one aim. Clearly he perceived the necessity of real, true Christians. For in a war against any anti-Christian only sincere followers of Truth could emerge victorious.

Finally in October, 1601, the christian army faced the Turks. Trembling and fearful, 18,000 Christians stood before 80,000 well-entrenched Turks. Outnumbered five to one, the Christians hurled themselves at the enemy. Once, twice, the armies clashed. And twice the Christians were beaten back. To the christian commanders this was a useless and costly affair. No army could rout those Turks. With that, they decided to give up and withdraw.

Quickly the news of the proposed retreat spread throughout the camp. Hearing it, St. Lawrence was dismayed. Was Europe finally to succumb to these invaders? A Turkish victory would mean the destruction of Europe; and for the Church, another dark age. Without hesitating St. Lawrence barged into the conference. But arguing meant nothing. These men were too practical for further useless fighting. Only deeds would now convince them.

Exasperated at the leaders' reluctance, St. Lawrence acted. "I myself will lead this army. Holding this crucifix high, I will lead you to the very midst of the enemy. And with the help of Christ, we will emerge victorious."

The generals were taken aback by this show of folly. They grumbled and argued. At long last they agreed to one more fight as long as a "wolf-priest" would keep his word.

For four days St. Lawrence ranged over the battle-field. Unarmed save for his crucifix, he passed from one fray to another. No skirmish was too fierce. He seemed to lead a charmed life. In fact, the soldiers noticed something strange. Wherever St. Lawrence rode, the enemies' weapons were useless. Cannonballs fell harmlessly to the ground while swords and lances cut only the air. Marveling, the Christians took courage and redoubled their efforts, assured of victory. Fighting like possessed men, they made short work of the entrenched Turks.

Every Catholic and Protestant triumphantly cheered their new general, St. Lawrence of Brindisi, the "wolf-priest." In addition to crushing the Turks, the man of God overthrew a more subtle enemy—indifference and bigotry. Hitherto lax Catholics became fervent; many of the Protestants renounced their heresy and embraced Catholicism. Over and above this, some followed their "general" into the cloister to become his confreres.

Against these men of the flesh, the man in the street, St. Lawrence was invincible. He could give them what they consciously or unconsciously sought, Truth and the promise of Salvation. Even so, when St. Lawrence faced the hardened conceit of the court, it was something different. He preached of conversion and the court replied, "Uh! Yes, but. . . Come again another time." And to miracles it cried out, "This is the work of the devil."

Before meeting this new adversary, St. Lawrence returned to Italy. There, he wished to lead only the life of an ordinary friar. However, Pope Paul V thought differently. In 1605 he commissioned the saint to return and evangelize Germany. Obediently this little Italian Capuchin recrossed the Alps.

By this time Germany had developed into a patch-work of Catholic and Lutheran provinces. Slowly it had evolved into a confused mosaic. Austria and Bavaria, on the other hand, although Catholic, often favored the Protestants. Beneath their Catholic surface ran a strong Protestant undercurrent. And now with the Turkish threat eliminated, mutual respect and tolerance were laid aside, like any weak measure. And in their place bigotry arose. Still, what had happened to the once fearless German defenders of the Faith? What were the Catholic princes doing? Simply this. They had switched interests. They had laid aside religion. As it receded, the princes dreamed of power and thrones, which were already tottering within their grasp.

In the meantime, the Protestants, seeing the confused mass of Catholic princes, grasped the chance of a lifetime. Openly they flouted

the Peace of Augsburg (1551) which guaranteed the freedom of religious worship. And no one rose to defend his rights.

Upon this scene of brow-beaten Catholics and cocky reformers, St. Lawrence of Brindisi walked in 1605. To him the first step in evangelizing Germany was obvious—stir the Catholic princes from their lethargy. Not with general principles only did he assail them, but also he flung into their faces a particular incident, one clearly showing the violation of the Catholics' rights.

In southern Germany at Donauworth, midway between Augsburg and Nuremberg, Catholic and Protestant openly clashed. The Protestants had refused to allow the Benedictines to hold their annual Rogation Day procession through the fields. Instead, they had limited the celebration to a small back lane adjoining the monastery. At first the Abbot condescended but soon tired of this unjust treatment. In 1606 he announced that the procession would take place as in the old days. Yet, when the procession did form, the Protestants streamed out of the town and dispersed the people and monks.

At this show of violence, the abbot appealed to the princes for redress. His rights and those of every German Catholic had been violated. Nevertheless, to his demands a deaf ear listened. No one but St. Lawrence of Brindisi lifted a voice against the Protestants. Demanding action, he walked from one prince to another. He even appeared before the emperor, Rudolph II. Mounting the pulpit, he presented the case to the people. Yet in each instance he met the same blank expression. And Donauworth returned to its obscurity.

The drowsy Catholic princes, however, did awake. Neither miracle nor sermon worked this marvel. It was the Protestants themselves. For in 1608 the Catholic princes were forced from their lethargy to stare into the face of the Protestant Union bent on the control of the Holy Roman Empire. Fearing for their tottering thrones, the Catholic rulers aimlessly cast about for a counter-measure. A year later, 1609, they formed the Catholic League. Nevertheless, it was too weak to withstand the Protestant Union. To shift the weight of power from the Protestant to the Catholic side, an appeal to Spain was needed.

Who was to fulfill this mission? Who could safely journey through the Protestant provinces and jealous France? Looking about, the Catholic League saw one man. He alone possessed sufficient knowledge of the conditions in the Holy Roman Empire to present adequately the needs of the Catholic League. Furthermore, the chances of detection were decreased. In that same year, 1609, St. Lawrence of Brindisi

journeyed to Spain. Arriving there, he presented himself to Philip II. At first the king refused any assistance, but he was no match for the Capuchin. With fingers crossed Philip III promised aid if and when needed.

As soon as St. Lawrence returned to the Catholic League and told of the promised aid, the Protestant Union calmed down. It decided to wait for a better opportunity to seize the government.

Now the Catholics in Germany, Austria and Bavaria had arisen. This did not make St. Lawrence of Brindisi any younger. Nor did it reclaim his body from the ravages of international travel. Presenting these reasons, he asked to be relieved of his post. Permission was granted, and for the last time he crossed the Alps into Italy, but not for rest.

Wherever he went people flocked to see and hear him. So great was their desire that on several occasions St. Lawrence had to be smuggled out of the towns lest he be mobbed. However, he had no chance to lay aside his role as diplomat. Twice more before his death he journeyed to Spain. Certain complaints between Spain and her possessions in Italy needed ironing out. In both instances, St. Lawrence of Brindisi obtained a just and equitable settlement. Even so, when on his last journey to Spain in 1619, he died at Lisbon during his return home.

Now this man of the spirit could rest. Finally, he could reap the eternal reward for his victory over the flesh. And some two-hundred years afterwards, in 1881, the Church having examined his life and having found him a man of the spirit, a man of God, declared Lawrence of Brindisi, that small Italian Capuchin, a Saint.



A General Synthesis of the Theology of John Duns Scotus

Fr. Marianus Mueller, O.F.M.

III. LOVE AS THE MOTIVE AND PRINCIPLE OF ORDER

As we have said, it is love, according to Scotus, that moves God to communicate Himself; for in His deepest Essence He is love. He therefore continuously realizes the concept of love: in His life He brings it to its fullest development; in His activity He gives it its most perfect presentation. Everything that love implies—all its being and activity—is realized in God; He completely exhausts the concept of love. The inner life of the Trinity completes itself in the most exalted love, in the breathing forth of the Holy Spirit Who is personal love become the Person, Love.¹ God—the Divine Essence—is consequently the ultimate foundation of all love, and as such He presents Himself as the highest value and as totally lovable. Right order, consequently, demands that God be also the final goal of all love, and that His first intention of love must be directed toward Himself and His own Essence: "*Primo diligit se*—first He loves Himself."² According to the beautiful psychology of Richard of Saint Victor, which Scotus adopts here, every perfect, generous, and unselfish love desires co-lovers (*condiligentes*).³ Nothing of the narrowness and exclusiveness of created love is proper to entirely pure and selfless love; there is nothing in it of that tendency to possess the beloved for oneself alone and to permit no co-lovers. On the contrary, perfect love seeks co-lovers in order that the beloved may be loved the more by being loved by many, and that the co-lovers may also participate in the bliss of that love. "He who loves perfectly wills the beloved to be loved. . . and to have him held dear and cherished by another."⁴ Since God's love for Himself—that is, for His Essence—is most perfect, He neither can nor will remain entirely alone. Accordingly, in the Son and the Holy Ghost, the Father associates Himself with infinite and consequently perfect co-lovers. Thus in His plurality of persons, the Triune God first loves Himself, that is, His divine Essence, but He wills to draw into His love persons outside Himself. In the second place, then, He desires the elect. He wills them for their sake and in order that they might love with Him the same object

of love, the divine Essence. "In the second place, as Scotus puts it, "God wills the elect. . . and that as it were reflexively, by wishing others love with Him the same object. . . Therefore He first loves Himself and secondly He wills to have other co-lovers."⁵ It is out of love that God directly desires Himself as the goal of all things; and that He desires other beings who in turn shall join Him in loving. Herein lies the final *ratio* of all predestination.⁶ At the very beginning of all things, ways that proceed from the Holy Trinity, at the beginning of all predestination, we find love which desires to give gratuitously and selflessly.⁷ "Thou art boundlessly good and with overflowing generosity Thou communicatest the rays of Thy goodness."⁸ Thus Scotus praises God. It is because of His love that God created all things: "God created the universe because of Himself, whence God, loving Himself, made it for Himself."⁹

Here again we emphasize that the point that God creates everything from the motive of purest liberality, and that the overflowfulness of His gifts has its ultimate foundation in the riches of the divinity: "It is fitting for God to give great rewards as He pleases, for to do this is to act according to His state."¹⁰

Being most perfect, divine love seeks to attain the objects of predestination in the most orderly and rational manner, because the divine will and love always follow the most reasonable course possible: "Whatever God causes outside Himself He causes in the most orderly manner out of the greatest love."¹¹ This principle of order corresponding to the demands of the intellect runs as follows: "First the end, then that which stands nearest or is immediate to the end, and finally that which stands in mediate relation to the end." "Everyone who wills rationally wills, first the end, and second that which attains immediately to the end, and third, those things which are more remotely ordered to the attaining of the end."¹² The goal of the divine operation both within and without the Trinity is the glorification of the divine Essence through love. Now the greater the creature's contribution to this end and the more perfect its glorification through love, the closer it lies to this goal—and is therefore preferred by God and predestined by Him in that precise degree and order. But the greater and the higher the value of the creature—which of course depends again on the free will of God¹³—the more it contributes to the end and the greater preeminence it enjoys in the plan of predestination. That is why Christ, for example, must be the first predestined of all creatures, because He is without doubt the highest and the most perfect creature and gives God the highest adoration, honor, and love.

IV. PREDESTINATION AND FOREKNOWLEDGE IN GOD

God wills the greater or lesser proximity of a thing to the final end. This principle—that proximity determines divine volition and predestination—shows itself precisely in the supernatural order. God desires most graciously to give Himself to creatures. Hence, as befits His desire, He wishes to give men the means to possess Him most immediately. It is through glory that we possess God immediately. Consequently, God wills for all creatures—even for Christ—glory first, and then that grace corresponding to glory, by which grace the creature possesses and recognizes God mediately: "After God wills Himself to someone. . . He wills to that person the act of glory by which he immediately attains to Him, and thus thirdly the grace disposing to glory."¹⁴ From this it is evident that the predestination of Christ as well as that of other creatures was already determined even before Adam's fall and was only modified by the fall. Scotus establishes this position in accordance with his view of love, by maintaining that no one should draw profit from the fall of another and have reason to rejoice over the fall of another. "We can therefore say," writes Scotus, "that prior to all knowledge of sinners, sin, and punishment, God preordained the nature of all men and angels, so that no one was preordained solely with reference to the foreseen fall of another. Accordingly, no one has been put in the position of being able to rejoice over the fall of another."¹⁵ Preelection as well as non-preelection is determined absolutely according to the free choice of grace.

True to his position that emphasizes the greatest possible independence of the freely-giving divine love, Scotus also makes the foreknowledge of God concerning contingent things and events dependent not on the state of the creature but on the decrees of God's will. He considers it possible that the divine intellect knows the determinations of the divine will ("intellectus divinus videt determinationem voluntatis divinae")¹⁶ and from this draws knowledge of contingent things. And even if Scotus notes that this view drags into the divine intellect a sort of discursive thinking, nevertheless, as Lychetus rightly points out in his commentary on Scotus, our teacher does not disapprove of this manner of speaking: "Non tamen Doctor improbat hunc modum loqui." In our own time, Schwamm¹⁸ has convincingly shown that Francis De Mayronis, O.P. (died 1325), a disciple of Scotus, designated the teaching of the divine foreknowledge derived from the decrees of the divine will as "Praevisio in decretis pradeterminantibus" the "teaching of our Doctor." John de Ripa, William Ockham—who at this point opposes Scotus—Peter de Candia, John de Basile, and

many other authors of the fourteenth century, assert the same thing so that there remains but little doubt as to the Scotistic origin of the doctrine. Minges¹⁹ believes that in this question Scotus took a middle course between Thomism and Molinism, since on the one hand he affirms the good points of the Thomistic teaching, and on the other hand energetically emphasizes man's freedom of will and responsibility.

V. ORDER AND SEQUENCE IN PREDESTINATION

In the doctrine of Duns Scotus all the purposes of divine will and predestination are arranged in sequence according to their greater or lesser proximity to the final end of love which the Trinity will. In the matter of predestination, God's will is founded in His very Essence, so that God is the "Selbstmacht des Seins," as Karl Adam has expressed it. In His activity of love and knowledge, therefore, God is not determined by external objects in any way. Further, this predestination-volition of God is a single act; and consequently there is in God but one single act of knowledge and love in which He knows and loves all things.²⁰ The object of this act is the divine Essence itself. Scotus writes: "We have but one single act to consider in all the varying degrees of predestination. The content of this act is an incomparable love for all things." The inequality of this love is not to be taken as absolute but to be taken as holding only under the aspect of the manner in which it reaches out to the various beloved objects. God loves all things in differing degrees ("non aequaliter"), each just as it is the more or the less immediately directed to the end. Hence, with respect to the act of love as it reaches out to different objects, God is said to love things not equally, for His love is not referred in the same manner ("non uniformiter") to all objects.²¹ The final *ratio* of degrees of divine love for creatures lies in this, that God desires a hierarchically graduated order in creation, and therefore imparts a corresponding degree of grace and glory to each. He whom God wishes to take a higher position is endowed with a greater grace, and hence also with a greater love, than he who is to take a lower position. "God wishes to endow those whom, as it were, He has chosen as His familiars with glory that corresponds to the varying gradations they will have according to His will in the celestial realm. He wishes to give them the grace that prepares them and renders them worthy to take their various positions in His household."²²

1. Christ's Primacy in Creation

It does not satisfy the love of our God to have a plurality of loving persons in the Trinity; in His overflowing goodness He wishes out of

love and for the purpose of love—to draw still other beings into the bliss of His love. Therein lies the motive of creation: "Vult alios habere condiligentes—He wishes to have other co-lovers."

Since God is infinite, He wishes to give Himself infinitely to at least one being outside the Deity; to make that creature the highest work of creation ("summum opus Dei"); and to grant that being a place at the very peak of all creation as the most perfectly loving being: "God . . . wills Himself to be loved by Him who can love Him in the highest degree, speaking of the love of someone else outside Himself."²³ This creature, first in the order of creation and therefore predestined before all, is Christ: "God wills Himself, and after Himself, immediately as far as it is outside Himself, the soul of Christ; therefore first after willing it intrinsically, He wills this grace to Christ."²⁴

It is the goodness of God that effects this highest work of creation, the incarnation of the Logos: "Among all the works of God there was no merely gratuitous work except only the incarnation of the Son of God."²⁵ Therefore Christ was predestined to the Incarnation absolutely out of the purest divine liberality, without respect to any merit or demerit. Consequently, He would also have become man even if Adam had not sinned. Indeed, even if no other being had been created, the Incarnation of Christ would have taken place. "Even if neither man nor angel had fallen, or if no other man had been created but Christ alone, Christ would still have been thus predestined."²⁶

Christ, therefore, is the model of mankind; He is the fulfillment of the purpose of creation and consequently the "primum volitum inter omnia creata volita." And in so far as He, as the *Summum Opus Dei*, is the highest co-loving being with respect to God, there rests upon Him in like measure the Trinity's loving gaze of incomparable complacency: "Christ was most dear and beloved by the entire Trinity; because God gave Him grace without measure."²⁷ In Christ, the Trinity has deposited the entire fulness of the divinity and of grace.

2. Mary's Position

But God's beneficent love was not yet exhausted. "Vult alios habere condiligentes." It will have yet other co-lovers. God does not want Christ to exist alone. Rather, it is His will that the God-Man have a multitude of created beings so that He may make His rational followers, Himself and through Himself, partakers of the priceless glory of His grace; and that He might pour out on them the ineffable treasures of His heart and might have them, as His members, share those treasures.

Among these created beings, the creature that follows Christ immediately in the plan of creation is the one who is most closely bound to Him and who stands nearest to Him, is Mary. She therefore occupies the second place in the world-plan. Like Christ, she was created out of love and for the purpose of love.

When Scotus, as faithful disciple and spiritual imitator of the Seraphic Father, sounds the praises of Christ the King, he follows the principle: "In praising Christ, I would rather over-abound than lack in the praises that may be due Him."²⁸ A similar principle guides him when praising the Queen of Heaven: To assert of Mary that which contributes more to her honor is the more certain course, provided that it does not contradict the authority of the church and Scripture."²⁹ Hence he acclaims Mary as the one creature pre-redeemed³⁰ by Christ, and as such the immaculately conceived mother of God.³¹ Her title to primacy springs from her election to the divine motherhood.

In the Scotistic concept of the universe, therefore, Mary ranks above Adam and Eve and receives her place at the side of Christ for the reason of her dignity as His mother. Christ and Mary are the phototypes according to which Adam and Eve and all mankind are modeled. They are the two most perfect co-loving beings.

3. Angels and Men

The beneficent goodness of God demanded still more: *vult alii habere condiligentes*. Therefore, God decreed the creation of angels and men, and this again out of love and for the purpose of love. "Whatever God causes outside Himself, He cause out of the greatest love."³²

God created angels and men. He gave them being and goodness that with Him they might love the divine Essence and be happy in the love. Furthermore, He created them so that no one is exactly like another in every respect. Every angel and every man is individually different. Thus creatures present God's own fulness of being and goodness in the most visible and glorious manner: "Propter bonitatem suam communicandam et propter beatitudinem [communicandam, Deus] pluram eadem specie produxit"³⁴ God chose to create angels and men in the greatest variety of degrees in rank and excellence so that they might give an exalted testimony to the inexhaustible fulness of the divine art (*divina*). "Deus praelegit ad illam curiam caelestem omnes quos vult habere angelos et homines, in certis et determinatis gradibus."³⁵

Since we have been created out of love and for the purpose of love, the purpose of our being is constantly fulfilled in love. We are here

we are here for love. Love is the bond of unity in the Franciscan concept of the universe as expressed in the theology of Duns Scotus.

4. Revelation and Grace

But God is not satisfied with creating angels and men to fulfill, through love, their purpose in life and reach their highest goal, the glorification of the Godhead through love; He wills also to give them all that is needed for the supernatural realization of this purpose. Indeed, since He always wills according to right order, He wills to give them those means which are more proximate to the goal, the *propinquius ad finem*. These are glory, grace, and all supernatural gifts: "Deinde collatio gratiae et aliorum supernaturalium, quibus immediate attinamus finem."³⁶ To these supernatural gifts belong above all revelation and grace.³⁷

By this new supernatural endowment, God wishes, as it were, to more strictly oblige creatures to love, in order that they be led to fulfill their purpose in life—which is to love God—from the additional motive of gratitude. Christ, as the highest work of God, has been immediately endowed by the Trinity with the most perfect liberality, since the Incarnation took place without merit, out of pure grace.³⁸ Therefore Christ, as a creature, is bound by infinite gratitude to love the Trinity. In Christ is contained the Logos, the Eternal Word, into which the Father from all eternity has spoken the fulness of divinity. It is through Christ, as Eternal Word, that revelation is made to us, in as much as He repeats what the Father has spoken into Him. We are then mediately endowed by the Triune God through Christ as Mediator. Moreover, in Christ dwells the fulness of all graces; it is through Him that we are to receive grace upon grace. Accordingly, we are indebted to Christ for grace and revelation. Through Christ, therefore, God has obliged us more strictly to a still greater love of the Trinity, and it is through Christ that we attain to that love.

(To be continued)

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se, et ex consequenti illa efficere in me." ⁷Rep. 1, d. 17, q. 2, n. 17 (22, 211). "Diligens aliquid propter se amore liberalitatis, non amore zelotypiae, diligit omnia diligentia illud primum diligibile, et omnia quae sunt ratio diligendi illud, inclinandi in amorem ejus; Deus autem sic diligit objectum suum primum, id est in amorem ejus." ⁸De prim. Princ., c. 4, n. 36 (4, 786b). ⁹Rep. 4, d. 49, q. 1, n. 10 (24, 657b). ¹⁰Oxon. 1, d. 41, q. un. n. 14 (10, 699b). ¹¹Rep. 2, d. 3, q. 1, n. 1 (23, 191a). ¹²Cf. note 50, Rep. 3, d. 32, q. un. n. 10-11 (23, 508). ¹³Oxon. 3, d. 32, q. un. n. 6 (15, 434a): "Ista inaequalitas dilectionis hoc effectus dilectionis, concedenda est non solum quantum ad gradus específicos, etiam in individuís ejusdem speciei; nec ratio hujus est natura in isto et in illa sed sola voluntas divina." ¹⁴E. Longpre, op. cit., 222. ¹⁵Oxon. 3, d. 7, q. 4 (14, 355b). ¹⁶Oxon. 1, d. 39, q. un. n. 22 (10, 639b). ¹⁷Op. cit., Comm. Lycheti, n. 21 (10, 640b). ¹⁸H. Schwamm, "Magistri Joannis de Ripa, O.P., doctrina de praescientia divina," *Analecta Gregoriana*, fasc. 1, (Romae, 1914), 147-156. ¹⁹Cf. P. Minges, op. cit., 431-32, 433. ²⁰Rep., 3, d. 32, q. un. n. 10 (23, 507b). ²¹Ibid., n. 11 (23, 508ab). ²²E. Longpre, op. cit., 222. ²³Rep. 3, d. 7, q. 4, n. 5 (23, 303b), Ms. F. 69 of the Cathedral Chapter library of Worcester, in E. Longpre, op. cit., p. 38, n. 120. ²⁴Ibid., n. 122, p. 39. ²⁵Oxon., 4, d. 2, q. un. n. 11 (16, 248). ²⁶Rep., 3, d. 7, q. 4, n. 4 (23, 303a), Ms. F. Worcester, *ibid.* 39, n. 122. ²⁷Rep. 4, d. 2, q. 1, n. 7 (23, 570b). ²⁸Oxon. d. 13, q. 4, n. 9 (14, 463b). ²⁹Ibid., 3, d. 3, q. 1, n. 10 (14, 165b). ³⁰Rep. 3, d. 3, q. 1, n. 14 (14, 171b). ³¹Rep., 4, d. 16, q. 2, n. 26 (24, 272b). ³²Ibid., 3, d. 25, q. un. n. 9 (23, 464). ³³Ibid., 2, d. 3, q. 7, n. 10 (12, 269b). ³⁴Oxon. 2, d. 3, q. 7, n. 10 (12, 269b). ³⁵Oxon. 3, d. 7, q. 3, n. 4 (14, 355b). ³⁶Rep. 3, d. 32, q. un. n. 11 (23, 508a). ³⁷Oxon. 1, d. 41, q. un. n. 11 (10, 697ab).



Discussion ✓

Imaginary Obstacles to the De Montfort Consecration

Many people are hesitant about consecrating themselves in total slavery to Our Blessed Mother. This hesitancy is due, in most cases, to one or more false concepts regarding the meaning and obligations of the Consecration. That such incorrect ideas are provoked by Satan, either directly or indirectly, we have no doubt. Let us now discuss some of the more common of these mental blocks.

Why Not Go Directly to God?

This question embodies one of the most powerful and most effective of all Satan's anti-De Montfort snares. It is particularly crafty and annoying for two reasons: 1) it contains a dangerous half-truth; and 2) it cannot be satisfactorily refuted with just a few words. Persons who for this reason abstain from total slavery have a false devotion both to God and to Mary. De Montfort calls them the *Scrupulous Devotees*: "What they say is in a certain sense true, but in the application they make of it, namely to hinder devotion to our Blessed Lady, is very dangerous; and it is, under pretext of a greater good, a subtle snare of the evil one." (*True Devotion*, par. 94).

De Montfort never said that we may not pray directly to God. He simply says that *it is more perfect* to pray through a mediator. "It is more perfect, because it is more humble, not to approach God of ourselves without taking a mediator. Our nature, as I have just shown, is so corrupted that if we rely on our own works, efforts and preparations in order to reach God and please Him, it is certain that our good works will be defiled or be of little weight before God in inducing Him to unite Himself to us and to hear us. It is not without reason that God has given us mediators with His Majesty. He has seen our unworthiness and our incapacity; He has had pity on us; and in order to give us access to His mercies, He has provided us with powerful intercessors with His Grandeur, so that to neglect these mediators, and to draw near to His Holiness directly, and without any recommendation, is to fail in humility. It is to fail in respect toward God, so high and so holy. To make less account of that King of Kings than we should make of a king or prince of this earth, whom we would not willingly approach without some friend to speak for us." (*True Devotion*, par. 83). This is confirmed by the practice of the Church. All liturgical prayer to God is directed through Jesus.

It is when in the company of Jesus that the creature best approaches God the Father. The whole idea of mediation consists in this that the prayers and works performed in union with Jesus are accepted by God the Father as the prayers and works of Jesus. The one necessary condition is that the soul be really and truly in union with Jesus. This union is best guaranteed by total slavery to Jesus through Mary as conceived by St. Louis De Montfort.

Interferes With Devotion to the Sacred Heart?

The exact opposite is true. There is no greater devotee of the Sacred Heart than the slave of Mary. To bring souls to the Sacred Heart of Jesus is the one ambition of Mary and the one purpose of her holy slavery. Jesus is the ultimate end of all devotion to Mary. "If we establish solid devotion to our Blessed Lady, it is only to establish more perfectly devotion to Jesus Christ. . . Devotion to Our Lady is necessary to us as a means of finding Jesus Christ perfectly, of loving Him tenderly, of serving Him faithfully." The biography of Margaret Mary confirms this elementary principle of Christian asceticism. It was her tender devotion to Our Blessed Mother which opened the door to her wondrous mystical union with the Sacred Heart of Jesus. She did not receive this extraordinary grace except through Mary. In several of the apparitions, too, it was Our Lady who explained to St. Margaret Mary the ineffable secrets and riches of the Divine Heart. It was not St. Louis De Montfort, but God Himself, Who made Mary the bridge between Jesus and mankind. De Montfort was quoting St. Augustine when he wrote: "Our Blessed Lady is the means our Lord made use of to come to us. She is also the means which we MUST make use of to go to Him." (*True Devotion*, par. 75).

Can't Pray to the Saints?

Only Satan would have the effrontery to suggest this one. If St. Louis De Montfort had taught that we should not pray to the Saints and Angels he would have been condemned as a heretic and not canonized as a Saint. A true slave of Mary prays to the Saints each day in the Sacred Liturgy. Nor would Our Lady be pleased if her slaves failed in their private devotions to pray to at least St. Joseph, their Guardian Angel, and their Patron Saints. Total consecration affects our prayers to the Angels and Saints in only two ways: 1. It makes them more meritorious because they come from a slave of Mary. 2. It takes their satisfactory and impetratory value out of our hands

and gives it to Our Blessed Mother. "Our satisfactions, however, we offer to her, to communicate to whom she likes, and for the greatest glory of God" (*True Devotion*, par. 122).

Conflicts With Other Marian Devotions?

Unfortunately this unsound attitude is not at all infrequent among even sincere Catholics. They will tell you that their favorite devotion is to Our Sorrowful Mother, or Our Lady of Perpetual Help, etc., and that they have no desire to "switch to De Montfort." This can reach a ridiculous extreme. Our Lady is not a split personality. It is true that certain Religious Order have been given the vocation of emphasizing a specific prerogative of Our Blessed Lady (e.g. the Servites and the Visitation of Mary) but this was done only because that particular prerogative was in danger of neglect by the faithful. It did not mean that all the other manifold privileges and glories of Our Lady were to be foreign to that Religious Order. It is likewise true that all saintly souls have a favorite devotion to Mary. This may be due to grace, background, personal taste, or even to the fact that the prerogatives of Our Lady are too multitudinous for the short span of anyone's life. De Montfort's, however, is not a particular devotion to Mary. It is a synthesis of all devotions. It is the elevation of your favorite devotion to the zenith of human perfection.

Clashes With III Order Obligations?

There is no devotion of the Church with which the De Montfort Consecration is in conflict. The first obligation of total slavery is the perfect fulfillment of the duties of one's state of life. Far from clashing with III Order obligations, therefore, the Consecration promotes their more fervent performance. The ideal tertiary is the one whose religious profession is insured by total dependence upon our Blessed Mother.

Masses and Prayers for Parents?

The fourth commandment of God obligates us to pray for our deceased parents. Isn't it ridiculous, therefore, to fear that complete devotion to Our Lady is in conflict with one of God's commandments? There are four ways in which our Consecration affects our deceased parents: 1. It obligates us to a more generous fulfillment of the natural law of offering Masses and prayers for them. 2. It inspires us to address more petitionary prayers to Our Lady for them. 3. It

insures their very special assistance from the Queen of Purgatory because they are the parents of one of her slaves. 4. It allows Our Lady to apply our prayers elsewhere if she so desires. That our parents will not suffer from the transfer should be obvious even to a child.

Can't Gain Indulgences?

Gaining indulgences is a priceless privilege granted by the Church to those in the state of grace. There is something deficient about a Catholic who would neglect this privilege. Obviously, therefore, Consecration does not put obstacles in the way of gaining indulgences. In fact the very opposite is true. One purpose of total slavery is to fill Our Lady's hands with works of satisfaction which she will use to save souls. How can she use indulgences unless we first gain them? It is true, of course, that we slaves may not determine to whom indulgences will be applied.

Spiritual Bouquets?

At first blush this seems an insurmountable difficulty: since we have given all our spiritual works to Mary we have none to give to anyone else. Nevertheless we may contribute to spiritual bouquets. We may say the prayers promised, give them to our Lady, petition Her to help the beneficiary of the spiritual bouquet, and then leave Her to do as she pleases.

No Help in Purgatory?

Do slaves of Mary give up the right to Masses and prayers offered for them after death? Yes. They give to Our Lady everything that may accrue to them in the future. Does this disturb you? Listen to Louis De Montfort: "Someone may perhaps say, If I give to our Blessed Lady all the value of my actions to apply to whom she will, I may have to suffer a long time in purgatory. This objection, which comes from self-love and ignorance of the generosity of God and His holy Mother, refutes itself. A fervent and generous soul who gives to God all he has, without reserve, so that he can do nothing more; who lives only for the glory and reign of Jesus Christ, through His Holy Mother, and who makes an entire sacrifice of himself to bring glory about—will this generous and liberal soul, I say, be more punished in the other world because it has been more liberal and more disinterested than others? Far, indeed, will that be from the truth! Rather, it is toward the soul, as we shall see by what follows, that our Lord and His holy Mother are the most liberal in this world and

the other, in the orders of nature, grace and glory." (*True Devotion*, p. 133).

Give Up All Luxuries?

Yes. Indulgence in unnecessary luxuries is contrary to the teachings of Christ. Therefore it is contrary to the holy will of Mary. When a consecrated slave spends money for worldly luxuries he is actually misappropriating Our Lady's money. Circumstances, however, do vary in individual cases. Note well: 1. What is a luxury for a Fatima peasant may be a social necessity for a U.S. physician. 2. Consecration binds only the slave, not his wife and family. To impose mortifications on others who are not voluntary slaves is a violation of charity and is contrary to the spirit of consecration. 3. There are degrees of perfection within total slavery. A saint will spontaneously practice rigorous penance while the average slave will not rise to heroic rep-
aration.

Let us point out, in conclusion, that there is really only one obstacle to the De Montfort Consecration—INDIFFERENCE. A soul "*conceived of the Holy Ghost*" will find no insurmountable obstacles to his being "*born of the Virgin Mary*."

This article, reprinted here with the permission of the author, first appeared in *The Age of Mary*, October 1956, 55-58 pp.



QUERIES AND REPLIES

Fr. Joseph Montalverne, O.F.M.

QUESTION: In the public recitation of the "Divine Praises" after low Masses and Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament, some priests say the invocation of the Assumption after the one to the name of Mary, while others say it before the latter. I have seen printed altar-cards of the customary prayers with either way of placing these two invocations, and both bear an "Imprimatur." Is there any rule for the order of these invocations?

ANSWER: The CORD (VI, n. 12, Dec. 1956, p. 381 ff.), in returning to St. Leonard of Portmaurice the origin of the "Divine Praises", did not warn about the confusion that followed the addition of the invocation of the Assumption in 1952, because this had long since been corrected. The original decree of the S. Congregation of Rites, approving the invocation of the Assumption, stated that it was to be said after "Blessed be the name of Mary Virgin and Mother"; thus it would be the last of the praises honoring the Blessed Virgin (cf. AAS, 45, 1953, 194). A month later, however, a notice from the same Sacred Congregation, with the heading *Errata corrige*—meaning that there had been a printing mistake—stated that the invocation of the Assumption was to be recited after the one which reads, "Blessed be her holy and Immaculate Conception" (cf. AAS, 45, 1953, 251).

No other changes have ever occurred in the order of the "Divine Praises." It is evident that an local custom of placing the invocation of the Assumption before the invocation of the Immaculate Conception is not in accordance with the original decree of the S. Congregation of Rites.

Rites, and indulgenced by the Holy See (cf. Beringer, F., *Die Ablassse, ihre Wesen und Gebrauch*, ed. Steinen, I. Paderborn, 1921, p. 225), is unlawful and must be corrected according to the amendment issued by the S. Congregation of Rites in 1953.

A theological reason may be suggested for the only amendment ever made as to the proper order of the "Divine Praises." The rectification made in 1953 by the Sacred Congregation is evidently in agreement with the teaching expounded by His Holiness, Pope Pius XII, in the solemn definition of the dogma of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary (*Bull "Munificentissimus Deus,"* Nov. 1, 1950, in AAS 42, 1950, 767-770). The Holy Father repeatedly considers the exemption of Mary's body from the bonds of death as sequel to her absolute immunity of sin, the common penalty of which is the degrading subjection to the corruption following death (cf. Gen. 2, 17; 3, 5-19); this theological conclusion also confirms the traditional argument of the immaculist theologians, who considered the Assumption as a becoming corollary of the Immaculate Conception, a reward for the unsullied purity of the Blessed Virgin. It seems therefore most fitting that, in the recitation of the "Divine Praises," the invocation of the Immaculate Conception should come immediately before the one of the Assumption, to remind the faithful that the latter is a becoming recompense for the former. Although the S. Congregation of Rites does not present any reason for the amendment, we may reasonably presume its theological foundation.

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