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the CORD

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the CORD

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MONTHLY CONFERENCE

The Liturgy of Confirmation

Fr. Martin Wolter, O.F.M.

Dogmatic Basis

On September 14, 1946 the Sacred Congregation of the Sacraments, acting on the authority of our Holy Father Pope Pius XII, issued a decree which granted to ordinary priests, who are pastors of souls, the faculty to administer the sacrament of Confirmation. This action on the part of the Holy See has served to focus attention upon the meaning and purpose of this particular sacrament.

This concession on the part of the Church in itself indicates to some extent something about the nature and place of Confirmation in the Christian scheme of life. It is apparently the wish of the Church that if possible no one die without being confirmed. Hence Mother Church allows pasters to confirm infants in danger of death when the bishop is not available. No other sacrament, besides the fundamental one of baptism, is thus made available to a child without the use of reason. Holy Eucharist is for those who have reached the use of reason; Penance and Extreme Unction for those who may have sinned; Matrimony and Holy Orders for those who choose respectively the married or clerical state of life. But Confirmation is something possible and proper for all baptized Christians. In fact it is uniquely related to Baptism as the completion of that first sacrament.

This relation of Confirmation to Baptism is expressly taught in an even earlier decree of the same Sacred Congregation of the Sacraments (1935) which reads in part: "It is indeed opportune and more conformable to the nature and effects of the Sacrament of Confirmation, that the children do not approach the Holy Table before they have received the sacrament of Confirmation, which is as it were the complement of Baptism, and in which is given the fullness of the Holy Spirit."

A study of the early writings and practices in the Christian Church point to the same connection between Baptism and Confirmation. The Fathers of the Church, such as Clement of Alexandria, considered as significant the descent of the Holy Spirit in the form of a dove at the baptism of Christ in the Jordan. The Apostles by their way of acting showed that Confirmation was a completion of the work of Baptism

Thus we read in the Acts of the Apostles: "Now when the apostle Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of God, sent to them Peter and John. On their arrival they prayed for that they might receive the Holy Spirit; for as yet he had not a upon any of them, but they had only been baptized in the name the Lord Jesus. Then they laid their hands on them and they receive Holy Spirit" (Acts 8, 14-17).

It was the practice of the early Church to administer the sacra of Confirmation often immediately after Baptism. In many can deacon or simple priest would perform the rite of baptizing, but a bishop would complete or "perfect the Baptism" as the saying very by admistering the sacrament of Confirmation. The Council of E in Spain about the year 305 even passed legislation to this effect ordained that if a catechumen in danger of death had to be bapt then if he should chance to survive, he should be brought to a bit who could "perfect" him by the imposition of hands. In the sect century St. Irenaeus compares Baptism with the milk for babes, whas the reception of the Holy Spirit through the laying-on of hand likens to the strong meat of the adult. Thus we see that the function Baptism is to regenerate us in the supernatural order, while Confittion brings us to the state of supernatural maturity.

The work begun in Baptism is "perfected" and the Christian brought to spiritual adulthood when at Confirmation the Holy Sp comes with the fullness of his seven gifts. He has already come into soul at Baptism, as indicated in the liturgy by the anointing with I chrism immediately after the pouring of the water. But the activity the Holy Spirit in the soul of one merely baptized is very limited compared with that in one confirmed. It parallels as it were m natural life, where a small child's capabilities cannot equal that an adult.

Before Pentecost the apostles also possessed the state of grand the presence of the Holy Spirit. But they lacked the fullness his gifts. Our Lord quite frankly pointed out to them the incompleness of their faith and the weakness of their virtue. "Many things I have to say to you, but you cannot bear them now. But when he, Spirit of truth, has come, he will teach you all the truth" (Jo. 16, 1 "You will all be scandalized this night; for it is written, 'I will so the shepherd, and the sheep will be scattered' " (Mk. 14, 27).

But with the coming of the Holy Spirit in tongues of fire a new vellous change is effected and we see our Lord's prediction fulfill "You shall receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you,

shall be witnesses for me in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samand even to the very ends of the earth" (Acts 1, 8). Hitherto childof God but still spiritual fledglings, the apostles were not raised to
tritual adulthood by the direct and visible coming of the Holy Spirit.
similar effect is achieved in the soul of the baptized when the Holy
irit comes invisibly through the instrumentality of the sacrament of
anfirmation.

Liturgical Ceremonies

The new Holy Week Ordo has a special "Chrism Mass" to be celelated by the Bishop on Holy Thursday morning. The Preface for this
lass now contains a section formerly part of the ceremony for the blesslass now contains. In this Preface the Church asks that God will "conlim this creature of chrism unto a sacrament of perfect salvation and
life" for the baptized. The remainder of the Preface also stresses the
general notions of the perfect Christian life, namely the overcoming
of our primitive corruption, the state of being a holy temple of God,
innocence and holiness of life, the office of king, priest and prophet
which the Christian shares with his Master, Christ. In other words,
already in confecting the chrism to be used for Confirmation Mother
Church clearly shows that it is destined to perfect our spiritual life
in all its aspects.

The first words of the confirming bishop (or priest) are reminiscent of those spoken by the angel to Mary. Facing the one to be confirmed the bishop says: "May the Holy Spirit descend upon you and may the power of the Most High preserve you from sin. Amen." The second prayer also makes a reference to sin, noting that the baptized has already received the forgiveness of sin. One of the first and most important effects of Confirmation is thus indicated in the liturgy, namely that the holy Spirit will so strengthen the soul as to enable it to keep from falling back again into sin.

The early Church seems to have had in mind the parable of the vil cast out of his house who later returned to occupy it with seven evil spirits more wicked than himself. Eusebius of Emesa speaks "house open to wickedness" whereas Clement of Alexandria points how Confirmation shuts the door against the return of the devil. hen we have emptied the soul from evils," he writes, "we must fill the good God, for it is a chosen vessel. When the empty vessel is then the seal goes on to preserve this holy thing for God." St. Paul tes to this "sealing" when he writes: "In him (Christ) you too, when had heard the word of truth, the good news of your salvation, and wed in it, were sealed with the Holy Spirit of the promise, "who

is the pledge of our inheritance" (Eph. 1, 13-14). St. John encourance his followers in the struggle against sin by reminding them of the poof the Holy Spirit dwelling in them. "You are of God, dear children, have overcome him (Antichrist), because greater is he who is in than he who is in the world" (I Jo. 4, 4).

In the second prayer of the Confirmation rite the Church indic that the work of Baptism—deliverance from sin and incorporation the life of Christ—will be perfected and made permanent through outpouring of the seven gifts of the Holy Spirit. "Almighty and etc. God, who in thy kindness hast given to this thy servant a new be through water and the Holy Spirit, and granted him (her) remiss of all his (her) sins; send forth from heaven upon him (her) they see fold Spirit, the Holy Paraclete. Amen. The Spirit of Wisdom and und standing. Amen. The Spirit of counsel and fortitude. Amen. The Sp of knowledge and piety. Amen. Mercifully fill him (her) with the Sp of thy fear, and seal him (her) with the sign of the cross of Christ, the (she) may obtain everlasting life."

These words describing the seven gifts are taken from the elevel chapter of Isaias where the great prophet tells of the Messias and work: "The Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him: the Spirit of wisd etc." Through the Sacrament of Confirmation, therefore, Jesus Chapters with us his sevenfold Spirit, the fullness of his spiritual manho "For in him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily, and in hand in hand the secretary of Confirmation are given us that we may practice the full Chapter than life, imitate our Lord also in his public life, share in the work redeeming souls, and grow "to perfect manhood, to the mature meast of the fullness of Christ" (Eph. 4, 13).

Now the bishop confers the sacrament. History tells us that "form of words" accompanying the laying-on of hands has varied we time and place. The Gelasian Sacramentary (perhaps 600 A.D.) the formula: "The sign of Christ unto life everlasting." In the Grand Church even today the formula is: "The sign (seal) of the gift of Holy Spirit." Our own Latin rite form reads: "I sign you with the sof the Cross and confirm you with the Chrism of salvation; in name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen." is noteworthy that the earlier formulas are more simple, expressing basic idea that Confirmation seals or perfects the baptized Christ with additional gifts of grace. Our present formula (possibly of Caringian origin) seeks to explain what the bishop is doing as he receithe words.

The bishop places his right hand upon the head of the one to be firmed and with his thumb applies the chrism to the forehead in form of a cross. This laying on of the hand signifies the conferring a power from above, just as the tongues of fire came down and teled upon the heads of the disciples. But here the divine power and ace is channeled to us through the ministry of the bishop who holds a position of authority in the Church. By the imposition of hands the hop also shows that he is accepting this person into the ranks of the diers of Christ, granting him a new status as a full-fledged Christian, adult citizen in the kingdom of God.

The matter or material part of the sacrament is the chrism composed of olive oil and balsam. In the Old Testament kings, priests and prophets were anointed with oil to symbolize that they were receiving from God a special power or office. Because Greek and Roman soldiers and athletes used olive oil as a "rubdown" to strengthen and limber up the muscles it also has received the connotation of preparing one for combat. On the other hand balsam, which gives off a sweet odor, symbolizes pleasant relations with one's neighbor. Confirmation brings us to spiritual maturity, which implies an awareness of our social obligations and the ability to fulfill them. St. Peter says: "Behave yourselves honorably among the pagans. . .doing good you should put to silence the ignorance of foolish men" (I Pet. 2, 12, 15). St. Paul writes: "Let your moderation be known to all men" (Phil. 4, 5). This social aspect of a good Christian life is symbolized by the perfumed scent of the balsam of Confirmation and is summed up in the words of St. Paul: "We are the fragrance of Christ for God" (2 Cor. 2, 14).

We mentioned in our first conference on the liturgy of the sacraments that the Church frequently makes use of the sign of the cross while administering them in order to show that the source of all sacramental grace is the meritorious death of Christ on the cross. In addition to this general thought there is a special reason why the bishop the sign of the cross on the forehead of the one confirmed. Perpet the forehead was selected because in ancient times runaway slaves to branded on the forehead so they could not escape recognition. Thaps, as the scholastics said, it was because shame shows itself by the shame on the forehead. At any rate the forehead is an open, public on the human person. And the cross is the identifying mark or of Christ. To place this sign on the forehead symbolizes that person publicly belongs to Christ and must publicly acknowledge as Lord and Master. The confirmed person must be ready to shame and suffering as did his Master. "No servant is greater

than his master" (Jo. 15, 20). "He who does not carry his cross follow me, cannot be my disciple" (Lk. 14, 27).

The slight blow on the cheek with the words: "Peace be to is in reality derived from the kiss of peace with which the bishop missed those confirmed. Nowadays we often explain it as a symbthe blows and sufferings which we must be ready to bear for the of Christ.

After some versicles the ceremony of Confirmation concludes this prayer by the bishop: "O God, who hast given the Holy Spir thy apostles, and hast willed that through them and their succe He be given to the rest of the faithful, look with favor upon our hus service, and grant that the Holy Spirit, descending into the heart of man (woman) whose forehead we have anointed with holy chrism signed with the sign of the holy cross, may, by dwelling there, m it a temple of his glory."

Franciscan Aspects

Reflecting upon the liturgy of Confirmation we might find me things reminding us of St. Francis. We could, for instance, consists great devotion to the Holy Spirit, or his desire to carry the significant the cross (the Tau) publicly on his person while preaching the cross all. Or we might study how the "good odor of Christ" was found the sweetness and charm of his personality. But for brevity's sake let restrict ourselves to the following main points.

We have seen that the early Christians believed in the importation of Confirmation as a sealing in of the treasure of divine grace and sealing out of the attacks of the devil. The opening words of the Confirmation liturgy expressed this in the words: "...may the power the Most High preserve you from sins." The mocking jibe of the Potestant "reformer". Tyndale against the Catholics: "They think the first the bishop butter the child in the forehead, that it is safe," is a quite true. But it is true that the Church considers the life of grace the baptized very unsafe unless Confirmation strengthens it.

St. Francis, too, realized the inherent frailty of our human natural and the constant danger that it might fall victim to the devil. He we extremely conscious of the need for watchfulness and effort on man part, and of the need for God's powerful grace. "Let us hate our bowith its vices and sins," he says in his First Rule, "because with a carnal way of living it would deprive us of the love of our Lord Jest Christ and of life everlasting, while sending itself and everything election (Hell; because by our own fault we are foul and vile, averse to goo but ready and willing for evil. . And let us be well on our guar

inst the spite and cunning of Satan. . .as the Lord says: "When an elean spirit has gone out of a man, he wanders about desert and terless places in search of rest, and finding none, he says, I will go ck into my house, which I left. . .So, let us all, brothers, keep a close ard on ourselves."

In Celano's Second Life of St. Francis we read further testimonies the Saint's fear of his own strength, or rather lack of it. "I may have and daughters yet! Do not praise me as if I were safe. Nobody ould be praised while his end is uncertain. Whenever it may suit Giver to take away from me what he has lent me, only body and will remain, and even an infidel possesses them." Again, "Nobody sught to flatter himself with undue applause over anything that a sinner can do. A sinner can fast, pray, weep, mortify his flesh. But this he cannot do: remain loyal to his Lord. . . While serving him faithfully, we (must) ascribe to him whatever he gives us."

While thus acknowledging human nature's helplessness without the power of God (as does the Church in confirming us), St. Francis on the other hand humbly recognized that all the good works that do proceed from a Christian are "fruits of the Spirit" (Gal. 5, 22). In his Admonitions Francis tells us: "The Apostle says: 'Nobody can say, Jesus is the Lord, except in the Holy Spirit' (I Cor. 12, 3) and it says, There is no one that does anything good, no, not one' (Ps. 52,4). So it is that whoever envies his brother for the good which the Lord says or does in him, comes close to the sin of blasphemy, because his envy touches the Most High, since it is he who says and does whatever is good." "You can tell by this whether a servant of God has anything of the spirit of God, that, when the Lord does anything good through him, his flesh. . . is not puffed up about it and he rather regards himself the more unworthy in his own eyes."

Pope Pius XI pointed out the connection between the sacrament of Confirmation and Catholic Action. He also appointed St. Francis the patron of Catholic Action. In this day when the "apostolate" is on everyone's tongue it is well to remember what the Church and St. Francis think about the apostolate. It should be well known to all Francisans how St. Francis insisted upon self-reform before others, how recommended preaching by example rather than by words, how he apphasized that the exterior apostolate must flow from interior sancty. "A preacher ought first in secret prayer to draw water he intends pour out later in sacred sermon; he ought first to grow warm within the utter cold words without" (II Celano).

From our study of the liturgy of Confirmation it should be appar-

ent that such is also the mind of the Church regarding this sacra of Catholic Action. After all, as the philosophers say, "agere seq esse," which means that all action corresponds to the source or I whence it flows. Full-blown Catholic Action can come only from a son who is fully Catholic. And that is the precise role of Confirm—to enable us, with the grace of the Holy Spirit, to reach the su of Christian perfection, "the mature measure of the fullness of Ch (Eph. 4, 13).

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BENEVOLENT OBJECT

Savior, I would tell them In pain with the pain of human-ness The urgent wonder Of all this royalty that is ourselves: And the intensely useful suffering of this world That rends to dust the cautious rock To which they bind their feet. You will not mind That I shall come Dishevelled into heaven, Scratched with the thorns of my roses And breathless with a love That urged me run When all the world would walk. You will not mind That I come in fool's cap And lay it at Your feet.

Cleo McMahon

In Memory of His Passion

Fr. Thomas Plassmann, O.F.M.C.

It is my recollection that many of the Franciscan writers¹ of the past sought to combine the story of the Passion with the Holy Sacrifice the Mass. This effort has a deep dogmatic and spiritual significance. are apt to forget that the Holy Eucharist was instituted on the eve the Passion, only a few hours before our Savior suffered the agony the Garden. The sacrifice of the altar is the same as the sacrifice of ary except that the former is performed in an unbloody manner, the er in a bloody manner. We may well imagine that when our Savior behaviored the words of consecration over the bread and wine, the lists of the rabble who were to crucify Him the next day, rang through little windows of the cenacle on the hill where our Savior celebrated with His Apostles the Memorial of His love.

Hence it is that Christian belief has from the earliest days surrounded the altar with memories of the Savior's passion and death. Over every altar stands the cross of Calvary. The priest's vestments symbolize the vestments of our Savior as He went to the ordeal of the great drama that climaxed His redemptive work among us. The alb symbolizes the robe with which Herod clothed Him. The maniple, stole and cincture symbolize the bands wherewith He was tied to the sillar of scourging. The amice reminds us of the crown of thorns and the chasuble represents the cross which He carried and which became altar of His immolation.

It is not mere fancy to say that the course of the entire Holy Mass, in the first to the last, shows reminiscences of Christ's passion and the first to the last, shows reminiscences of Christ's passion and the first to the last, shows reminiscences of Christ's passion and the first to the last, shows reminiscences of Christ's passion and the things that happened as the mass than by contable bearing in mind the things that happened as the Savior wended way from Gethsemane to Calvary. In this meditation there is no last norm to be followed. The devout soul has full liberty in searchor moments, actions, and words of the sacred Passion in what St. has calls "the memorial of His passion," the Eucharistic sacrifice.

When the priest stands at the foot of the altar to say the opening and confess his sins, we may well follow our Savior into the

Garden of Olives where He suffered His bitter agony. Three time priest says MEA CULPA and three times our Lord raised His han His heavenly Father in His agonizing pain. Then He rose and with Apostles proceeded to the gate. Judas met Him and greeted Him a kiss. Even so the priest kisses the altar, for as the Pontifical says, altar is Christ". May the priest's kiss and that of the faithful never semble the kiss of the traitor.

Then the priest turns to the right to say the Introit of the Margesus followed the soldiers and the rabble into the city of Jerus It was His introit to His bitter passion. The priest returns to the margest of the altar and recites the KYRIE ELEYSON and CHRISTE EXTSON. This may remind us of the clamor in various tongues of the and foreigners who were gathered in the Holy City to partake of paschal lamb, a type of the Lamb to be offered on Calvary. Then priest raises his voice to say or sing the GLORIA IN EXCELSIS IN Jesus was about to give glory to God and to bring peace on earth three His glorious passion and death. Meanwhile we may hear the carraise their voices in blasphemy because they had taken prisoner Nazarene.

Whenever the priest turns to the people to say DOMINUS VOI CUM we may well imagine our Savior looking upon us to remind the sufferings He bears for us. It is an invitation that we join our he with His.

There follows the Prayer of the day, the epistle and other pray and then, passing the middle of the altar, the priest sings the gospe the day. These actions and movements should bring home to us appearance of Christ before the Highpriest Annas and before the ious other authorities. During the reading of the epistle we are thing of the trial of Jesus before the Sanhedrin and the Highpriest ophas. When the priest crosses the middle of the altar to read the gow we are reminded of the night in the Highpriest's court where He subject to the insults and mockery of the soldiery until dawn. I should we neglect to think of the denial of St. Peter and of the sad of Judas.

The CREDO may well serve to put us in mind of the condemtion of Jesus by the Sanhedrin. Witnessing the sorrow and distress our Savior makes us all the more aware of the price our holy Fa (CREDO) has cost Him.

From the Sanhedrin Jesus was led to Pilate, Herod and back Pilate. The unveiling of the chalice will bring to mind the horrible fleellation of Christ at the pillar. The offertory, when the host and the pillar is the pillar is

lice are offered up to our heavenly Father, is reminiscent of Pilate's tence that Jesus should be crucified. At the LAVABO we recall that late washed his hands in hypocrisy. The Jews preferred the death of sus to that of Barrabas. Pilate brings the king of the Jews before the cople and exclaims: Ecce homo, even as the priest turns around to e people and says ORATE FRATRES. The recital of the secret prayer vites us secretly to thank our Savior for His unbounded kindness to and to ask Him that His sufferings may not be in vain for us and e world at large.

The passion of Christ was a tremendous drama and its blessings d effects range from the beginning of the world to the last moment and far into eternity. Thus it is proper that the priest begins the prece with the words PER OMNIA SAECULA SAECULORUM. As the priest raises his voice, Christ takes upon Himself His cross and carries it through the streets of Jerusalem to the top of Mount Calvary. The preface is the most beautiful canticle we possess. St. Cyprian calls it the "canticle of canticles". We may well imagine that while the heavy burden lay upon the King of heaven and earth, the celestial choirs and the souls redeemed by Christ joined in this beautiful hymn of praise and glory. But another chant was heard, which might well be traced to the portals of the infernal regions whence the voices of the evil spirits mingled with the raucous voices of the rabble that led our Savior to the place of crucifixion. Here we meditate on the three falls of our divine Master, on meeting His holy mother, Simon of Cyrene, Veronica, and the women of Jerusalem. The priest bends down to say the threefold SANCTUS, the ancient hymn of the prophet, to remind us that the Moly One fell three times under the heavy cross. As He leaves the Holy City we should imagine that we hear the voices of the holy souls in Limbo crying out with the Church Militant "Benedictus qui venit-Blessed is He that comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the high-***The echo of this song still lingered in the olive trees around the Holy City for it was only less than a week ago, on the first Palm Sunday, that this song was chanted along this road by the jubilant disciples ad the people of Jerusalem. The Hosannas of Palm Sunday turned into asphemies on Good Friday.

The priest now opens the missal at the common of the Mass. The rge T in the words TE IGITUR has gradually been changed by the vout hands of artists into a large crucifix which now faces the Canon all our missals. The Canon of the Mass indicates the ascent to Mount lawry. These are sacred moments enveloped in mystery. The priest ms to the altar and his voice is no heard until the PATER NOSTER.

In like manner the devout Christian will now wrap himself up in meditation and contemplation upon the things that happen of altar even as they once took place on Calvary.

It is not necessary to follow a strict order of events. The should be at liberty and seek inspiration where it may and let its tions take a free course. Arrived on the summit of the mount, the cross is taken from the Savior's shoulders. He is deprived of Himments and cruelly thrown upon the cross. The MEMENTO of the land the COMMUNICANTES will remind us that the Blessed Mosome holy women, and St. John stood near and that this small represented the Church for which Christ was to die. The HANC TUR is the prayer ascending from the hearts of the faithful, besing the heavenly Father to accept this holy sacrifice of His Son. A prayer QUAM OBLATIONEM the priest makes three signs over entire offering and then two more over the chalice and host separathere we may well think of the three nails which transfixed the and hands of the Savior and of the raising of the cross and letting down into the stony ground.

The words of the Consecration remind us forcibly of the Shanging upon the cross and looking down upon the world which H deemed. It was the most perfect sacrifice ever offered to the Almi A sacrifice means the destruction of the victim in recognition of power and dignity of the Divinity. In the Old Testament the viction on the altar were burned or destroyed and the sweet odor ascende the heavenly throne. Here on the altar the substances of bread wine cease or are converted into the Body and Blood of Christ w like a sweet odor ascend to the throne of the heavenly Father. The secrated host is raised first on high, the consecrated chalice there-a This symbolizes that by the power of the words the blood was arated from the body and that there is a perfect oblation.

The devout soul will not want any special inspiration at this ment but will fly to the feet of the Savior on the altar and with I commemorate His bitter passion and death.

This is the time for a devout meditation on the seven last we of our Savior on the cross. The MEMENTO and the prayers of priest for all friends and bystanders will recall our Savior's prayer His executioners, and His kind invitation to the good thief.

Before minor elevation, when the priest makes three crosses we the sacred host over the consecrated chalice, we may pause and the of His words to St. John and His Blessed Mother, when, in fact, He of mitted the secret of the love for His Mother as well as His Mother's

Him to the heart of the beloved disciple. The disciple stands for the ole Church, and every faithful lives his life for Christ, that is, hrough Whom, with Whom and in Whom" honor and glory is given the Triune God.

During the PATER NOSTER we should recall the four last words the Savior, namely His prayer to the heavenly Father, His expresson of thirst, the commendation of His soul to God, and the words to is consummated."

All these words fit beautifully into the greatest prayer of all, the ar Father. With this the Savior bade farewell to the world because, St. Bonaventure writes, He had surrendered everything: His garents to the soldiers, forgiveness to His executioners, paradise to the soldiers, His mother to the disciple and His disciple to His mother, and finally His spirit to His heavenly Father.

The prayer LIBERA NOS may be taken as the last prayer of Christ for His Church, in particular for the small group under the cross. As the priest bends down to strike his breast and invoke three times the Lamb of God, we may well meditate on the Savior's redeeming death for all mankind. With the priest we bend closely upon the consecrated species and whisper our farewell to the dying Savior.

At holy Communion we are free to think of the Savior's descent into Limbo as well into our hearts. May our hearts prove a worthy resting place for our divine Master who died for us and Whose sacred passion we have followed at this holy Mass.

On several occasions the text of the Mass tells us that this is the memorial of the passion, resurrection and ascension of our divine Lord. The bitter passion is over. The chalice is covered as was the tomb on Good Friday, and as the priest returns from the prayer at the missal address the people saying DOMINUS VOBISCUM we may well think the Christ's glorious resurrection. There follows the Postcommunion Christ's glorious resurrection. There follows the Postcommunion that the priest turns to give his solemn benediction. In the memory our Lord blessed His Apostles as He departed from them to the white clouds of heaven.

We now return with Mary and the Apostles to the cenacle, meanaile recalling the wonderful story of Christ the Savior, from His eternbeginning to His ascent into heaven as it was written down by the pired pen of St. John the Apostle, in whose company and that of pired pen of St. John the Apostle, in whose company and that of ry we shall go to our homes even as Mary went to the disciple's ne after the sad tragedy on Calvary.

A General Synthesis of the Theology of John Duns Scot

Fr. Marianus Mueller, O.

a) Christ as the Head of Angels and Men

God did not will to make Christ the head of a formless h Creatures were not to be placed in isolation from each other, wit order or organization. On the contrary, God willed the elect to form organic whole, a vital body, of which Christ was to be the head. The fore, as Scotus puts it, "anima Christi est primum in Hierarchia su ma." As the highest of all creatures, Christ is to be formally the H the Head of the body of the elect. "Christus est caput electorum."2 only the Church Militant but also the Church Triumphant is subject His rule. "Christus. . . praedestinatus est esse caput caelestis curid Further, all grace is contained in Christ. "Christus . . . est caput or gratiae."4 This grace, which is to be imparted to us as the gratia Cap means divine revelation and life. Only the man who is incorporated Christ the Head receives the grace of Christ as participation in Hi vine life. Only the man who through grace partakes of Christ's life really in faith address God as "Father." This grace is charity, and it enables us to love God in a supernatural manner and thus to fulfill meaning of life, which is love. Since, however, we become adopted of God only in the union of brotherhood with Christ, the Only-begot Son of God, we constitute, as the Mystical Body of Christ the Head, one person outside the Trinity, the one community of charity through which is fulfilled the God-willed meaning of creation-love.

Christ in the Incarnation was immediately endowed by the Trin We are mediately endowed through Christ, our Mediator. He mer the grace in which we participate, and therefore the Head is the chreason for the grace of the body: "Christus est caput, qui fuit infimeriti." The grace which He gives to angels and men is the sar "Gratia autem animae et angeli est ejusdem specie." Therefore, He King of angels and of men.

Christ endows Mary most liberally of all. Consequently she is menlightened than all angels and men. Next, He endows the angels gives them grace. Indeed, according to the order of nature (in hierarc naturae) Christ stands below the angels; but according to the order grace (in hierarchia gratiae) He stands above them. And since it is order of grace that is decisive in the ordering of values, Christ is at the King of angels: "Christus habet imperium efficax respectu potests."

ngelorum.⁸ Finally, man and the entire Church receive revelation and cace through Christ the Head, Who contains not only the gratia perpendis for Himself, but also the gratia capitis for the members of His ody, that is, the gratia Christi capitis ad membra."

b) The Message of the Logos and Theology

Christ, therefore, endows the elect, angels and men, and this gift above all a revelation of grace: "The soul of Christ flows into other ouls and into angels. . .and this influx is as a revelation according to e order of grace, but not according to the order of nature."10 Those nings that the Father has spoken from all eternity into the Logos, the ogos, at the behest of the Father, imparted to man on earth. It is not owever, the Logos as mere thinking or intellection, nor a mere Theoria, at as the Eternal Word, Who at the commission of the Father speaks hrough the Holy Spirit; therefore, it is the Logos united with the living divine Pneuma. The words of the Logos, accordingly, are spirit and life, for they demand not only the understanding but also the will and the love of the man to whom they reveal; they demand the whole man. And when we consider that the words of the Logos endure in the magisterial decisions of the Church in dogma; when we recall that dogma and the process that precedes dogma makes up the most prominent part of theology, it will be evident how great a misfortune an overbalanced stress on speculative theology implies. Such theology loses its contact with daily life; it is no longer suited to this life at all; and vitality departs from theology because theology falls short of its goal, which is to stir up life and love and to serve them. If four hundred years ago, at the dawn of modern history, theology had most miserably failed, the wilt, as Karl Adam convincingly asserts, lay in this, that "theology, wred by the Aristotelian concept of knowledge, went all too far out n the thin ice of abstract concepts and lost sympathy with everyday Me."11 And if again today our theology has become so much a matter the intellect alone and if interest in it lies almost exclusively within e schools, then we have the responsibility of remedying its sterility d of placing it anew in the Church-life of the present. This demand is complete accord with the attitude and the love of all great theolons toward theology. For, to cite Scotus again, a sterile theology es rise to many evil consequences, among them the danger of exsing the faith to ridicule—"ex hoc exponeretur fides derisioni."12 viously, the efforts of theologians who seek to introduce a change d support and encouragement, and this will come only if the real portance of their endeavors are fully understood and appreciated.

c) The Meaning of Theology

It is again the liberality of God that through Christ has given grace and revelation. And God gives us these gifts that we may let to know and love Him more and become more intimately united with Him. In other words, God is lavish in bestowing His benefits upon so that we may come to understand more thoroughly the meaning purpose of our existence, which is to love Him. Through supernate grace and revelation Christ obliges the Church to a love of gratitue. "Habet ergo (Christus) influere gratiam in totam Ecclesiam; ergo Ecclesia sibi specialius tenetur." Love is the goal to which revelat and theology must lead us, in that they show us God in His amiabil

So it is that theology serves man according to the will of God teaching man his purpose in life. Revelation and theology shows God as He exists in the Blessed Trinity, for example, with the purp that our love be directed to the right object. "For. . .the will ignor of the Trinity is likely to err in loving or in desiring its end, by de ing to enjoy one person alone." Revelation and theology further st us God as the Creator of the world, and again with the purpose of citing to love: "For the will ignorant of God as Creator of the world likely to err in not returning to so great a love the gratitude it deser for such a communication of its goodness for our welfare." Finally, elation and theology give us a knowledge of the economy of our demption, and this again with a view to love. "The will ignorant the matters pertaining to our redemption is likely to err by not rep ing the love owed for such a benefit; and likewise for other matt of theology."14 We are especially indebted to God on account of sufferings undergone by His divine Son for our salvation: "Christus." sua gratia passionem suam ordinavit et obtulit Patri pro nobis, et id multum tenemur ei." Christ voluntarily sacrificed Himself to the Fath in suffering for us; therefore we are greatly indebted to Him. F while the redemption of man could have taken place in some other way, Christ, of His own free will, wished to redeem us in this manual Therefore we are very much indebted to Him-multum tenemur e more so, indeed, than if He had had to redeem us necessarily in t way and in no other: "ideo ad alliciendum nos ad amorem suum, credo, hoc praecipue fecit, et quia voluit hominem amplius teneri Ded I believe, therefore, that it was in order to draw us to His love that did all this, and because He wished to bind man more closely to G in love."15

The spirit of Scotistic theology, therefore, is love. And Scotus demands of theology "quod extendatur ad dilectionem finis," that it leads to be a spirit of Scotistic theology.

love God as its final end. The theology of Scotus conceives this tion between God and man not so much legal relation but rather relation of love. All revelation and theology has the goal of preting to us the amiability of God: "Quaecumque conditiones tradunde fine, magis natae sunt ostendere appetibilitatem finis."17 If our ology had always remained conscious of this purpose of making wn the lovableness of God Who is our end and goal, there would be need to deplore the lifelessness of theological studies. Raoul Plus tes only too truthfully when he says: "It is a sad fact, but a person study a whole semester "de Verbo Incarnato" without even once oming astounded or excited, without even once experiencing within nself feelings of wonderment and love. All that one seems to hit on is the cold, bare armour of concepts. The theological tracts are ken through one after the other, just as the most beautiful flowers taken in botany according to the herbarium; and yet the reality at would render theology comprehensible is so full of life. Why is this e so little lived? How does this remarkable capacity of man to live a puble life develop constantly to conceive of God with the intellect and yet scarcely in that very act to think of God, hardly to wish to currender oneself to God? Let us be on our guard against the tawdry sttainment of neatly separating life and study; we should live what we think. There is nothing more that study demands. Surely methods and enthusiasm, lectures and sermons, are different things. But even if they are different, they gain nothing if they are to march side by side all stubbornly separated. . . By means of meditation on the subjects of andy, that which is dead shall become living, Christ shall rise. An urge do should be born of a dogmatic text from Denziger, or from a tation from the Fathers. Woe to the science that does not lead to re. We dare not pass over truth with half a soul, especially when it a case of these truths. We cannot do enough in their regard; we must prehend them with all our being."18

As we have seen, Scotus strongly emphasizes the liberality of God, by reason of this divine liberality we owe God love and gratitude. ordingly, it is fully in harmony with his system to hold the acceptatheory which leaves the work of computing merits to God. In activity with this bent of mind, Scotus also had to make the attaining of wledge dependent in the greatest possible manner on the liberality od, just as Bonaventure had done in the theory of illumination. here we cannot enter into the question more in detail. Scotus' of knowledge, discussion of which we must forego here, demands be knowing subject: humility, reverence, piety, a kind of congen-

iality with regard to the object, and loving desire—a sort of know eros. These are the same theoretical prerequisites of knowledge today are again being strongly emphasized.

5. Visible Creation

To man, created out of love and for love, God gave revelation all other gifts as immediate means to his destined end (proping ad finem) in order to bind man more closely to Himself throw debt of gratitude. But that was not sufficient; God wished to a man to love even more, and therefore gave him still more. God de all that is less near the final goal (remotiora ad finem), that is visible world. This stands in the fifth place in the order of values, willed and created the world that it might serve man and that should be its immediate end: "Deus. . .vult propter illos (scil. destinatos) alia quae sunt remotiora, puta hunc mundum sensibut serviat eis. . .Igitur quia Deus vult hunc mundum sensibile ordinem ad hominem praedestinatum. . .Homo erit finis mundi sibilis." 19

Love is the prime motive and the ultimate meaning of visible tion. Thus Scotus in his build-up of the world-picture remains thord ly consistent in the sense that he has love rule all. God, out of divine liberality, decided to make the world. "Whatever God ca outside Himself, He causes out of the greatest charity."20 In order reveal His being in the reality of the world, He created things ou His most liberal goodness as a further revelation of His love for a "Propter bonitatem suam communicandam. . .plura in eadem sp produxit."21 Entirely in accord with the mind of Scotus, Karl A writes: "The world from that viewpoint is not a work of God, but absolute will to communicate, a form of His gracious revelation self. . . Empiric things are the seal through which God seeks to known and contemplated. They are, so to say, though not perfe transparent, the goal and the culmination points of a special movement of love emanating from God, points become visible to our mortal eve Because the immeasurable goodness of God cannot show itself ciently in one created thing, God creates many things in order to ren Himself visible in creation in the most effective way. "His goods one and simple existing in Himself, is manifested many times in m things at the same time, so that in no one thing can His total good be manifested, because nothing can attain to the divine perfection.

Accordingly, creation reveals God to man in a new way. Man cknow God and praise Him in creation. The world is a new gift of G to man, for whose use the things of earth have been made. And in

th as man enjoys these gifts as benefits from God, he should lovingfive thanks, and in this way realize his goal in life, which is love. If were not to recognize in creation a benefit of God and lovingly to nk Him for this gift, he should find himself on the wrong path: or the will ignorant of God as the Creator of the world is likely to by not returning to so great a love the gratitude it deserves for the a communication of its goodness for our welfare."²⁴ Hence, crean has the purpose of leading us to love.

6. Sin and Redemption

God sees in the order of intention (in distinction to the order of tecution) 25 in the sixth place the sin of man: "God. . .foresaw those ho would fall in Adam." He permits the fall into sin. And now the that God in His deepest being is love and not law is made manistet again in a new splendor. If He were law, He would have had to punish sin in full measure. He would have had to damn us all as a massa perdita et damnata." But instead of this, His whole being, His love, took action to help and save. Thus the freely giving love of God becomes a helping and a saving love.

Finally, in the seventh place, in the order of intention, God sees Christ coming as a suffering Redeemer instead of as a glorified King: From this that God saw that Adam would fall, He saw that Christ would redeem in this way."29 If there had been no sin, Christ would have appeared as a glorified and impassible King from the very first moment of His Incarnation: "The Christ would not have been a passible man, nor mortal, nor having such dispositions in the flesh, but His body would have been glorified at once"30 "and Christ would have been wholly glorified immediately."31 The glory of the flesh of Christ is a lesser good than the glory of the saved. Therefore it is not against the principle of order if Christ, for the sake of a higher good, that is, the glory of the blessed, gives up the glorification of His body and postpones until His resurrection: "Glory would have been given to the flesh Christ immediately, except that because of a greater good it was betponed, that the human race might be redeemed from the power of e devil; for the glory of the blessed to be redeemed through the ffering of His flesh was a greater good."32 The King of creation waives right to the glorification of His body in order to save a sinful and thless people. "God saw the Mediator coming to suffer, to redeem people, and He would not have come to suffer and redeem unless neone had first sinned; nor would the glory of His flesh have been tponed unless someone had to be redeemed."33 Scotus' conception of work of redemption, therefore, does not present the activity of

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God's love for man in a dimmed light. One would be more justiff saying that new splendor was given to the concept of His love fa This is surely in harmony with the principle of "it is better to es in praising the soul of Christ than to be deficient in the praise to Him."34 This principle is begotten of love. How well Scotus it in glorifying Christ the King, Whose absolute and universal ship he taught, and in glorifying Mary the Queen, for whose til the Immaculate Conception he gave the convincing argument.

VI. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

If we look back once more over the whole theological system Duns Scotus we shall be forced to admit that the Franciscan ide love found its most glorious expression and culmination in his To recapitulate briefly, the Scotistic theology of love holds the fo ing tenets: Since God is love, He wills to have co-lovers. Therefor decrees first of all the Incarnation of the Son, so that Christ me the highest Ens condiligens outside the divinity. But that did no isfy God's love; He willed to have still other co-lovers. Therefor decreed the creation of Mary as the second highest creature. But that did not suffice. Accordingly, He created the angels, likewis of love and for love, that they, like Christ and Mary, might realize meaning of their existence by loving. But even with this God's was not satisfied; He willed to have still other co-lovers. Therefor created man, again out of love and for love. Thus the meaning of life is simply this: to love and to perform acts of love for the of God. Yet even with this the overflowing love of our God was content. He willed to render the fulfillment of our task in life : certain by its very nature. Therefore in Christ He gave us revelation a new gift, that through it we might become more acquainted God's love, that we might love Him in return, and thus realize greater degree the purpose of being. He gave us revelation because willed that man be more closely bound to Him.35 He gave us retion that for the sake of this new gift we might love, be more and t obliged in love and to love, and thus all the more certainly fulfill purpose of our being, which is to love. But even with revelation liberality of our God was not exhausted. He willed to oblige man more in love and hence He created the visible world and created it man, so that everything in creation is a gift of God to man: "God v because of them (the predestined), this sensible world, that it m serve them."36 The visible world as a gift of God to man has again meaning, as objective glory of God, to lead man to the subjective gl of God, to affections of gratitude and of loving admiration toward G hat in this way man might realize his purpose in life, which is to

But man, so richly endowed and therefore so bound to gratitude, ead of showing himself grateful, sinned; and therefore God's love ne forth in new splendor. He did not reject man but decreed his emption through the death of His only and well-beloved Son. For reason and for our sake, Christ waived until after His resurrection glory due Him from the first moment of His incarnation. Thus the ld-plan of God was not destroyed, but merely altered, on account

As we have seen, the scientific embodiment of the teaching of the aph of Assisi, Saint Francis, appears in the theology of John Duns tus. We might even venture to assert that in Scotus the Franciscan al of love reaches its culmination, that is was given to Scotus to sing hymn of divine love in a manner not granted even to the ecstatic rancis or the seraphic Bonaventure. Scotus is the first of these to give Christ as King and to Mary as the Immaculate Queen the place due bem in the world-plan, and thus he adds the final ornament to their crowns. Scotus' complete system, clearly the product of far-seeing and constructive genius, offers in view of its unity and completeness innumerable motives that bid fair to impart a new orientation to modern theology.

(Conclusion)

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

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Franciscan religious life, as we have all heard so often, is be and fundamentally the imitation of Christ according to the prece the Gospel. In his first Rule, our Seraphic Father quoted the wo the Master to show his followers what would be demanded of them. rule and life of the brothers is this, that they live in obedience, in tity, and without property, and follow the teaching and the for of our Lord Jesus Christ who says: "If thou wilt be perfect, go sell thou hast and give to the poor and thou shalt have treasure in he and come follow me" (Mtt. 19:21); and "if any man will come me. let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me" 16:24); likewise, "if any man come to me, and hate not his father mother and wife and children and brethren and sisters, yea and hi life also, he cannot be my disciple" (Lk. 14:26); and "every on hath left house or brethren or sisters or father or mother or w children or lands for my name's sake, shall receive a hundredfold shall possess life everlasting" (Mtt. 19:29).

Obviously, the perfect imitation of Christ entails the sacriff things that are natural goods, even divinely-ordained goods. To take yows of poverty, chastity, and obedience leaves the religious with cious little of his own. He sacrifices or makes holy to the Lord (was the root meaning of the word) all that he is and has and do then becomes his task to grow daily in the likeness of the Cruce "unto the measure of the age of the fulness of Christ" (Eph. 4:13), whom he is nailed to the cross by the vows. If he is true to his voca he will one day be able to say: "With Christ I am nailed to the cand I live, now not I, but Christ liveth in me" (Gal. 2:19). But it vows demand total self-surrender and self-sacrifice, they also protected the total power of the spiritual man.

1. The Vow and the Ideal

Although poverty is generally considered the distinguishing acteristic of Franciscan life, it can be rightfully said that chastity if foundation and center. We are not speaking of the vow of chastity in legal aspects, however, but in its perfection and fulfillment in the in

consecrated virginity. The vow is simply renunciation, negation. It ks boundaries and erects barriers that may not be overstepped withguilt. For the legal requirements of the vow it is sufficient merely avoid sins of sexual impurity and to live in celibacy. When these uirements are met, the obligation of the vow is satisfied. But the fect fulfillment of the vow extends far beyond this and reaches to ideal of virginity. This ideal, of course, does not bind in conscience t least not directly, but only in so far as religious are obliged to ive after perfection. Obviously, ideals being somewhat intangible and sive of legal definition, it would be difficult to establish boundaries them binding in conscience. The ideal of virginity must always rein more or less a matter for the individual to realize in the depths of own soul.

Briefly, the ideal of consecrated virginity is not so much abstinence continence, a keeping together, a perfecting, a conserving or contrating of powers and personality so that on a higher level these facties may be released for a more intense activity of love. The denial man's natural and divinely ordained powers entailed in the vow of astity is balanced by a more perfect fulfillment on a supernatural lane in the ideal of virginity, which ideal is rooted in love of God. Thus the perfection of the vow of chastity is abstinence; the perfection of the ideal of virginity is love.

2. Celibacy as an Evangelical Council

Celibacy is an evangelical counsel. We have the most cogent proof of this in the example of Christ Himself who lived a life of celibacy and consummate chastity. The example of Mary, the Virgin Mother, and Saint Joseph, who was wedded to her in perfect love and continence, d further proof, as do the chaste lives of Christ's most intimate friends, e celibate John the Baptist and John the Evangelist. Christ made it ear, however, that celibacy is not for all men, but for a chosen few; d that celibacy itself possesses no intrinsic value, but receives extranus value when it is embraced "for the kingdom of heaven". As we ad in the Gospel of Saint Matthew (19:11-12): "Not all men can accept teaching, but those to whom it is given. For there are eunuchs who re born so from their mother's womb; and there are eunuchs who re made so by men; and there are eunuchs who have made themselves nuchs for the kingdom of heaven. He that can take it, let him take it." It is not necessary here to go into detail concerning the scriptural is for virginal chastity nor to discuss the place of celibacy in the

tory of religion. It is sufficient for our present purpose to point out

that the Church has always recognized the state of virginity as of gious value, and has so treasured celibacy "for the kingdom of hear that she has always urged it for her clergy.

3. Celibacy as a Sacrifice

Through the vow of chastity the religious binds himself to ob celibacy in its highest form. He makes a solemn and public declar that his body is the property of God, and that he no longer had right to give his body to another in the marital union. As long a vow binds, the religious sins grievously if he attempts to, or acti does, contract marriage. It is not the Church, not the ecclesian authority, but the religious himself who after mature deliberation with free determination responds to the call of God and binds him under pain of mortal sin to live in chaste celibacy for the rest of life. The vow is a contract between the individual and God; the Ch merely blesses the contract and ecclesiatical authority protects it by

The vow of chastity further obliges the religious to refrain whatever is forbidden by the sixth and ninth commandments. the vow transforms into the virtue of religion the general obligation all Christians to lead a chaste life. From this it follows that a sin ag chastity is not only a transgression of the divine law, but is an in aimed directly at God himself, to whom and for love of whom the was made. Consequently, for religious a violation of chastity is all sacrilege. On the other hand, if an act of impurity is so much the base in a religious than in a person not bound by vow, by the same to the purity of a religious is so much the more elevated above the pu of one not bound because it is a continuous act of divine worship. faithful observance of the vow of chastity, even in its negative as of abstinence, is a continuous prayer of the highest value.

The observance of the vow of chastity is a great and often ded painful sacrifice. It is diametrically opposed to the natural man rather, to the very nature of man. The vow of chastity is of such & value because it means the sacrifice of that which itself ranks am the highest values. Accordingly, the full sublimity of the vow of chast becomes clear only when the natural and supernatural values of m riage is fully understood.

Marriage, as has been stressed so pointedly by contemporary s itual writers, is a kind of reflection of the life of the Blessed Trim Just as the love of the Divine Persons for one another is ever active productive and unifying, so also is the love between husband and w Of its very nature marriage possess sublime dignity. It was instituted

primarily as the means for propagating the human race, and in purely natural sphere there is nothing greater than human procreon. But over and above this, marriage has the further purpose of oviding man and woman with the natural means of leading each other ward perfection, toward mutual fulfillment and completion in the vsical, intellectual, and spiritual spheres. We have only to recall that rist raised marriage to the dignity of a sacrament to realize its value. erefore Saint Paul remarked: "This is a great sacrament; but I eak in Christ and in the church" (Eph. 5:32). The Church herself es the symbolism of marriage to express her most profound mysteries. Obviously, then, the dignity of marriage is worthy of our deepest spect. Those who have renounced it for love of God would do well to bep in mind that religious celibacy became higher than the married ate only as a consequence of original sin, and it is higher only objecvely. Subjectively—that is, considering the individuals as such—married persons can reach a much higher degree of sanctity than religious celibates. A religious, therefore, who would truly understand the sublimity of the vow of chastity must first convince himself of the sublimity of the married state. Any religious who despises marriage and embraces continency out of a feeling of superiority is dangerously out of harmony with the mind of the Church. The Synod of Gangra solemnly declared: "If anyone lives unmarried or continent and withdraws from marriage out of contempt and not because of the beauty and sanctity of virginity, let him be anathema. If anyone who, for the sake of the Lord remains unmarried, proudly looks down upon married people, let him be anathema."

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The value of the vow of chastity, then, lies in the fact that it entails renunciation of a great good. When a religious gives himself to God in hastity, he offers a sacrifice not only of his physical powers but of his hole personality. For as marriage involves the entire physical, in-Hectual, and spiritual make-up of man and woman, so also does the nunciation of marriage. Religious renounce the natural sweetness and mont of sharing life with a beloved and trusted partner, together with joys and purifying sacrifices inseparable from parenthood; they up the pleasures of home-making, the stimulation of having childto provide for, the satisfaction of being masters and mistresses in r own households. All these desires are deeply rooted in the nature man, and all religious, if they are normal, well-balanced human gs, feel the renouncing of marriage as a sacrifice on both the physand spiritual level. It is exactly right that they should; for it is when the vow of chastity is recognized and felt as a sacrifice of the highest value that it can be truly pleasing to God. This is a that should be kept in mind especially by those who are entrusted the training of candidates for the religious life. Any young mayoman who does not possess the qualities required for marriage parenthood can hardly be expected to qualify for the religious life, if fear or contempt of marriage motivates the candidate, there is hope that he will ever become a worthy religious.

For most religious, temptations against chastity will assume form of vague loneliness, of longing for love and attention, of a fe of frustration and barrenness. This is merely a sign that the na man is still alive, even though he is nailed to the cross. The best reagainst such temptations is the honest facing of the fact that celiba clean contrary to nature, that nature will inevitably rebel, and exactly in this lies the value of the vow of chastity. It hurts; it always hurt, sometimes more, sometimes less; and it will hurt or ligious more than another. But of what value is a painless sacrifice? can we honestly say we are nailed to the cross with Christ if w not feel the stinging pain of the nails? The vows are meant to and they always will. This is the reason why the mere legal observe of the vows, without any attempt to strive for the ideals behind t cause so many spiritual disasters among religious who are appare faithful in keeping their Rule. It is the ideal of consecrated virg that makes the pain of celibacy not only endurable but surpassi sweet and desirable. Without love as the vivifying force behind vows, it is doubtful that any religious can long persevere, much reach the perfection of the religious state.

It is imperative, therefore, to give young religious a clear unstanding of the vow of chastity not only in its legal aspects, but and especially in its deeper significance as the ideal of consecrated ginity.

(To be continued)

adre Serra's Devotion to the Passion of Our Lord

Fr. Eric O'Brien, O.F.M.

How do you estimate the priests that you know? It would be rather toolish to estimate any priest by his ability as an orator, or an organizer parish activities, or a man of financial wizardry to meet the annual adget. When he stands at the altar, the priest is a priest in the fulness of the word. And there, on his vestments, you see the cross. The one safe standard by which to measure any man's priestly stature is the cross. And that is why some of the most important questions that Holy Mother Church asks about any candidate for sainthood are these: "Was he devoted to the Passion of Christ? Did he often meditate upon it? With what fervor and devotion? Did he strive to awaken the same devotion in others?"

For ten years now, in the far west of the United States, the answers to these and many other questions have been sought regarding the priest who was the Apostle of California, Padre Junipero Serra. Suppose we page through the story of his life with those questions in mind. We might summarize them in one: "Did this priest love the Cross?"

Padre Serra lived to be over seventy, and he travelled far and wide, but everywhere we can see mingled with his foot-print, the dragging-mark of the Cross that he followed. You may know what it's like for a young man to leave home, to face danger and possible death on some distant front. You know how, as parting, people fumble and strain to fit into words thoughts that are too big for human language. They want to say something memorable and helpful to the tearful ones whom they are leaving, and to cheer their own hearts. When Padre Serra was a young man, already distinguished as a university professor in learned pain, already in demand for his eloquent sermons, he volunteered for Indian missions of Mexico, and resolved to stay there till his death. This letter to his grieving parents before his ship sailed from Cadiz, exhorted them to make the Way of the Cross frequently.²

On the long and dangerous voyage of ninety-nine days, he wore a cifix on his breast during the day, and held it in his arms when he at night.

The Franciscan missionaries, you know, were given special train-

ing at colleges like that of San Fernando in Mexico City, where P Serra was sent. During his five months there, just two centuries Padre Serra daily joined the novices in their Way of the Cross. In monastery, a part of the divine office, the priest's daily recitation of breviary, was held around midnight. Afterwards, while the others their much-needed sleep, Padre Serra would meditate on the Pa and death of Our Lord, and the sorrows of His Mother, until time his morning prayers and Mass.

When he finished his training at San Fernando College, he with him a cross, which he carried on every one of his many jour thereafter. He held it in his arms at night, and left it on his bed whe rose. The first appointment was to the isolated mountains of cer Mexico, in a region still called the Sierra Gorda. There his heade ters was at the town of Jalpan. On a hill overlooking it, he built a chrof Calvary. Every Friday during Lent he would carry up that hill f his mission church a cross so large and heavy that his younger stronger priest companions could not carry it. Then, returning to church below, he would preach on the Passion of Christ. That chron the hill is gone now, but the church down there in the town living monument to the zeal and sweaty labor of Padre Serra. The he hired skilled workmen and artists for the beautiful structure set his Indians daily an example of doing the most menial of task assist the workmen.

The most impressive feature of the church is the octagonal chalfway down the nave, on the Gospel side, which he adorned images and reminders of the Passion. There in the Sierra Gorda had found a thousand Indians who had been baptized, but not on them had made his Easter duty.

Throughout the year, he was piously ingenious in making Ch real and lovable for them. But during Holy Week his priestly h was overflowing with love for the Crucified.

On Holy Thursday he would imitate the humble Christ by kn ing before twelve old Indian men to wash and kiss their feet. Exceremony of the Church was carried exactly, and to the ceremonies processions that you and I know, he would add others inspired by own devotion. Thus, on Good Friday afternoon, he and his Indiwould re-enact the Descent from the Cross. For this, Padre Serra lobtained a large crucifix, on which hung a life-size body with moval arms. After his sermon on the redeeming death of Our Lord, he his Indians would carefully withdraw the nails from the hands a feet, and tenderly lower the body from the cross, and reverently care

arough the hushed and crowded church, to that side-chapel of the ion. There, the image would be laid on the altar in a simple coffin, a left for the veneration of the faithful. That night there would be a cocession in honor of the heartbroken Mother of Our Savior, and afterds Padre Serra would preach on Our Lady of Solitude. At Carmel ission in California, where Padre Serra lies buried in the sanctuary, successor, Father Michael D. O'Connell, still holds that same moving remony for his parishioners.

The same scarlet thread of the Passion of Christ runs through all the story of Padre Serra. His one year's work at Mission Loreto in Old California, now a part of Mexico, lasted from Easter to Easter, and his biographer, Padre Palou, tells us that the faithful had never seen the ceremonies of Holy Week performed so devoutly and solemnly. Some years later, when he was sixty-six, we find that he said Mass on Palm Sunday for the soldiers in the fort at Monterey in New California, and then hurried across the hills to his own Carmel Mission, to chant the Passion for his Indian converts.³

When chanting the Passion, or going the Way of the Cross, he was often weeping, so real for him was the memory of the sufferings and death of his Lord.

That Mission at Carmel was his headquarters during fifteen laborious years as founder of the Faith along the Pacific shores of what is now the United States. Nine missions were begun under his leadership, and always the first step was to raise a great wooden cross which this Servant of God would bless and venerate. At Mission Carmel, where he is buried, the old buildings have been restored with loving fidelity to all that history and tradition can recall. In the central patio, or garden, the site of the original cross which Padre Serra raised has been located, and a cross stands there again. Each morning on rising, he would go there to pray, reading a portion of breviary before saying Mass. There later he would recite the remainder of his divine office, and often during the day he would venerate the cross. At night before retiring he would pay it his evening farewell, then lie down to sleep with the little cross from San Fernando in his arms. When the pagans came to visit him at Carmel, he would bless them, then lead them also venerate the cross. The soldiers and the convert Indians soon learned follow his example of manly recognition of our immeasurable debt Christ.

Once, on a journey through the California wilderness, Padre Serra suddenly surrounded by a howling crowd of pagan Indians who lain in ambush. But this holy priest was always hoping and pray-

ing for the crown of martyrdom, and he was far from fear. Who made the sign of the cross over them and addressed them kindly, became his friends.

Long before that, one time down in San Diego, on the feast of Assumption of Our Lady, the pagan Indians attacked the little ish camp. Padre Serra quietly remained in his brushwood hut, ho in one hand the image of the Blessed Virgin, and in the other course—a crucifix. As he wrote about it afterwards, "With such fenses, I was sure that either I would not die, or would at any rat well, although I am so great a sinner."

In another letter, where he discusses the difficulties of missic life, he says, "but my Lord Jesus Christ had to pay an immeasur greater price for these poor people". In 1775, when he wrote reging a small crucifix, he called it "the principal object of our pring". In all his Indian missions, in the Sierra Gorda, and later in California, and finally in our New California, he erected the Wathe Cross in every church, and, hardly more than a week beford died, feeble as he was, he made the Stations of the Cross on Fowith his people for the last time. On the afternoon of August 28, in his simple little room at Carmel Mission, he lay down on his of boards and, as always, took the cross in his arms. A few min later, when his brother priest went in, Padre Serra was, as he wasleep in the Lord.

There are many stirring splendid things that are recorded, or alive in loving tradition, about Padre Serra's spiritual greatness, the that you and I could profit by immeasurably and eternally. I hop have the opportunity of telling you much more about him.

To see Padre Serra crowned as a saint would mean great instation for his beloved California, and his native land of Spain, and missionary training-ground of Mexico. His canonization depends upon the learned historians and experts in church law than upon prayers of people like yourselves. For the Glory of God and the of men, please pray for the Cause of Padre Serra.

¹Rev. A. M. Santarelli, O.F.M., "Codex pro Postulatoribus," (Rome), 1929, p. ²Junipero Serra to Francisco Serra, Cadiz, Aug. 20, 1749. ⁸Serra to Lasuen, Mon March 22, 1779. ⁴Serra to Juan Andres, San Diego, Feb. 10, 1770. ⁵Serra Andres, San Diego, July 3, 1769. ⁶Serra, Memorandum, Monterey, July 3, 1775.

With spring's damp breeze God fans Her fervid lip; In oozing balm from last fall's upturned leaves— Dark, plow-torn, new-exhumed—Her soul perceives His promise—a unique Blossom meant to slip In fresh-sprung grass and rival reds that strip Chalcedony's green field. Over silent eaves With young Earth's herald bird the rainbow steeves To merge at dusk in starry Noah's Ship.

Then white-plumed Gabriel's wings brush close. He hails The gracious Maid, and with Her Fiat pens the Tree That makes of God a man—a clay-wrought key To a Womb that shrines, in answer to man's wails, Love's consuming flood of grace, for Three Abide in one—the Dove, Her Child, and She.

Sister Mary Amandine, C.S.S.F.

A FIGURE OF FRANCIS

On Boston Common at Christmas time the stony image of Poverello stood like a man transfixed in grace and vet he was most ill at ease, stone being so unlike himrigid in form he was not free; up toward the hill under the dome of candied gold the Christ Child kingward comes in jubilant birth where only last hot July

the sailors lingered in languorous heat, and only the very weary wept while the dead drunk fed on the faded grass provided by a benevolent State and the just taxation of the common folk-Poverello. how still you stare from your granite cowl toward the green-cribbed hill where Jesus lay, till redwings rush from your snowy hands and dance like fire in your ashen eyes.

Thomas P. McDonnell

Book Review

THE RADIANT CROWN OF GLORY, defects are gladly accepted however. by Very Rev. Thomas Plassmann, O.F.M. Benziger Brothers, Inc., New York, N. Y. \$3.50 258 pages.

In this glorious Marian Age, the volume of Literature on the Mother of God keeps fitting pace with a growing devotion to the "Singular Vessel of Devotion," and it is at once an active source and fortunate sequel of our love for Mary. That too much be written on the subject of God's Mother is not possible. At the same time this exalted theme exacts of an author the very best thoughts of his mind written as masterfully as possible, but only after being purified in love's furnace of prayer; especially when the theme is narrowed down to that glorious prerogative, the Immaculate Conception, Mary's radiant crown of glory.

Father Plassmann's work successfully measures up to these strict requirements. To the reader's delight two things are plain: The author is thoroughly at home in the field of Mariology,-and of Mary's Immaculate Conception in particular,and his pen moves effortlessly because a great love urges it on.

Some readers will undoubtedly object to a certain wordiness that occasionally appears, and also to a repetitiousness that could easily have been eliminated. These

the story of Mary Immaculate stead unfolds in all its grandeur under the terful hand of a scholar who once shows his wide knowledge and amazi ly expert use of Sacred Scripture,

Some chapters in "The Radiant Cro of Glory" are outstanding. Chapter Part I. The Mother of Eternal Wisdon will delight anyone, lay or religious, v loves to follow the Missal on Feasts our Lady. It is regrettable that the thor did not treat more than the Epis of these Masses from the liturgical state point. One would be hard put to find any work on Mary a chapter to sur "Mary Immaculate and the Incarn Word" (Chapter VI. Part 1), wi "The moon was under her feet" (Ch ter III, Part III) is in itself reason enor for this book, reviewing as it does Marian devotion from the earliest d to the present in a manner to satisfy if vice and scholar alike.

Finally, in the novena in honor the Immaculate Heart of Mary-a devi tion which surely is fast becoming chief mark of the Marian era-Fath Plassmann gives a strong and movid conclusion to his book and at the san time makes a unique contribution to Ma ian devotional literature.

-Fr. Leonard Perotti, O.F.M

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