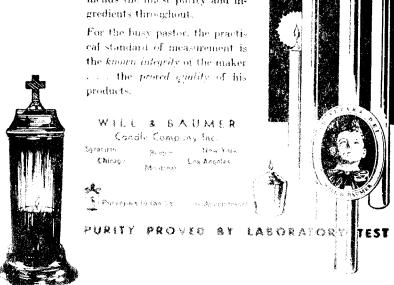
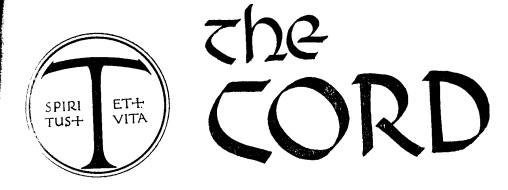


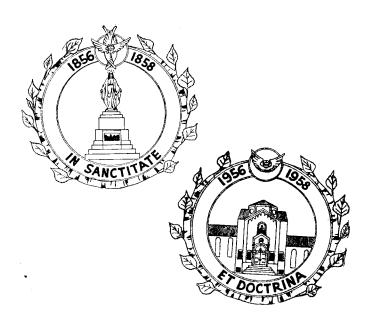
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MONTHLY CONFERENCE

LOVING GOD IN OTHERS

Geoffrey G. Bridges, O.F.M.

"A new commandment I give you, that you love one another; that as I have loved you, you also love one apother. By this will all men know that you are my disciples, if you have love one for another." (Jn. 13, 34-35) We come now to the second great commandment of love. It is one of the most difficult and troublesome of commandments. Uncharitableness is usually the last outpost to fall on our battle to overcome the obstacles on the path to spiritual perfection. Long after we have gotten tempations to unchastity in thought and desire under control; long after we have developed other virtues like temperance and fortitude, we still fail, and fail often, against the commandment second only to the commandment of love of God. The cause no doubt is that uncharitableness has so many and such deep roots, the longest and strongest of which is our self-love.

The reflections I will offer in this conference will do more I hope than emphasize the importance of fraternal charity in your spiritual life; you know that already. Rather I will try to bring out motives and means that will aid you to turn your knowledge into virtue. And actually all that there is to be said on the subject can be drawn from the fountain of Holy Scripture. There is no other virtue which receives as much attention in the New Testament. This in itself should be a lesson to us where to put the emphasis of our effort in the spiritual life.

Our Neighbor

Our neighbor, as you know, is the broadest of terms excluding no intelligent creature—except the damned. Mary, the saints, the souls in Purgatory, and every living human being all these are the object of the second command of love. It is important that we grasp and hold this with all the strength of our faith. No man as long as he is living and hence capable of saving his soul is excluded from this command. This is a revealed doctrine which Christ was at pains to

make clear. We know why he was so insistent; we are constantly feel ing the pull of nature to make exceptions: our detractors, confirmed sinners, persecutors of the Church. Not content with the figurative teaching of the parable of the Good Samaritan, Jesus on several oc casions went into detail, pointing out for our love those very peo ple we are inclined to exclude from the embrace of our love. H directs us to pay for those who persecute and calumniate us. (Mt 5,44) He means men like Krushchev, Tito, Mao; he means the guid ing spirits of the POAU; he means a fellow religious who unreasonal bly opposes or calumniates us; he means a fellow religious with ir ritating mannerisms, or a habit of loud boasting, or a tendency to underhanded conniving. With keen insight into our human nature he warns us away from the pagan attitude of loving only those who love us and saluting those we like. (Lk. 6,32) As he said, there is no reward in this; it is merely natural; it doesn't befit our supernatural destiny. If we are to be his disciples our love must follow our faith and his revelation. We must love all men for his sake; then we may hope for reward.

It is significant that the golden rule of perfection follows immediately after his exhortation that we love those who do not love us. This rule is: "You therefore are to be perfect even as your heavenly Father is perfect." (Mt. 5,48) For one thing God's love is perfect in that he loves all without distinction of person; and in this he showed his love, in that he gave his Son for the salvation of all men. To the extent that our love takes on the universality of the love of he Father, we will approach the perfection of his love.

A limit to the ranger of our love, any exclusion of a person, or a type of person, or a particular race is contrary to the command of Christ; and it is alien to the Franciscan spirit of brotherhood with all men, especially the sinner and the outcast. Perhaps the best antidote to such a temptation is a sincere prayer to this effect: "O God, who hast always loved me despite all my sins and imperfections, for love of thy love, I will love this person no matter what he may do."

"Love thy neighbor as thyself"

The way to love our neighbor is laid down simply and clearly by our Divine Teacher: "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." (Mt. 22,39) This means, Christian tradition tells us, that we should desire for every single person the same good and blessing that we seek for ourselves: primarily growth in grace and virtue and eventual salvation and sanctification, secondarily the necessary and useful goods

of this earth. Everything that we rightly desire, we should desire for our neighbor. Then we will live up to this command.

We can hardly succeed in this love of well-wishing, however, unless we have that prior love that takes joy in the worth of our neighbor. I mean that love whereby we are made on with every human being because he is created by God, made in the image of God, redeemed by Jesus Christ, loved by the Blessed Virgin Mary, an actual or potential member of the Mystical Body. When the light of our faith pierces below the surface of race and creed and character and lights up these essential truths (as violet rays bring out the hidden beauties of phosphorescent rocks), and when our hearts embrace these people because of these underlying qualities, then the acts of charitable action follow easily.

Or more simply, when we learn to see Jesus Christ in every man, to love Jesus Christ in our neighbor, then the wishing good and the doing good becomes possible. Again, our faith must lead the way. Under her light we can see in our superiors Christ the Divine Master; in our friends, Christ the Divine Companion; in repulsive, abusive, irritating persons, Christ in disguise, testing me in order to prove my virtue and increase my merit. When caring for a queulous sick person, or placating a selfish complainer, or helping an ungrateful petitioner, it becomes easy to be patient, kind, generous, when we do it for Christ in this person. "Amen, I say to you, as long as you did it for one of these, the least of my brethren, you did it for me." (Mt. 25,40)

The Counsels of Christ

Certainly such a personal love rooted in faith is necessary if we are to practice the counsels of Jesus Christ on loving our neighbor. And I wonder if we can say that we have truly put on the mind of Christ if we do not practice these counsels. Yet what he asks is not easy. These counsels at times strike at our pride and natural self-respect; they go beyond our natural prudence. Take for instance the counsels in the Sermon on the Mount, where Christ laid down the foundations of the Christian philosophy of life: "But I say to you who are listening: Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you. Bless those who curse you, pray for those who calumniate you. And to him who strikes thee on the cheek, offer the other also; and from him who takes away thy cloak, do not withhold thy tunic also. Give to everyone who asks of thee, and from him who takes away thy goods, ask no return. And even as you wish men to do to you, so also do you to them. And if you

love those who love you, what merit have you? For even sinners love those who love them. And if you do good to those who do good to you. what merit have you? For even sinners do that. And if you lend to those from whom you hope to receive in return, what merit have you? For even sinners lend to sinners that they may get back as much in return But love your enemies; and do good, and lend not hoping for any return and your reward shall be great, and you shall be children of the Most High, for He is kind towards the ungrateful and evil. (Think of that!) Be merciful therefore even as your Father is merciful." (Lk. 6, 27-36) This is Christian charity in action.

LOVING GOD IN OTHERS

You see now what I meant when I said that this virtue strikes at our natural self-respect and our natural prudence. Only on the supernatural level can it be wisdom to refrain from defending our good name or to lend when we know that no return will be made. Only men of deep supernatural faith can truly practice this virtue of fratern al charity, especially to the extent here counseled by our teacher, Jesu Christ.

Searching elsewhere in Sacred Scripture, we find many other works of charity commanded or counseled by Christ and his Apostles. We should bear one another's burdens (there are abundant opportunities for this in the convent); incite one another to charity and good works; look not to our own interests but to those of others; become all things to all men; giving of what we have to those who have not; giving good example to all men; showing mercy and compassion to all; loving not only in word but in deed and in truth; being toward all humble, meek, and patient. This is true fraternal charity. Looked at in this way, embracing, that is, all the virtues that have respect to our fellow man, it is not surprising to hear St. Paul proclaim: "The whole law is fulfilled in one word: Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." (Gal. 5, 14) This is the real, the positive virtue of fraternal charity, a far cry from that insipid, negative attitude of trying not to think or speak or do evil against our neighbor. Such is only a small part, the introduction, to this beautiful virtue.

One Command and One Love

It helps us to realize the dignity of fraternal charity, if we realize that actually love of God and love of neighbor are not two virtues or two loves, but two aspects of the queen of all the virtues, charity. Because charity has two objects, God as the direct object and our neighbor as the indirect object, there can be two commandments of love. But charity itself is one. It is God that we love in this virtue, either

directly in himself, or indirectly in his image and reflection in our neighbor. Love of neighbor is a necessary consequence of love of God. For if I love God, then I will love what God loves, and God loves all men without exception. If I love God, then I will desire that all men will love God and grow perfect in this love. And if I love God, then I will love the participation of divine perfections and goodness in my neighbor. You have heard this before, that you should love your neighbor because God loves him and because he is an image of God. Do not be discouraged if you cannot see this resemblance. It is faith that is leading here, and faith is not vision. Your neighbor is like a sacrament: an outward sign and an inner reality. Despite all appearances cling to the truths that faith teaches you about your neighbor and you will have the foundation for fraternal charity.

I said at the outset that the second great command of love is one of the most difficult because of our human nature which is constantly exerting a drag on our super-nature. In this difficulty St. Theresa of Avila offers a word of encouragement. She assures us, since love of neighbor requires at times more effort, more generosity, more forgetfulness of self and of personal feelings and desires, therefore it is often more meritorious than many a direct act of love of God.

We can tie this in, then, with the previous conference. In the course of your day, as you cast about for ways to express your love for God, you will seldom find a better, more meritorious opportunity, than the one that your neighbor offers you. Negatively, by restraing your tongue, your action, your judgment, your criticism, or positively by a kind word, a generous service, by giving or loaning, by patience and compassion, you can love God in your neighbor.

There is not better way to die to yourself and live for Christ in his love, than to subject yourself with your natural likes and dislikes to the Christ you see by faith in your neighbor.

St. John says, then, "Beloved, let us love one another, for love is from God. And everyone who loves is born of God and knows God. . . If God has loved us, we ought also to love one another." (In. 4,7;11)

Living with our neighbor in the spirit of Christ is a school of love. Loving him as God loved us is one important way of fulfilling our destiny as co-lovers of God with Christ and Mary.

THE PASSION Of CHRIST

Fr. Thomas Plassmann, O.F.M.

Many of our daily exercises and duties afford us a practical opportuinity for the constant recollection of the Cross of our Savior.

One way is to cover the entire Passion from the Garden of Gethsemani to the Sepulchre, using the prayers and ceremonies of Holy
Mass as indicative of the various scenes of the Passion. This was described in a previous number of The Cord. Another is to meditate on the
Passion during the seven Canonical Hours. The theme for each hours
is easily determined, f.i., by starting in Gethsemani at the beginning
of Matins and closing with the death of Christ at Compline.

The history of the Passion from the Upper Room to Mount Calvary covers about twenty-four hours. In the following description the hours do not necessarily correspond to the time of the day when and where the various scenes of the Passion took place. In fact, one may suit them to his own convenience. It has been suggested that we write out a brief horarium of these twenty-four hours and briefly indicate the theme. In this way we shall comply with St. Paul's beautiful suggestion "Always bearing about in our body the dying of Jesus." If we keep this outline on our desk or in our workshop, it is easy to carry the Cross of Christ with us all day.

HOLY THURSDAY AND GOOD FRIDAY

"Come, child," said Jesus, "stay with me This ev'ning and tomorrow And I will tell you of my death And of my Mother's sorrow.

"Behold, my wounds were never sealed And though I live in glory, My love goes out to those who watch My bitter Passion's story. "Mark then, at every hour's stroke You must recall with pity The places of my sufferings In Isr'el's Holy City.

"Assembled in the Upper Room, The Twelve looked sad and tired. 'From all eternity,' said I, 'Have I this Pasch desired.'

"Into the chalice and the bread I poured my love in token.
And last, on Calv'ry's hoary heights I died for all, heart-broken."

THE PASSION CLOCK

Holy Thursday

- 6 p.m. The Last Supper in the Upper Room

 Where is the guest chamber, that I may eat the passover there with my disciples? (Lk. 22:11)
- 7 p.m. Ritual of the Paschal Lamb

 It shall be a lamb without blemish, a male of one year: according to which rite also you shall take a kid. (Ex. 12:5)
- 8 p.m. Jesus Washes Feet of Disciples

 If I do not wash thee, thou shalt have no part with me. (John 13:8)
- 9 p.m. Institution of the Holy Eucharist
 I have greatly desired to eat this passover with you before I suffer. (Lk. 22:15)
- 10 p.m. Institution of the Priesthood

 Do this in remembrance of me. (I Cor. 11:24)

11 p.m. The New Commandment of Love. The Priestly Prayer

A new commandment I give you, that you love one another. (John 13:34) Holy Father, keep in thy name those whom thou hast given me, that they may be one even as we are. (John 17:11)

Good Friday

12 midnight Farewell Between Jesus and Disciples

I go to prepare a place for you... And where I go you know, and the way you know. (John 14: 3-4)

1 a.m. The Bloody Sweat in Gethsemani

Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass away from me; yet not as I will, but as thou willest. (Matth. 26:39)

2 a.m. The Kiss of Judas the Betrayer

Friend, for what purpose thou come? (Matth. 26:50) Judas, dost thou betray the Son of Man with a kiss? (Lk. 22:48)

3 a.m. Arrest of Jesus-In Chains

He shall be led as a sheep to the slaughter and shall be dumb. (Is. 53:7)

4 a.m. Before High Priests. Peter's Denials and Remorse

And the Lord turned and looked upon Peter. . . And Peter went out and wept bitterly. (Lk. 22:61-62)

5 a.m. Mockery, Insults-In Prison

But I am a worm, not a man; the scorn of men, despised by the people. (Ps. 21:7)

6 a.m. Before Caiphas: "Guilty"

The kings of the earth rise up and the princes conspire against the Lord and against his Christ. (Ps. 2:2)

7 a.m. Before Pilate: "Not Guilty."Barabbas

His blood be on us and on our children. (Matth. 27:25)

8 a.m. Before Herod: Royal Robe of Derision

But Herod, with his soldiery, treated him with contempt and mocked him, arraying him in a bright robe. (Lk. 23:11)

9 a.m. The Cruel Scouring

Upon my back the plowers plowed; long did they make their furrows. (Ps. 128:3)

10 a.m. Ignominiously Crowned with Thorns

He was wounded for our iniquities, he was bruised for our

sins. (Is. 53:5)

11 a.m. "Ecce Homo." Bitter Way of the Cross

We have seen him, despised, and the most abject of men, a man of sorrows. (Is. 53:3)

12 noon Golgatha: Crucifixion

They have pierced my hands and my feet, and they have numbered all my bones. (Is. 21:17-18)

1 p.m. Jesus Crucified Between Two Thieves

Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing. (Lk. 23:34) This day thou shalt be with me in paradise. (Lk. 23:43)

2 p.m. St. John and Sorrowful Mother
Woman, behold, thy son. Son, behold, thy mother. (John 19:26-27)

3 p.m. "It Is Finished"

Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit. (Lk. 23:46)

4 p.m. Jesus in the Arms of His Mother

O all ye that pass by the way, attend, and see if there be any sorrow like to my sorrow. (Lam. 1:12)

5 p.m. Darkness. Burial. "Peace be to you"

Him the Gentiles shall beseech, and his sepulchre shall be glorious. (Is. 11:10)

ECCE HOMO

I saw Him—the Man of Sorrows—and lo!
He lisped to my heart His grief and His woe:
All stained in His gore, all wounded and sore;
The crown of derision upon His brow;
His cheeks with burning fever aglow;
An anguished quiver about His lip;
His hands pressed together in trembling grip.
And hark! a sigh from His breast divine—
It died, and yet in my heart's deepest shrine
Re-echoed those accents, so tender, benign.

Accents of loning, a pray'r sad and numb,—Because in His sorrow He must succumb—Ah, and His eyes were longing with pain, Longing for Love, Love without feign... "See with My blood I have come to regain Naught but thy love—love is life, sin decay. Thine is My destiny: sentence Me, pray—Wilt thou Me die, or live, to-day?"

... I saw Him, and gazed, and listened anon To the word that broke from His dying breath: "Oh, give Me thy love, thy love alone, Or thy sin will cause—My death."

By a holy contemplative of our day (Appr. by Bishop William Turner)

Ut Melius Catholice Observemus

Fr. Cajetan Esser, O.F.M.

Chapter Six

THE FRIARS ARE NOT TO ACQUIRE ANYTHING AS THEIR OWN—THEY ARE TO DEPEND ON ALMS—THE CARE OF THE SICK FRIARS.

With this chapter we reach what is one of the most important sections of the Rule, in which Francis binds all his friars to the highest poverty. But, as the second part of the chapter shows, such utter poverty is wedded to and made feasible in a truly brotherly community life. Not by accident are these two elements of our life so closely linked together in the Rule. Poverty and fraternal love go hand in hand, and the one is made possible only through and in the other. They stand and fall together: poverty without the protection of brotherly love can make us hard and biter, while through poverty fraternal love finds new life, depth and meaning.

1. THE SUBLIMITY OF THE HIGHEST POVERTY.

"The friars are to take nothing as their own, whether it be a house, or a place, or anything at all. Instead, they are to be as pilgrims and strangers in this world; and as those who serve the Lord in poverty and lowliness let them go begging for alms with full hope in him. Nor should they feel shame thereby, since for our sakes the Lord himself came into this world as a poor man. Such indeed is the greatness of this perfect poverty that it makes you, my dearest brothers, theirs and kings of the kingdom of heaven, so that though you are thereby in want of this world's goods you are made rich in virtues. Let this always be your 'portion' here below, for it will bring you to 'the land of the living.' Hold fast to it, most beloved brothers with all your soul, and desire never to have aught else under heaven, for the sake of our level Jesus Christ, whom you have chosen."

In excerpt from Fr. Cajetan Esser's explanation of the Rule of Saint Francis, blished in *The Matrow* of the Gospel (Franciscan Herald Press). See previscues of the CORD.

The mind of Saint Francis stands forth clearly in these words: his friars an Order, as a brotherhood, are not to claim anything at their own, a house, a piece of ground, or aught else. From the beginning the Order and the Church have seen in this sentence the basis for the absolute lack of ownership on the part of the Friars Minor. The Church, moreover, through her highest pastors, the popes, has ever sought to bring this seemingly impossible prohibition into harmon with the concrete daily life of the friars and the changing condition of the world.

1. The Poverty of Saint Francis.

Here the first question that interests us is how Saint Franchimself understood poverty and the lack of all possessions; that is how did he actually live this poverty. A law must always be understood first of all from the viewpoint of the lawgiver if we would avoid a servile and barren observance of the letter thereof.

In both Rules Francis says that the friars are allowed a certain kind and definite amount of clothing. The earlier Rule (ch. 3) permi them to have "those books necessary to fulfill the divine office," thou these were then more numerous than we need today. According the present Rule (ch. 3), they may have breviaries. The permission the older Rule that such laics among the friars as knew how to re might have a psalter, is now found in the later Rule. Again, in prescri ing that each should retain, if honorable, the art or trade he knew fore entering, the former Rule (ch. 7) also grants that "they may ha the tools and instruments required by such trades." Since other book besides breviaries proved needful for the life and activity of the fria Francis did not reject such a necessity: "He wished, however, the they be few, and available for the needs of all the friars." Cela quotes him elsewhere as saying that "the friars should have books at all pleasing things (placentia) in common." In like manner, France allowed the friars to have churches and houses, as these in the cou of years proved necessary for the life of the friars. Moreover, the Ru for Hermitages, which is so full of his spirit, says simply and plain "They should have a cloister (that is, an enclosed section), in whi each should have his cell" in which he may pray and sleep. In Letter to the Chapter, Francis speaks of "the places in which the fri dwell," and prescribes that they should celebrate Mass therein according ing to the form of the Roman Church. Thereby he makes reference the privilege granted by the pope, that the friars might have the own oratories. But if they were to celebrate Mass and receive H Communion, they would need vestments and sacred vessels, and Fran does not hesitate to say these should be costly (pretiosa). Finally, at the end of his life Francis approved this whole development when he wrote in his Testament: "The friars should make sure that they do not receive under any circumstances churches, houses however small and mean, and all else but for their use, unless they are truly in keeping with the holy poverty which we have promised in the Rule; and they should always, as pilgrims and strangers, consider themselves as guests therein."

In all these instances, we may rightly conclude, Francis recognizes the necessities of life and does not push poverty to some unattainable extreme. That in all these instances likewise a certain "having" is involved, Francis shows by the fact that on occasion he disposed of such things, giving away his mantle, capuche, tunic, drawers, books, and even the ornaments of the altar, and declaring that his friars should also retain such liberty. He once remarked: "I wish that my friars show themselves sons of the same mother and that if one asks for a tunic or cord or anything else, the other would generously give it away. Let them share with one another books and whatever else might please the other; let one even force the other to take them." This was one of the liberties of the Gospel which Saint Clare, the truest daughter and disciple of Saint Francis, wished her Sisters to practice, since she writes in her Rule: "If anythink be sent a Sister by her parents or others, the Abbess should have it given to her. The Sister, if she need it, may use it; otherwise, let her in all charity give it to some Sister who may be in need of it."

Behind all these concessions there stands out clearly the idea which the first Franciscans had of property, to which Francis himself so often gave concrete expression: God places all things at man's disposal, that he may use them as the needs of his life may require. But such things are less a gift than a loan to which man loses all right when he meets someone poorer than himself. If he then clung to what had thus been conceded to him, he would be guilty in the mind of Saint Francis of an "appropriare," a "desire for possession." When Francis once met a man poorer than himself, he gave him his mantle and remarked to his companion: "It is only right, brother, that we give this poor man the mantle because it really belongs to him. We have only received it on loan, until we should find someone poorer ... I do not wish to be a thief, yet it would be charged as thievery sainst us if we did not give it to one in greater need." As much as rancis conceded to his brothers the use of things needed for their stence and for the fulfillment of their labors, just as much did he insist that all such things were but loaned to us by God, "that great Almsgiver," and might be used by his friars only as long as they did not encounter someone poorer whose need might be alleviated thereby

The "approriare" of Saint Francis has therefore less of a juridical than a deeply religious meaning. Man cannot claim things as his own but must ever hold them at the disposal of their proper owner, "th great Almsgiver," who must be able always to use them as he wills wit no let or hindrance from the greedy will of man. "To appropriate no thing to oneself" must be thus understood in the words of Saint Paul "This I say, brethren, the time is short; it remains that those who have wives be as if they had none and those who weep, as if not weeping and those who rejoice, as though not rejoicing; and those who but as though not possessing; and those who use this world, as though not using it, for this world as we see it is passing away" (I Cor. 7, 29-31) This Francis implies in using the word "hospitantes" in his Test ment, for the friars are to live as guests in their cloisters and churche Even more clearly the earlier Rule brings out the meaning of "appropt" ate:" "Wherever the friars may be, in hermitages or in other place let them take care not to make any place their own or to forbid and one access to it."

If Francis thus granted his friars the use of what was needed for their life and work, it was always full acknowledgment of the sovereing rights of God. The Friars Minor were to renounce that use in complete detachment if love were in any way harmed thereby. Thus does sure lack of ownership serve the great goal of their life: the honor and glo of God, since he is once more revered as the supreme Lord of all thing Francis said as much to Cardinal Ugolino when at the latter's lavitable he ate the black bread he had begged on the streets of Rome. When the Cardinal demurred, for this seemed to shame him as host, Fracis replied: "I have rather shown you honor, since I have honored greater Lord; for God is well pleased with poverty, and above all that which includes voluntary begging." The poor man surrenders his self completely to God and casts all his care upon him, that he may be cared for by his Father. He thereby gives "to God the things the are God's" (Mt. 22, 22).

The next sentence of the Rule is full of meaning for the poor free who must seek to serve and honor God: "They are to be as pilgrif and strangers in this world (who)... serve the Lord in poverty a lowliness." The deep, truly religious meaning of "non-appropriare" capsuled in these brief but pregnant words. The pilgram and strangis, so to speak, always enroute, and if he does tarry somewheres a whi

it is always as a guest. As a result, Saint Francis did not wish to make his friars attached to any place or particular cloister, by any vow of stability. They were not to live by the fruits of their land or estates, from rentals or any kind of fixed revenues. Instead, as they went their way through the world, they were to earn their livelihood by their work. They were not even to have a legal claim to the pay for their work, for that again would be an appropriation at odds with the lowliness of our state.— Even what was offered them as pay they were to accept as alms; and when it did not suffice for their needs, then they might take themselves to the table of the Lord and like other poor men go begging from door to door. Francis thought too that the brothers might practice such begging among themselves, as he wrote for the friars in hermitages: "And they can, if they will, beg (from the friars who acted as 'mothers') an alms for the love of the Lord God as little poor people might do." The truly poor man makes no demands and shows no preferences. Rather, like a beggar he awaits whatever God's love is ready to give him through the hands of man. To beg for alms was thus for Francis an expression of his deep and living faith in the providence of God.

11T MELIUS CATHOLICE OBSERVEMUS

2. The Motives for a Life of Highest Poverty.

What were the motives that drew Francis of Assisi to embrace such a life of utter poverty? The Rule itself presents two reasons both of which had shaped and inspired his life: the example of our Lord Jesus Christ who "for our sakes... came into this world as a poor man;" and the thought that the life of a Christian is a journey and an exile until the Lord shall come and make perfect that which is now but a promise: therefore as pilgrims and strangers we should take poverty as our portion here below that it may lead us to the land of the living (Ps 141, 6).

"Brethren, you know the graciousnes of our Lord Jesus Christ—how, being rich, he became poor for your sakes, that by his poverty you might become rich" (II Cor 8, 9). These words of Saint Paul are implied in the phrase of the Rule: "since for our sakes the Lord himself came into this world as a poor man." Historically, no doubt, it was the external poverty of Christ that first attracted Francis and led him to accept it as a characteristic of his life and ours. But gradually he came to understand more fully the inner poverty of Christ, the "emptying" (Phil 2, 7) of the Incarnate Word, and sought to empty himself in return. In every sin, he knew, man seeks to have and poscess for himself things or other men, when in reality they belong to God. At the heart of every sin is an "appropriare," whereby we take

as our own what does not and cannot belong to us. At the heart of our salvation, by contrast, is he poverty of Christ, who, being rich emptied himself and became poor for our sakes. His saving grace will flow most fully, then, upon him who shares the poverty of Christ because totally "expropriatus," stripped of self, he seeks to live with nothing of his own. The poor man thus becomes the living symbol of the Christ who saved us by his poverty: "Brother, when you see a power man, you have before you a mirror of the Lord and his poor Mather."

For Francis, his friars were to re-present and exemplify in t Church that poverty of Christ by making it live again in their li Their poverty was to preserve and nourish in the members of t Church love for the Poor Christ. Sometimes, then when he sent the for alms, he would say: "Go, for in this last hour the Friars Minor a given to the world that in them God's chosen ones may fulfill the which may obtain for them the favor of the Judge of all: 'What y have done for one of my lesser brethren, you have done for me'." again, he wrote: 'The friars who labor in seeking alms shall have great reward, and cause those who bestow such alms to acquire gain that same reward.' The poor life of the Friars Minor is thus occasion or a channel of the saving graces of Jesus Christ in the Chur Poverty becomes a help to the salvation of men: "Know, my brothe that poverty is a special way of salvation. Her fruits are manifold vet actually known only to a few." Because of this precious fruit poverty Francis wished to have nothing and to lay claim to nothing "He sought to have nothing as his own that in God he might more fu posess all thing," and as utterly poor and empty might be filled w the fulness of the kingdom of God through the grace of our Lord Je Christ. In turn, his poverty and that of his brethren would bring t kingdom of God to men, by portraying to all the poverty and humil of Christ.

Unceasingly therefore Francis bade his sons make the poverty Christ the foundation of their life: "Often, when he spoke to then poverty he would point to the words of the Gospel: 'The foxes h dens, and he birds of the air have nests, but the Son Man has now to lay his head'." When he could not copy to the utmost the povert Christ, he was filled with sorrow and holy dismay: "When the I dwelt in his hermitage (the desert), and prayed and fasted for for days, he had no cell or house to cover him, but lived under the roof the mountain. We can follow him if in keeping with our life Rule we have nothing of our own, though we cannot live without

use of houses." Yet he sought to follow that poverty to the utmost, conscious that to this God had called him, and that it was to be the special mark of his brotherhood and would distinguish it from all other orders: "The example of the poverty of the Son of God must bind us more than all other religious." Our poverty is primarily and literally the poverty of Christ; and we embrace not poverty but the Poor Christ, "who was not ashamed for our sakes to be poor and without means, and to live by alms." Joyfully, Francis could claim: "I deem it royal dignity and high nobility, to follow that Lord who, being rich, became poor for our sakes," for poverty was thereby made a "royal virtue since it shone so wondrously in the King and his queenly Mother." He therefore loved poverty as the Bride of Christ, and in knightly fashion dedicated himself to her as his liege lady, that through utter self-despoilment he might honor Christ and with him our Father in heaven.

"Such indeed is the greatness of this perfect povery, that it makes you, my dearest brothers, heirs and kings of the kingdom of heaven, so that though you are in want of this world's goods you are made rich in virtues. Let this always be your 'portion' here below, for it will bring you to 'the land of the living'." Not without reason did Francis speak of his friars as pilgrims and strangers, to indicate thereby their truly Christian approach to life. The Christian is a wayfarer, a man on the way. He is not of this world but a stranger in it, that he may reach another world (cf. John 15, 18f). In Christian hope he awaits the fulfillment and perfection of his life in the kingdom to come. The outward sign of such hope in us is, for Francis, holy poverty. Through it is nourished in Christians the longing for their true home, the "land of the living" (Ps. 141, 6). For this reason he allowed nothing in the houses of the friars that would recall this world to them. Instead, everything was to remind them that they were pilgrims and exiles. This "law of pilgrimage" was ever to be in effect, above all in their highest poverty.

"Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven" (Matt. 5, 3). To our holy Founder poverty was "the pledge of our heavenly inheritance. . . . the pledge and promise of eternal riches." Because the early friars sometimes did not fully take to begging, he comforted them: "My dearest brothers, the Son of God was far nobler than us, yet he came into this world in poverty for our sakes. For love of him we have chosen the way of poverty, and cannot therefore be ashamed to go for alms. It does not belong to the heirs of the kingdom to be ashamed of the pledge of their heavenly inheritance." And those

who placed their hope in earthly things he earnestly rebuked: "For sake of a loan given but for a time I would not abandon what is a sure inheritance to come; for it is poverty alone that makes us heirs and king of the kingdom of heaven, not your false riches." Only to the man who in Christian hope has made himself poor will the fulness of God come. He alone becomes rich in virtues, since he gives ful place to the workings of the Spirit. For him, poverty is truly "the root of Pefection."

from this Christian view of poverty proceeds the concluding exhoration of Saint Francis: "Hold fast to this poverty, most beloved brothers, with all your soul and desire never to have aught else under heaven, for the sake of our Lord Jesus Christ, who you have chosen."

II. FRATERNAL LOVE AS THE GUARDIAN OF MOST HIGH POVERTY.

Ind wherever the friars may be together or may come upon any ther brethren, let them show by ther behavior toward one another hat they are all of one family. And if one of them is in need other. For if a mother has such care and love for the child born of who is his brother according to the Spirit? And if any of them become wish to have themselves."

There is a vital connection between the apparently disparate paragraph of this chapter of the Rule. Francis has just required of his insecurity. Now, in the second part of the chapter, he seeks to give them another, more deeply Christian security for their life: the true brotherhood of the Franciscan common life, which is to be the support and guardian of poverty.

Here again we soon discover that Francis had very clear concepts and principles governing his approach to the common life of his sons. We are not surprised to discover that only twice in all his writings dots he use "Order" in reference to the friars. The Bull of Honorius II speaks of the Order of Friars Minor, but the Rule itself invariably uses "religio" or more often "fraternitas," brotherhood. In this it is a more accurate reflection of the mind and spirit of Saint Francis, since his whole concept is that of a closely knit community of brothers pursuing a definite form of the Christian life (haec vita) through a common Rule. Our communities must therefore possess

more of the character of a true family, since Francis wished his friars to "show themselves sons of one and the same mother." They are indeed sons of one mother, the Church and through the life which she has given them, "spiritual brothers." Through that life, which is developed in pursuit of the will of God, they are brothers of Christ, one spirit with him, and in the oneness of that spirit brothers to one another.

Francis has truly grasped the words of the Lord, and cites them in the early Rule: "All you are brothers; and call no one on earth your father; for one is your Father in heaven. . . Wherever two of three are gathered together for my sake, there am I in the midst of them." Taking these words literally, Francis saw his community as less that of sons under a father (an abbot or prior) than of brothers bound together for the sake of Christ and through his love under one Father in heaven. His friars were to be and are brothers in the Spirit. Therefore must their love for one another exceed the greatest natural love that can be found, that of a mother for the child she has carried beneath her heart. Of all human loves, this is the most beautiful, the most loyal and indestructible, the most self-sacrificing. Yet Francis demands more of us: the very love that Christ has for us: "And they are to love one another according to the word of the Lord: 'This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you'." He who is bound to his brothers through the spirit of Christ must love them with the love of Christ which surpasses all knowledge (Eph. 3, 19). Francis therefore cites in the early Rule the prayer of Christ for his disciples, as the foundation of our community life: "And for them I sanctify myself, that they may be sanctified in truth. Not for these only do I pray, but for those who through their word are to believe in me, that they may be perfected in unity and that the world may know that thou hast sent me and that thou hast loved them even as thou hast loved me. And I will make known to them thy name, in order that the love with which thou hast loved me may be in them, and I in them." Franciscan brotherhood, then, is nothing more than radical Christian brotherhood and unity! The spiritual brothers must love one another with that love of God which became man in Christ which far surpasses in intensity and greatness the love of a mother for her child.

Such love Francis reduces to three practical directives in the text of the present Rule:

1. His friars were to find their true dwelling-place, so to speak, in such love. "Wherever they may be together or may come upon

any of their brethren" had pointed meaning when many if not most of them were traveling preachers. Because they thus lacked a fixed abode, they were to show themselves in any chance meeting as members of one family, knowing that their love took the place of any house or home. They were not solitary pilgrims and strangers, but joined together wherever they were in the love with which God has loved us in his Son.

- 2. If it is to be genuinely human, love must always be concrete and not theoretical. Therefore, "by their works let them show the love which they owe one another, as the Apostle says: 'Let us not love in word, neither with the tongue, but in deed and in truth'." Such true love should inspire confidence in one's spiritual brothers. If a friar has a need, he should not hide it within himself in the unhappy thought of solving it alone, but should make it known to his brother, that the latter may show true love and care for him. How, in practice, this should be done. Francis clearly tells us: "I wish that my friars show themselves as sons of one and the same mother, and if one asked for a habit, a cord, or anything else, the other should gladly give it to him; rather, the one ought to insist that the other take it." Or as the early Rule (ch. 9) puts it: "And let one unhesitatingly reveal his need to the other, that the latter may find and provide what is necessary for him. And let each love and cherish his brother as a mother loves and cherishes her child." Even more, brotherly care and thoughtfulness ought to make us alert to the needs of others, so that we would not wait for the other to ask but with generous heart and full love anticipate his wants.
- 3. "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself" (Mt. 19,19). This commandment, which is like the grestest commandment of the love of God, Francis applies in a special way to our love and care of the sick friars. If the life of highest poverty is a difficult and complete sacrifice for one in good health, it is doubly so for the sick. And in the time of sickness there is always a greater danger of "looking back." Hence the friars should make special provision for the sick and "take that care of them which they would wish to have themselves." Here indeed will their love be tested, whether it be free of all self-interest and is truly love for the love of Christ. "Truly blessed is that friar," says Saint Francis, "who loves his brother who is sick and cannot render him service with as much love as he has for one who is well and can be useful for him."

As much as Francis commends the sick brother to the love of all, he does not fail to warn him of the danger of looking back": "And

I ask the friar who is sick to give thanks to the Creator for all things, and to desire to be whatever God wills for him, whether healthy or sick." One who is truly poor accepts everything in deep faith as coming from the hand of God. He makes no demands and knows full well that he can exact nothing as due to him, not even good health. As Francis sees it, he must not merely be resigned to the dispositions of providence but more positively must make his own whatever God wills for him, whether sickness or health. Even in the time of sickness, then, the Friar Minor can "love and honor our Lady holy Poverty." We can thus readily understand the further admonition of Francis: "But if the sick friar lets himself be troubled or angered whether against God or the other friars, or is too demanding of medicines in the vain desire of saving the flesh which is soon to die and which is the enemy of the soul, this comes to him from the evil one; and he is a carnal (i. e., self-centered) man and is acting no more like one of the friars, since he loves the body more than the soul." Let him humbly accept what God disposes for him, and let the others by their kindness and loving service help him to preserve the truly Christian and Franciscan spirit in sickness and in trouble.

Another reason for the care of the sick friars Francis advances elsewhere: "Brother, in the sick behold the sufferings which Christ undewent for us!" As the poor were for him the mirror of the Poor Christ, went for us!" As the poor were for him the mirror of the Poor Christ, so the sick were the image of the Suffering Christ: "I was sick and you visited me" (Mt. 25, 36). The sick thus help us to prove our love for Christ by our deeds: this is the reason for the mercy and kindness which Francis showed the lepers, whom for love of Christ he served with such self-forgetting love. As the "wholly Christlike Poverello," he saw in the poor and the sick the "effigies Christi," Christ made visable before him.

Poverty, which Francis praises so highly in this sixth chapter of the Rule, will truly produce many fruits in us if we give ourselves wholly over to her keeping and possess her true spirit. She will rid us of all attachment to or dependence on earthly things, that we may be wholly free to glorify God and as pilgrims and strangers to serve him in poverty and lowliness. Yet even as she finds support and protection in the brotherhood of the spirit, she will in turn teach us how to love one another, without self-seeking or self-interst in the pure love of Christ, who loved his own even to the end.

Sister M. Anthony Brown, O.S.E

It must be born in mind that the Fioretti does not purport to ha biography; it is a collection of beautiful traditions about St. France and his companions, handed down orally in the Provinces of Umbriand the Marches and put into writing in the course of the Fourteent Century in such a way as to appeal to the popular fancy. As in man cases history has a tendency to transform itself into legends, even if the case of kings and emperors, how much more must this be the case of two Saints like Francis and Clare, who form a striking exception the axiom nemo propheta in patria sua. There is not, therefore, after all anything that should surprise us, if in some chapters of the Fiorett the thread of historical truth is of the slenderest.

Many of the stories of the Fioretti, are, doubtless, but memorie of memories, ensamples, fused, and transfigured in the imagination always fervent to say the least, of the second and third generations of Spirituali which they told as they went by the way or as they gathered together in their refectories.²

Since the purpose of this paper is to discuss the historical value of certain chapters of the Fioretti, it is, perhaps of value to discuss briefly the historical value of the Fioretti, itself, before mentioning in dividual chapters and their historical import.

There has been some doubt as to whether the Fioretti were written in Italian in the first instance, as Sharalea thought, or were translated from a Latin original, as Wadding maintained. The latter seem altogether more probable, and modern critics generally believe that larger Latin collection of Legens, which has come down to us under the name "Actus B. Francisci et Sociorum Ejus" represents an approximation to the text now lost of the original "Floretum," of which the Fioretti is a translation.

A striking difference is noticeable between the earlier chapters of the Fioretti which refer to St. Francis and his companions, and the later ones which deal with the friars in the province of the March of Ancona. The first half of the collection is, no doubt, merely a new form given to traditions that go back to the early days of the order; the other is believed to be substantially the work of a certain Fra da Monte Giorgio of the noble family of Brunforte, who, at the time of his death in 1348, was provincial of the Friars Minor in the March. Living as he did a century after the death of Saint Francis, Ugolino Brunforte was dependent on hearsay for much of his information, part of it he is said to have learned from Fra Giacomo da Massa who had been well known and esteemed by the companions of the saint, and who had lived on terms of intimacy with Fra Leone, his confessor and secretary. Whatever may have been the sources from which Ugolino derived his materials, the fifty-three chapters which constitute the Latin work in question seem to have been written before 1328. The four appendixes on the Stigmata of St. Francis, the life of Fra Ginepro, and the life and sayings of Fra Egidio, which occupy nearly one half of the printed text of the Fioretti, as we now have it, form no part of the original collection and were probably added by later compilers. Unfortunately, the friar who translated into Italian fifty-three of the seventy-six chapters found in "Actus B. Francisci", and in translating immortalized them, as the Fioretti remains unknown. The attribution of this work to Giovanni di San Lorenzo rests wholly upon conjecture. However this may be, the vernacular version is written in the most limpid Tuscan and is reckoned among the masterpieces of Italian literature.3

Now let us look at the historical value of Chapter XV of the Fioretti entitled: "How St. Clare Ate With St. Francis And His Fellow-Friars At St. Mary Of The Angels". Some accept the feast as an established fact because it fits in with their sentimental notions of the pleasant, friendly feeling existing between the Minorite "brethern and sistren". Others reject it as pure romance from the standpoint that such things as are narrated could not possibly have happened. A moment's reflection causes one to perceive that this manner of argumentation is nothing more or less than apriorism pure and simple and it involves the negation of accepted historical methods. A whole group of articles resulted from a statement about the feast that was made Paschal Robinson. He translated from the Latin the oldest known schal Robinson, "Fioretti di S. Francesco d'Assisi," Catholic Encyclopedia, VI, pp. 78, 79. This is almost a word for word quotation from this article.

¹Paschal Robinson, "A Conjectural Chapter in the Life of St. Clare," AFH V 639, 640.

²T. Okey, "The Little Flowers of St. Francis," Introduction, XX.

biography of St. Clare.⁴ Robinson took occasion in a footnote to the text to say that the charming chapter found in the lives according to some biographers and the same story in the *Fioretti* which tells how she once went to eat with St. Francis and his companions at the Porti uncula, was, in his opinion, wholly devoid of historical foundation Opinions to the contrary have been forthcoming in considerable number. In reply Father Paschal quotes as his sources for this opinion the Actus B. Francisci⁵, and the Floretum S. Francisci⁶. Now it is a well known fact that the Fioretti is based on the Actus, but no critical exhaustive study exists about the historical value of the single parts of the Actus-Fioretti.⁷

According to Father Paschal the earliest extant biography of S Clare is her legend written by order of Alexander IV about the tim of her canonization (1255-1261) and now generally ascribed—almowholly on internal evidence—to Thomas of Celano. The oldest text this legend known to scholars, is that to be found in the Assisi Ms 38 This Ms, which formerly belonged to the Sacro Convento in Assidates from the end of the XIII Century or beginning of the XIV, be its text of the legend contains no reference to the famous repast the Portiuncula where St. Francis and St. Clare were rapt in ecstas Attention is called to this omission by the Conventual scholar, Papil in a marginal note in the Assisi Ms 388 at fol. 80b, 1.

In the edition of the Legenda S. Clarae issued by the Bollandis in 1761 the Bollandists enclosed the chapter in brackets, because, no having found them in any Ms older than their own, they suspected them to have been interpolated in the Mss they have followed.

Furthermore, those who accept the Fioretti story of the feast an established fact discuss how the repast can be reconciled with the law of enclosure without any inquiry whatever as to whether the incident recorded really ever happened.

Now, the really formidable difficulty in accepting the repast storas an actual fact lies, not so much in the weight of negative evident against it, as in the reiterated assertion of St. Clares' first biograph

that St. Clare never left San Damiano after her installation there in 1212.8

Also the author of this biography asserts that he had recourse to the companions of St. Francis and St. Clare to verify the truth of his narrative.⁹

For these reasons, Paschal Robinson¹⁰ and others ask, "Chi lo dice il primo?" History has not yet revealed who was the first to tell it, but we do know that there is no allusion to his incident in St. Clare's contemporary biography, or in the versified legend based upon that work. Moreover, one can find no corroboration of it in any of the other sources, properly so called, of the history of St. Clare. Nor is the repast included in the scenes from the Legend of St. Clare depicted in the ancient paintings of the Saint at S. Chiara in Assisi. The earliest representation of the repast Bughetti has come across is to be found in the Codex Laurenziano Guddiano, c. XII, an early XV century Ms which formerly belonged to the Franciscan nuns at Foligno.

Another chapter of the *Fioretti* which is open to doubt as to whether it is based on a firm historical foundation or whether it has its origin in fancy is Chapter XXI—Of The Most Holy Miracle That St. Francis Wrought When He Converted The Fierce Wolf of Gubbio. A lengthy discussion of the historicity of this chapter is to be found from the pen of Faloci-Pulignani. This writer suggests that in the Passio Sti. Verecundi we find what may well be the first part of the narrative of the wolf of Gubbio.

Another suggestion is that the once cruel feudal brigand Fra Lupo of Verna, or, perhaps a cruel oppressor wrecking havoc and desolation among a peaceful community may easily have been developed into the flerce wolf of Gubbio.¹³

Ignatius Brady offers two suggestions—He asks if perhaps this

⁴Paschal Robinson, "The Life of St. Clare ascribed to Fr. Thomas of Celano, the Order of Friars Minor, Translated and Edited from the earliest MSS by P ther Paschal Robinson," Philadelphia and London, 1910, XLIII, 109 pp.

⁵Actus B. Francisci et Sociorum eius, ed. P. Sabatier, Paris 1902, cap. XV, p. 52-4

⁶Floretum S. Francisci, ed. P. Sabatier, Paris 1902, c. XV.

⁷Paschal Robinson, art. cit., p. 640, note 2.

genda S. Clarae, ed. Pennacchi, no. 10, p. 16.

buius locelli ergastulo, pro coelestis amore sponsi, virgo se Clara conclusitate se a mundi tempestate celans, corpus, quoad viveret, carceravit. . In hore reclusorio per quadraginta duos annos disciplinae flagellis frangit sui corporistrum, ut domus Ecclesiae repleatur fragrantia unguentorum.

enda S. Clarae, Prologue, ed. Pennacchi, p. 2,3.

chal Robinson, art. cit., p. 639.

v. Bughetti, "Alcune idee fondamentali sui Fioretti di S. Francesco' ", XIX (1926), p. 321-333.

ell. Franc., X, 8.

Okey, The Little Flowers of St. Francis, Introd. xx.

mentioned in the Speculum, c. 66. For his second opinion he queric with Sabatier whether the story might not have had an historic found tion in the conversion of a robber named Lupo.¹⁴

Sometimes historical truth is so overgrown by legend that it difficult to find out the facts. This is particularly true of the charming story of how St. Louis, King of France, came to visit Brother Gil in Perugia as told in the Fioretti, Chapter XXXIV under the title How St. Louis, King of France, Went in Person, In The Guise Of Pilgrim, To Perugia To Visit The Saintly Friar Giles. A search of thistorical record of the life of St. Louis reveals that St. Louis new went to Italy. The Bollandists have printed a lengthy account whe they, too, state that it is a matter of history that St. Louis never pass through Italy at all. This chapter appears to have its slim historic basis in the fact that the Spiritual writers mention that Brother Gil was visited at one time by an illustrious personage with a retinue "I made him appear as a king". That St. Louis, King of France, was King in question has not been established as an historical fact.

In the Actus Sancti Francisci et Sociorum Ejus and in the Fiore which depend on the Actus¹⁶ there are two episodes pertaining to life of St. Anthony, both depending on sources of the middle to teenth century, viz., the sermon to the fishes¹⁷ and the miracula multilingual sermon at Rome, where all understood him, despite fact that his audience was made up of persons who spoke Free German, Slavonian, English, and diverse other tongues. In the Actual the first event is narrated in Chapter XLIX, the second in Chapter XLVIII; in the Fioretti these two events correspond to Chapter entitled: "Of The Miracle That God Wrought, When St. Anthony, ing At Rimini, Preached To The Fishes In The Sea", and Chapter XXXIX-entitled: "Of The Marvelous Sermon That St. Anthony, Padua, A Friar Minor, Preached In The Consistory." 18

Another doubtful chapter in the Fioretti is Chapter XLVIII titled: How Friar James of La Massa Saw In A Vision All The Fi Minor In The World In The Similitude Of A Tree, And Knew Virtues And The Merits And The Sins Of Each One Of Them.

This harsh story also can be traced to the Actus B. Francisci et Sociorum Eius where the vision of Friar James is substantially the same. The Friar "that had drunken part of the clup and part had been poured away, climbed up that branch and to that place whence Friar John had descended"—is never mentioned by name, but since St. Bonaventure "climbed up that branch and to that place whence Friar John had descended"—or simply it was St. Bonaventure who succeeded Blessed John of Parma as Minister General at a special Chapter at Rome in the early months of 27, this bit of fanciful imagining must concern Blessed John of Parma and St. Bonaventure.

It is true that St. Bonaventure was concerned in the trial of Blessed John of Parma for his Joachimistic leanings, but nowhere is it related that St. Bonaventure was vindictive as the Fioretti story so strongly states, when it says: "And while he [the Friar who had climbed into Blessed John of Parma's place] stood in that place [the top of the tree or the position of Minister General] the nails of his fingers became of steel, sharp, and cutting as razors; whereat he came down from that place whither he had climbed, and with rage and fury would have flung himself against Friar John to do him harm. But Friar John, beholding this, cried out amain and commended himself to Christ. . ." The cries of Blessed John of Parma, according to the story aroused Christ, Who gave St. Francis a sharp flintstone with which Our Holy Father St. Francis cut the nails of St. Bonaventure so that he was unable to rend asunder Friar John.

As an historial source for the trial of Blessed John of Parma by St. Bonaventure, this story certainly cannot be considered valid since it is contrary to accounts found in accepted histories of the Order.²⁰

True, the enemies of John of Parma did not rest however, until they had brought him, on account of his alleged connections with the Abbot Joachim, before an ecclesiastical court. The accounts of this affair seem to give a very clear understanding that it was the enemies John of Parma who stirred up the trouble and insisted that John brought to trial. Raphael Huber says, "The new General, Bonavenere, was forced into the trial.²¹ This opinion is not just one singular,

¹⁴Ignatius Brady, OFM, The Sources of Franciscan Spirituality, (1952), p.

¹⁵ Acta S.S., Aug. V, Comm. Praev., cap. LXII, p. 446-9.

¹⁶Historiae Serephicae Religionis Libri Tres (Venice, 1586)

¹⁷Supplementum ad Scriptores, etc. (Rome: editio Nardecchia, 1921), Pars p. 114; cf. ibid., p. 114c, annotation by the Quaracchi editors.

¹⁸Raphael M. Huber, St. Anthony of Padua, Doctor of the Church Unio (Milwaukee, 1948), pp. 130, 131.

he Little Flowers of St. Francis, c. 48, (Everyman edition), p. 87.

Tuber, Raphael, A Documented History of the Franciscan Order 1182-1517

ashington, 1944)

Papfel, H., Handbuch der Geschichte des Franziskanerordens (Frieburg im Breis-1909)

ber, R. op. cit., p. 142.

isolated instance for the same meaning is conveyed in other sources.

Around 1257 (the date for this event varies), John of Parma wagain called to judgment, this time by the General himself, at the monastery of Citta della Pieve in Umbria.

The trial was under the direction of John Gaetano Cardinal sini, the Protector of the Order.²³ At these proceedings John was liged to undergo a severe cross-examination. The accused, both and angered, that his faith was suspect, stood up and with his craised to heaven and in an attitude of supplication, he recited Apostles' Creed, slowly and distinctly so that those in the legal chaber might hear each word.

The enemies of Blessed John of Parma were not appeased by display of attachment to the tenets of his faith, nay rather, his agg sors seemed only the more incensed and did not cease their accitions.²⁴ They kept importuning the authorities until the judges were duced to pass sentence on John.

Just before the announcement of the sentence, a letter arrifrom the nephew of Innocent IV, Cardinal Ottoboni, giving a established defense for John, who was thus saved and freed from ther incarceration.

Then the Minister General, St. Bonaventure, gave his permission. John to pass the rest of his earthly days wherever he pleased.²⁵ kindness of St. Bonaventure to Blessed John of Parma seems to direct contradiction of the *Fioretti* story, and does nothing to the trate the vicious enmity between the two as portrayed in the *Fioretti* story.

There is no intention in this paper to discount the charm and tractiveness of the *Fioretti*, but the intention has been to discuss historical value of certain of its chapters.

22AM IV II; AF, III, c. 24, p. 350.
23L. Oliger in AFH, II, 346.
24L. Oliger, op. cit., p. 346.
25AM IV, 5; AF III, c. 24G, 698, 9.

The Pious Association of the Guard Of Honor of the Immaculate Heart of Mary

Fr. Berard Vogt, O.F.M.

(Continued from last issue)

ORGANIZATION AND SPIRITUAL BENEFITS

The statutes of the Guard of Honor, as confirmed by the Holy See in the above Brief, have the following text:

Statutes of the Guard of Honor of Mary:

- A. The Purpose of the Guard of Honor of Mary.
- 1. The first purpose of the Guard of Honor of Mary shall be to train and to band together pious clients of the Most Holy Mother of God who in imitation of the heavenly hosts offer full honor to the Immaculate Heart of Mary.
- 2. The second purpose is the imitation of the virtues of the Most Pure Heart of Mary and active reparation and expiation offered to the Mystical Body of Christ.

B. Organization of the Guard of Mary.

The Director of the Guard of Honor of Mary is subject to the jurisdiction and supervision of the local Bishop according to Canon 720 of the Code of Canon Law.

The direction of the Guard of Honor shall be exercised by the incumbent pastor of St. Ann's in Munich, a member of the Bavarian Franciscan Province.

It shall be the duty of the Director of the Guard of Honor of Mary:

- 1) To see to it that the Pious Union of the Guard of Honor of Mary shall ever live up to its purpose more perfectly.
 - 2) To actively promote the spread of the Guard of Honor of Mary.
- 3) To administer the temporal goods in acordance with the directions of the Code of Canon Law.
- 4) To have care that the members are entered into the Register of Confraternity, and that the Indults, especially the Apostolic Indulences, are renewed at the proper time.

C. Membership in the Guard of Honor of Mary

Anyone can be admitted to the Guard of Honor of the Most Holy and Immaculate Heart of Mary who is a Catholic in good standing. The member accepts the obligations:

- 1) To cultivate and foster love and veneration of the Mother of God.
- 2) To offer reparation and expiation for the insults inflicted upon the Most Holy Mary through a spirit of sacrifice and self-denial, through fostering devotion to Mary, and through sanctification of her feasts especially also of Saturday.
- 3) To work for the salvation of souls through prayers, good works sacrifices, sufferings offered to God through Mary.
 - 4) To keep a daily Guard Hour with Mary.11

As was stated above, the affiliated national office of the Guard o Honor is the national office for the United States, located at 135 W. 31st St., New York, under the direction of Fr. Irenaeus Schoenherr, O.F.M.

The official manual for the American members of the Guard Honor, as prepared by Fr. Irenaeus Schoenherr, O.F.M., the spiritu Director for the United States, contains the following explanations.

The National Office in the United States was established in Ne York City in April, 1938.

The Director and Assistant Directors are aided in their work heromotors. The title, "Promotor of the Guard of Honor", is acquired by those who enroll at least six new members, and who are willing carry on this good work in the future. Propagation of the Guard Honor is due in large measure to the zeal of faithful Promoters.

The official periodical is the Messenger of the Guard of Honof the Immaculate Heart of Mary. Its purpose is to consolidate the membership of this Union, to stimulate zeal and love for the cause and to unite all the members in a common bond of charity.

Enrollment: For reception into the Guard of Honor it suffices the the prospective member desires to be received. The Director will see him the Certificate and Manual. No special ceremony is required, their effort to enroll prospective members, promoters should prudent refrain from the use of undue pressure. It is not so much the number of members that matters, but rather their zeal and fidelity. Even Catholic is, however, eligible for membership. Once a person is mitted to membership, it is enjoyed permanently, unless it be sever by voluntary resignation.

11Cf. Ehrenwache, pp. 20-25

12Cf. Manual, pp. 12-16

The Guard Hour: Members shall select a daily Guard Hour, that is, a certain hour during which they will guard in spirit the honor of Mary without necessarily interrupting their daily occupations, and will fervently salute Mary and offer her acts of praise and love and expiation of the insults suffered by her. The Guard Hour may also be offered up as an Hour of Mercy for the salvation of souls.

Spiritual Benefits:

- 1) Every Saturday holy Mass will be offered for the members living and dead, and for their relatives.
 - 2) A Holy Mass at Christmas and Easter Sunday.
- 3) A special Novena of Prayers ending on the principal Feasts of the Blessed Virgin Mary.
 - 4) A daily Rosary by the members of the Franciscan Order.13

PAPAL INDULGENCES

As stated above, on August 7, 1931, the Holy See granted the following Indulgences for a period of seven years (to be regularly renewed) to associates of the Guard of Honor.

I. Plenary Indulgences:

On the day of enrollment.

Once a month, by those who have made daily the offering of the Sacred Heart of Jesus.

Once a month, by those who have made daily the offering of the Immaculate Heart of Mary.

Twice a month, by those who have faithfully observed the Guard Four.

On the following Feasts of the Blessed Virgin:

Immaculate Conception, Nativity of the Blessed Virgin, Presentation, Annunciation, Visitation, Purification, Feast of the Seven Dolors, Assumption, Holy Name of Mary.

At the hour of death, by those who having confessed and received Holy Communion, devoutly pronounce the Holy Names of Jesus and Mary.

II. Partial Indulgences:

An Indulgence of seven years for keeping the Guard Hour.

Theree years for each offering of the Sacred Heart of Jesus. One year for each offering of the Immaculate Heart of Mary.

One hundred days for every good work performed for the intentions of the Guard of Honor. 14

Cf. Manual, p. 31 Cf. Manual pp. 29-30 On April 12, 1956, the Holy See gratiously permitted that all priests belonging to the Guard of Honor may celebrate a votive Mass in honor of the Immaculate Heart of Mary on the first Saturday of each month. This indult was given for five years.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

Fr. Bonaventure died on December 20, 1942, happy in the certain knowledge that the Association of the Guard of Honor founded by him would endure. When the Holy Father received the news of the death of Father Bonaventure, he sent, on the 26 of February, 1943, a message of condolence to the Procurator General of the Franciscan Order, through Cardinal Maglione, the Secretary of State.¹⁵

Today the membership of the Guard of Honor includes person from every walk of life and every rank of society, young and old, rich and poor, laymen and religious, priests and prelates. It has grown like the mustard seed of the Gospels.

There exist today six accredited branch offices in Germany. Switterland has an office; so do Luxemberg and Holland. The United State have, besides 135 W. 31st Street in New York City, a second center conducted by the Franciscan Friars of Pulaski, Wis. Ireland possesses very active center at Adam and Eve's Convent, Merchant's Quay, Dublin. The Irish Fathers also publish a bi-annual Bulletin, The Guard Victoria in far off Australia also has its own Bulletin. Recently branch office has been accredited in Hong Kong for the Far East and its zealous Spiritual Director, Fr. P. Gabrill Maria Allegra, O.F.M has volunteered to translate the manual into the Chinese language. The total enrollment of the Guard of Honor at present (Jan. 1958 surpasses one million sixty five thousand members.

The Pious Association of the Guard of Honor of the Immacula Heart of Mary has reached the four corners of the globe and has become a powerful instrument of Divine Providence. It has recruited legion of devout clients of Mary who are battling the forces of evil the world today by loyal cooperation given to the Church in her vinely appointed mission to bring men to God. The ills of the contemporary world are spiritual. If the ills are spiritual, the remedimust likewise be spiritual. The profound spiritual influence of the Guard of Honor exerts upon souls stamps it as a true apostolate bringing graces into play, and a truly apostolic movement of Cathol Action, properly so-called, under the auspices of our Lady.

15Cf. Acta Ordinis Fratrum Minorum, Ann. LXII, Martii-Aprilis, Fasc. III & I

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