

## Review of Current Franciscan Literature

“Literatura Franciscana”

*Selecciones de Franciscanismo*, 17 (1988): 467-74

Translated by Philip Bohan, O.F.M. Cap.

L. Galmés, O.P. *Fray Junípero Serra*. Apóstol de California. Madrid, 1988, 251 pp.

On 25 September of this year, John Paul II beatified Junípero Serra, a Franciscan Friar from Majorca. He was born in Petra, and was an apostle and evangelizer whose objective was to bring the Gospel and culture to the indigenous peoples of America, especially to those in Mexico and California. Recently a number of biographies of Father Serra have been published, and without doubt more will continue to appear. The one that we now introduce is not just another biography; it has an importance of its own. Without doubt, it will have an appeal to many people. The author, Father Galmés, a Dominican from Majorca, has already published many works. He has studied the life and works of Father Junípero with love and diligence. The fact that the book has been included in the BAC Popular collection marks its parameters and characteristics. The requirement is that it be a simple biography, understandable to everyone, well documented from the author's first intention to write, but printed without notes or bibliography. Someone looking for a detailed and scientific biography might refer to P. Geiger (see *Sel Fran.*, no. 48 (1987):482). Those preferring a more popular life of the Blessed (in the best sense of the word) now has this option. We are grateful to the BAC and to Father Galmés for this biography of Blessed Junípero Serra, and we hope that it will be widely read, so that the message of this Franciscan from Majorca, who is so relevant today, might be felt everywhere.

Adro KXavier. *Cardenal Cisneros*. Hombre del Renacimiento. Barcelona, 1988, 525 pp.

Not long ago we introduced our readers to the biography of Junípero Serra, written by Adro Xavier (see *Sel Fran.*, 48 [1987]:483). Now we present another by the same author, similar to the first and to the many that have already been published as to the style and presentation. This time the protagonist is a friar, Francisco Jiménez de Cisneros. Both Serra and Cisneros belong to the same religious order, the Franciscans, and were moved by similar forces and ideals – the Kingdom and the glory of God and

service to people. Nevertheless, the distance between one and the other is notable as to time and geography, and not least as to the social and political circles in which they developed their labors for people and the service of God. As the subtitle of the book indicates, the feature that Xavier highlights in the personality of his subject is that of Renaissance man. This same author tells us: "We have familiarized ourselves with the vast areas through which our subject has walked. The scene of this complex historical personality is familiar, but we seldom really look at it. We shall limit ourselves to admiring his humanity – a study of his character and personal distemper. . . . Cardinal Cisneros, above all and primarily, was a man – but a Renaissance man. Consequently it is only within this context that his personality can be measured" (p. 8). We wish success to the author and his work, consistent with his famous biographies.

W. Hümmerich. *Anfänge des kapuzinischen Klosterbaues*. Untersuchungen zur Kapuzinerarchitektur in den rheinischen Ordensprovinzen. Mainz, 1987, 730 pp.

The work that we now introduce is a doctoral thesis defended by the author in 1986 in Bonn. It is the result of lengthy investigations carried out in close collaboration with the archivists of many Capuchin friaries. The author describes how a little book entitled *Deliniationes Conventuum Spectantes ad Archivum Provinciae Rhenanae* fell into his hands, and that this awakened in him the interest to investigate the history of Capuchin architecture in the Rhineland. As his investigation progressed, his study was expanded to take in the beginnings of the construction of Capuchin houses. The final result is a voluminous, meticulous, and well-documented work. The book begins with a long list of sources and literature. The main body of the book follows, with corresponding notes, then 25 appendices, and finally 404 photographs, plus numerous illustrations that accompany the text. The principal part of the book is divided into six chapters: (1) The beginnings of the Capuchin Order and its requirements with regard to construction of friaries. The norms established by the order, and the skill of those called *fabricierii* ("builders"), resulted in a special style of construction that one might call "poverty of construction." The first friaries built in Italy are studied. (2) Then follows an analysis of Capuchin architecture outside of Italy. The order, along with its construction, spread from Italy to Spain (specifically to Catalonia, and from there to the north and center of Europe), making allowance for "places, seasons and cold climates" of which St. Francis spoke. (3) Then the author treats the specific theme of his thesis: the Capuchins in the Rhineland and the construction of their friaries. (4) He treats of the churches of the Capuchins of the Rhineland, which were built to fulfill the needs of preaching and the ministry of the confessional. (5) He describes with greater detail the construction of the friaries:

materials used, the enclosure, the buildings, the gardens and orchards – everything marked with the ideal of poverty. (6) Finally he demonstrates what might be called the “Capuchin rationale” in its architecture. The ideal emerged first in the Italian friaries, but later it accommodated itself to the needs and demands of localities and ministries. The simplicity and good taste, the ideal of poverty and the secluded life, the necessities of the apostolate and climate, were inspiring, and they ought to continue to inspire our construction. This book is a monumental one-man study, with an abundance of material and documents.

L. Antoine, O.F.M.Cap. “François d’Assise, mystique.” In *La Vie Spirituelle*, no. 678 (Jan. – Feb. 1988):63–72.

*Bolletino d’Informazione del Centro di Studi Bonaventuriani “Doctor Seraphicus”*, 35 (1988). 60 pp.

In line with the message of the World Day of Prayer for Peace, in Assisi, October 1986, the 35th Congress of Bonaventuran Studies met in Bagnoreggio on 30–31 May 1987, dedicated to the theme of the roots of ecumenism and Franciscanism. This bulletin provides the minutes of the meeting, and a short introduction by Professor Pietro Prini. Among the reports, Leonardi cites reasons why medieval Christianity was not moved by an ecumenical spirit. I. Vásquez shows the significance of the visit of St. Francis to the sultan of Egypt. J.G. Bougerol deals with the differences between Francis and Bonaventure in ecumenical dialogue.

E. Borner, O.F.M. “Die Priester der frühen franziskanischen Bruderschaft,” in *Franziskanische Studien*, 70 (1988):44–67.

Under the title “Priests in the Primitive Franciscan Fraternity,” the author studies the clericalization of the Franciscan Order. Chapter 1 treats the question in the last twenty years, referring to the studies of Esser, Landini, Baraúna, Iozelli, Conti and Godet. Then he examines the primitive Franciscan and non-Franciscan sources. Chapter 3 is dedicated to the writings of St. Francis. A summary follows.

F.R. Carraro, O.F.M.Cap. “Las culturas de los pueblos. Riqueza y riesgos. Reflexiones e indicaciones sobre la inculturación,” in *Cuad. Franc.*, no. 82 (1988):40–56.

The encyclical letter of the minister general of the Capuchins, dated 1 Nov. 1987. He develops these points: The state of the question; culture and inculturation; toward a culture of evangelical dimension; on the way; attitudes to assume, and practical suggestions.

M. Causse. “Paul Sabatier et la Question Franciscaine,” in *Revue d’Histoire et de Philosophie Religieuses*, 67 (1987):113–35.

L. Davino. "Francis of Assisi; Metaphor of Franciscan Maturity," in *Spiritual Life*, 39 (1987):241-49.

B. Fajdek, O.F.M. "Francesco scopre la fraternità cosmica," in *Vita Minorum*, 30 (1988):159-70.

The author analyzes the theological foundations of the love of Francis for nature, according to Bonaventure's Major Life. The beginning of the cosmic brotherhood of Francis can be seen in these words of his biographer: "The compassion of the saint was filled with a great tenderness when he considered the first and common origin of all things, and called all creatures with the names of brother or sister, since he knew that all of them had the same beginning as he." Francis, all during his life, felt and personified the consequences of this principle. As a conclusion, people today who follow in Francis's footsteps ought to discover that "every creature, of its very nature, is like an imprint and image of eternal Wisdom" (*Itinerarium* II 12).

*Frate Francesco*, 55 (1988):nos. 1-2 (January - June 1988).

Motivated by the Marian Holy Year, this magazine dedicates a double special issue with abundant illustrations in black and white and full color to Francis's devotion to Mary.

G. Iammarrone, O.F.M.Conv. "Il rinnovamento della vita religiosa francescana dopo il Concilio Vaticano II," in *Mis Fran.*, 87 (1987):67-95.

Part 1 explains the council's teaching and a postconciliar theological reflection on the renewal of religious life. Part 2 gives some suggestions for a renewed presence of religious life. Part 3 is dedicated to a Franciscan theme: the fundamental elements of the charism of Francis as its founder, and key ideas to actualize the Franciscan charism in today's world.

J.T. Johnson, O.F.M.Conv. "Contemplative Prayer and the Constitutions of the Order of Friars Minor Conventual," in *MisFran.*, 87 (1987):96-113.

A study of contemplative prayer in the new Constitutions of the Conventuals. It develops these points: Contemplation and religious life; contemplation and conversion; contemplation and apostolic life.

L. Lehmann, O.F.M.Cap. "Neuere kirchliche Bewegungen. Anfrage an die Order," in *Ordens-Korrespondenz*, 29 (1988):146-66.

A conference given 8 December 1987 in Münster with the title: "New Ecclesial Movements: Appeal to the Order." It consists of two parts. The first gives a short description of some of the ecclesial movements today: the Focolari, Communion and Liberation, "Ark," Light-Life, the neocatechu-

menate, Catholic charismatic renewal, etc. Part 2 develops the appeal of these movements to the order.

G. Mandelli, O.S.C. "Maria, modello di minorità," in *Vita Minorum*, 30 (1988):129-40.

The Rule of Francis and Clare was the Gospel. Aside from Jesus, what evangelical model influenced them with regard to their most precious ideal? Minority? Without any doubt, the supreme model for their contemplation and imitation was Mary. The author explains three incidents in Mary's life: the Annunciation, the Visitation, and the Magnificat, indicating that their most conspicuous feature in each was Mary's (and also God's) minority - to ask confidently, to be well disposed to receive, to respect others, to give of self, to transmit the message of God to another, to accept what comes to us from our neighbor, reciprocity, to be vehicles of the gifts of God. At the same time he shows how these attitudes are reflected in Francis and Clare, quoting the writings of the two saints.

A. Mattioli. "Idiota: ausencia de cultura u opción por la privacidad. Notas de lexicografía franciscana," in *Cuad. Franc.*, no. 82 (1988):3-14.

The author investigates the meaning of the term 'idiot' [*idiota*], which St. Francis applied to himself. He studies it first of all in classical and medieval Latin and Old Latin; then in two of the writings of Francis in which Francis judges himself as an 'idiot': the Letter to the Entire Order (no. 39), and the Testament (no. 19). Then he examines the biographical sources, in which Francis and Anthony are considered as 'idiots'. He concludes by underlining the importance of the term 'idiot' in classifying Franciscan virtues. In Franciscan parlance it has a double meaning: that of an unlettered or uncultured person, and that of a 'private' person who is neither public nor official. In the biographical sources and in the writings of Francis, 'idiot' can be interpreted in the principal sense of a person who loves a private and hidden life, loving a hermit's life, and belonging by choice to the class of 'minors'. Only secondarily may it be interpreted in the meaning of a person of little culture, for which there are other terms: ignorant, simple, unlettered. As proof, a well-to-do tax-paying citizen [*assidua*] judges St. Anthony as an 'idiot' in spite of his high culture. "Therefore, the term 'idiot' expresses a particular aspect of Franciscan spirituality. In translations, terms that indicate a level of culture ought not be given undue emphasis. Rather, they indicate a whole life-style that is freely chosen, a life-style of humble retreat, detached from possessions of social prominence." This article, with an ample apparatus of notes not supplied here, was published in the Paduan magazine *Il Santo*, 27 (1987):121-44.

"Miscellanea P. Lázaro Iriarte Iturri," in *Estudios Franciscanos*, 89 (1988):5-492.

The magazine *Estudios Franciscanos*, of the Iberian Capuchin provinces, dedicates this special double edition to Father Iriarte, who is seventy-five years old, for his educational and investigative work. A total of fourteen contributions are assembled. The first gives an account of the literary production of the honoree. Three summarize the influence that Franciscan philosophy has in the magazine. There is also a study on the thought of St. Bonaventure, on the fathers of the church, and on various points of Capuchin history. Father Iriarte's particular dedication to the study of Franciscan themes is well known, and to them are dedicated four contributions. First, in Italian, S. da Campagnola develops these points: the Franciscan "novelty" within monasticism and heterodox movements; a new orthodoxy?; a new religious ideal: to live according to the manner of the holy Gospel; a new human ideal: the fruition of nature and of creation; an in-depth problem: the speeding up of the social evolution of an era; the Franciscan social model and social virtues. Then E. Rivera explains these seven phenomena: St. Francis, knight, troubadour and minstrel; the crucified Christ; love for poverty; through Christ to the Father; the nature and image of God and source of His goodness; men as brothers; and peace, happiness, and a foretaste of heaven. The O. van Asseldonk studies the frequency and explanation of the word in the biographical sources, and more specifically in the writings of Francis and Clare. Then in Portuguese, A. Felicissimo develops four points: the problem of studies at the beginning of the order; the appearance of studies in the order; irreversibility of studies in the history of the order; and challenges of the present time.

L. Peláez, O.F.M.Cap "Los hermanos no sacerdotes en la Orden de los Hermanos Menores," in *Cuad. Franc.*, no. 82 (1988):32-34.

Notes, reflections, memories, and lively dialogues among lay brothers of South America.

A. Quaglia, O.F.M. "Maria e Francesco," in *Vita Minorum*, 30 (1988):123-28.

Francis's great devotion to the Virgin is reflected equally in his life and writings. The biographies refer to the Marian piety of Francis from the beginning of his conversion and during his life: "He repaired the Church of St. Mary of the Portiuncula; his heart was inflamed with devotion to the mother of all goodness; when he gave lodging to Bernard of Quintavalle, he was in prayer all night, praising the Lord and the glorious Virgin, His mother; during his whole life he thrilled with unspeakable love for the mother of Jesus, for having made our Brother, the Lord of majesty" (1Cel 21, 14; 2Cel 24, 198). St. Bonaventure expresses himself in similar words in

his Major Life, chapter 2, no. 8, and chapter 9, no. 3. This makes us believe that Francis began his devotion to the Virgin while still a boy in family surroundings. Later he felt a special affection for the Church of St. Mary of the Angels, which he repaired and chose as his home, and in which he had his most significant divine inspirations. Moreover, his two Marian writings (Praise of the Virtues, and Letter to the Entire Order) and other works also speak of the Virgin.

A. Quaglia, O.F.M. "Il Celano e la Regola francescana," in *Studi Francescani*, 84 (1987):177-99.

Thoughts on whether St. Francis presented a Rule (the Proto-Rule) to Innocent III in 1209/10 for his approval. Authors generally agree, as does First Celano, no. 32. Father Quaglia supports the contrary, and in this article he gives reasons that corroborate what he has already written on other occasions.

Capuchin Tertiary Religious. *Zagales del Buen Pastor*. Message of the Superior General and his council to all the brethren on the first centenary of the congregation (1889-1989). Rome, 1988, 52pp.

Father Amigó, founder of the Capuchin Tertiary Religious, summarized his motive and mission to misguided youth: "You, whom He has set up as shepherds of His fold, are those who have to walk behind the scattered sheep, to return them to the fold of the Good Shepherd." These inspiring words were an invitation to joy and gratitude for the first centenary of the congregation. At the same time they were a doctrinal and schematic document directed to all the members of the Congregation of the Capuchin Tertiary Religious of Our Lady of Sorrows, to prepare for the General Chapter. The document also shares his feelings with us in behalf of the whole Franciscan family.

A. Rotzetter, O.F.M.Cap. "Franziskus heute," in *Wissenschaft und Weisheit*, 50 (19087):176-95.

A conference given by the author on 23 April 1986, with the title: "Francis today. Hermeneutic Considerations on the Modern Interpretation of Francis." In the first part of his study he examines the abyss existing between Franciscan research and our response to Francis. He quotes various concrete examples. In the second part he points out nine postulates for contemporary Franciscan research.

C. Savini. "Francesco d'Assisi: attualità e provocazione per una rinnovata coscienza ecologica," in *MisFran.*, 87 (1987):256-66.

A discourse of Professor Savini, president of the Planning Institute for Quality of Life.

L. Serrini, O.F.M.Conv. "Circular del Ministro General. Navidad, 1987," in *Cuad. Franc.*, no. 82 (1988):57-66

The minister general of the conventuals develops the following points: Formative principles in the Gospel; St. Francis in the pursuit of Christ; our pursuit; aspiring for peace; the desire for justice; and preferential option for the poor.

J.A. de C.R. Souza. "Miguel de Cesena. Pobreza franciscana e poder eclesiástico," in *Itinerarium*, 34 (1988):191-231.

Pages 225-31, and also the appendix, carry Michael de Cesena's letter "To All the Brothers at the Chapter."

K. Synowczyk, O.F.M.Conv. "Communion and Obedience in the Fraternity as Understood in the Writings of St. Francis of Assisi," in *MisFran.*, 87 (1987):114-46.

Basing himself on the writings of St. Francis, he studies communion and obedience in the fraternity as the saint understood them. He develops these points: *Sitz im Leben* from the practice of obedience and the function of authority; communication with the brothers; communication between subjects and superiors; and the concept of obedience in the Rules and Testament.

B. Tapia, O.F.M. "La evangelización para la justicia y la paz a través de una auténtica formación," in *Cuad. Franc.*, no. 82 (1988):15-31.

The situation of the Latin American church urges an evangelization in justice and peace, which constitute a challenge to our own evangelization and formation. Justice and peace, which Francis lived and taught, are a guide for our formation and evangelization.