

Franciscan Solitude

Raischl, Cirino: THE FRANCISCAN INSTITUTE, 1995

The anthology gathers into one place and one language twenty-seven essays from Italian, German, Latin, and English sources. This is a large task of editing and translating, and the editors have done a fine job of making this Tradition accessible to an English-speaking audience.

The book's five chapters help to locate the Franciscan solitude tradition in its context. The pre-Franciscan experience of solitude is traced first, beginning with the New Testament accounts of Jesus in solitary places, moving through the desert hermits of early monasticism, and into the lay and women's eremitical movements in the centuries just before Francis and Clare. "Ideals of the Women's Hermitage Movement" by Edith Pásztor is especially important for casting light on the traditions contemporary with the growth of the Poor Clares. The work of Benedikt Mertens, OFM, on solitude and hermitages in the life of Francis (Chapter 2) helps to illuminate an aspect of Francis' "evangelical life".

EXPERIENCE: ST. FRANCIS' DOCUMENT ON SOLITUDE

Length: weekend or longer, contact: André

From the earliest days of his conversion, Francis sought God out in the caves surrounding Assisi in order to commune with God in silence. When the first brothers joined him, he continued this practice. An opportunity is offered to experience solitude in much the same way Francis did with the early friars.

The heart of the book is Chapter 3 on the "Rule for Hermitages" with a critical edition of the text and commentaries. These pages make available Kajetan Esser's Latin and German work on the text. The editors have chosen to show the ongoing vitality of the Franciscan Tradition of the hermitage from the thirteenth to the twentieth centuries.

William J. Short OFM

The Geste of the Great King: Office of the Passion of St. Francis of Assisi

ISBN 1-57659-175: Laurent Gallant OFM, André
Cirino, THE FRANCISCAN INSTITUTE, 2001

St. Francis of Assisi composed a very original prayer form which would permit him to listen every day to the voice of the Son of God. Both Francis and Clare prayed the Office, she frequently and he seven times daily.

Josef Raischl composed melodies for the entire Office (available as a CD). Two artists, Marc Lisle and Christine Cavalier illuminated the manuscript, producing artistic linkages between the written text and the iconic text of the San Damiano Crucifix.

"To pray as Francis prayed, to use his own words and arrangement of Scripture in his Office of the Passion is an enriching experience for anyone in the Franciscan family. The addition of easily learned music adds to the spiritual depth of this composition. Through it, I have learned to see Christ the way Francis saw him." (Joseph Schwab, OFM, Director, Franciscan Renewal Center, Scottsdale, AZ)

WORKSHOP ON THE OFFICE OF THE PASSION

Length: day or weekend, contact: André

"The book is an illuminating arrangement of Scripture and art that connects one deeply with the prayer life of St. Francis and his bonding with the life of Christ the Hero. The workshop is superbly organized and fully explains how to pray this powerfully spiritual book." (Mary and Anthony Mazotti SFO, San Jose, CA)

"The Office has enhanced our awareness and appreciation of the legacy Francis left us. We pray the Office in community, esp. on Fran. feastdays. Some of our Sisters like to pray this prayer form privately on a daily basis." (Liz Hilvers OSF, Liturgy Coordinator, Dubuque, IA) "The Office of the Passion has deepened our own Franciscan spirituality and our contemplative prayer." (Claire André Gagliardi OSC, Poor Clare Monastery NJ)

My Heart's Quest: Collected Writings of Eric Doyle, Friar Minor, Theologian

ISBN 0-954-9272-06: Cirino/ Raischl, Fran. Int.
Study Centre, Canterbury, UK, 2005 (distributed
in the U.S. by THE FRANCISCAN INSTITUTE)

Eric Doyle was a man of vision, a vision of Christ seen through the eyes of St. Francis of Assisi, which vision brought a unity and a dignity to all creation, as well as a fraternal connection with Christ. Eric alerted us to the wealth of the spiritual life, prayer, devotion, philosophy and theology that saturate our Franciscan heritage. He sought for answers to contemporary issues in ecology, liberation theology, ecumenism and the place of women in the Church.

This volume of more than 600 pages includes articles on Franciscan Spirituality, St. Bonaventure's and Bl. John Duns Scotus' theology, Teilhard de Chardin, various theological and spiritual themes. Throughout the text, the editors wove biographical notes, photos and memories of people who knew Eric. Two of his recorded talks on CD accompany the text. A complete bibliography closes the collection.

Three Heroes of Assisi in World War II

ISBN 88-87021-73-2: Raischl, Cirino, EDITRICE
MINERVA, Assisi, 2005 (contact André)

In 1943-44, amidst the horrors of war, Assisi had another time of true glory. While the Allies had just landed in Sicily, Assisi was occupied by German troops. There, three men worked together to do something constructive rather than destructive: Bishop Giuseppe Nicolini, the German commander, a medical doctor, Col. Valentin Müller and Don Aldo Brunacci. Divided by the war, they remained nevertheless united by their Christian faith and its mandate of unconditional love. They obtained that Assisi be made a hospital city, a city for medical care, not for military confrontation; a city for healing, not for fighting.

The anthology highlights the heroic efforts of Nicolini and Brunacci by which many Jewish refugees survived, correcting the distorted historical account of the book and film "Assisi Underground."

Journey into God by St. Bonaventure

A Forty Day Retreat with Saint Bonaventure and Saints Francis and Clare of Assisi by Raischl and Cirino, St. ANTHONY MESSENGER PRESS, Cincinnati, 2002. (1615 Republic Street, Cincinnati, Ohio 45210-1298, 513-241-5615

“For hearts and souls hungering for God, this book opens up new vistas...[the authors] show us how to get inside the heart of Bonaventure and how to embrace his understanding that all the universe is a ladder by which we can ascend to God.” (Roberta McKelvie, OSF)

Journey on a forty-day retreat with two experienced retreat directors into the joyful acceptance of goodness that is at the core of Franciscan spirituality. The basic theological concepts found in Saint Bonaventure’s great work are presented in clear and practical language. Each day there are readings from The Journey, reflections by the two authors and exercises the reader can carry out in daily life. The book may be used by groups or by individuals journeying alone. The complete original text of a new translation of The Journey by Franciscan scholar Zachary Hayes OFM, is included.

RETREAT-EXPERIENCE: JOURNEY INTO GOD

Length: 8 days, contact: André

André and Josef have developed this retreat during a period of study in Rome in 1988. It has been presented in Italy, Canada, the United States, England and the Philippines. It is an exploration of the content of this classic work of spiritual theology. The retreat seeks to recover this often-neglected source of Franciscan spiritual wealth.

Each day is a balance of instruction on the text, periods for reading and personal prayer and community participation in Eucharistic liturgy, morning and evening prayer. The liturgical and para-liturgical prayer is especially designed by the presenters to disclose the profound themes in a contemporary experience.

André Cirino OFM, a Franciscan itinerant preacher, worked at the Little Portion Retreat House for the poor in the Bronx for 8 years. André has ministered in parishes, Franciscan formation, education. He is co-author of *Teens Encounter Christ* (1978, Alba House) and edited a journal on the writings of Francis, *In The Womb Of The Cave* (Charisma Press, 1981). Since 1984 his summers are spent in Italy with the Franciscan Pilgrimage Programs (“The Assisi Experience Of Spirituality Of Place” in *THE CORD*, Jan-Febr 1997). Since 2000 André lectures at the Franciscan International Study Centre, Canterbury, England. The same year he published an article on Marianne Cope (“A Powerful Woman” in *THE CORD* March-April 2000).

Contact:

Siena Friary, 25 Laurel Avenue,
Mt. Vernon, New York 10552-1018
phone: (914) 699-1221 or 374-7232 cell
email: cirinoandre@yahoo.com

Josef Raischl SFO, lives with his wife Bernadette, a psychotherapist, and their three children in Dachau. Bernadette is the granddaughter of Colonel Valentin Müller who is regarded as savior of the Assisi in World War II. Josef works for St. Christopher’s Hospice in Munich as a social worker, directing the home care team. He completed studies in theology and philosophy at the Catholic University of Eichstätt and at the Franciscan International Study Centre, Canterbury, England. He also studied Franciscan Spirituality in Rome. Josef composed the music and produced the CD for St. Francis’ Office of the Passion and published the retreat experience on the *Journey into God* in 1999 under the title “Auf Gott zugehen” (Claudius Verlag).

Contact:

Egerer Str. 17A, 85221 Dachau, Germany
phone: 011-49-8131-2281
Email : raischl@web.de

André R. Cirino, OFM

Josef Raischl, SFO



Publications

Workshops

Retreats