





**Continuing Formation**



# **Franciscan Heritage The Intellectual Tradition**

by

**Andrew Conradi, ofs**

**Ordo Franciscanus Sæcularis**

**National Fraternity of Canada**

**Our Lady of the Angels Region**

**St Francis Fraternity**

**Vancouver, BC**

**September 2012**



What is the  
Franciscan Intellectual Tradition?  
(FIT)

Why learn about it now?

FIT is one part of the  
Catholic Intellectual Tradition  
which, along with the  
Traditions of Orthodox and  
Reformation churches, is part  
of the  
Christian Intellectual Tradition  
(CIT)

CIT was the major influence in the formation of Western European culture and in turn was originally influenced by other Religions (Judaism & paganism); a political and legal system (Roman); an intellectual system (Greek); and also science (Christian, Muslim and secular) and the arts

# WHAT FORMS AN INTELLECTUAL TRADITION or Cultural Heritage?

Beliefs, ideas, customs, practices

- Theology & Philosophy
- Liturgy & pious devotion
- The arts (literature, visual arts, music , drama)
- Science
- Architecture & engineering
- Agriculture & manufacturing
- Law, economics, politics, education, social organisation & customs

# CIT

## Some characteristics

- Engages in the *search for truth* in all disciplines and forms of belief and unbelief
- Continuing and developing: a *live* tradition
- *Faith and reason*
- *Natural law*
- Sacredness and *sacramentality of creation*
- *Humans made in the image of God*

# Some *Roman* Catholic ITs

- The three major ones are:
  - Augustinian (400's)
  - Franciscan (1200's)
  - Dominican (1200's)

How do they differ?

Does it matter?



# Origins of CIT/FIT

All are based on the same two foundations:

## 1. God & Jesus

1. God: the One and Triune God (the Trinity)
2. Jesus, The Word made flesh, the Incarnation (Christology)

*(The Franciscan Intellectual Tradition: Tracing its Origins and Identifying Its Central Components by Kenan Osborne, OFM, 2003, 2-4)*

All based on the same sources:

- Scripture
- Tradition
- Magisterium

## Differences

“Differences are based on the various philosophical and theological ways in which the three intellectual traditions express the implications of the revealed Word of God and on the interfacing of spirituality and theology, an interfacing that is most evident in the Franciscan Intellectual Tradition.”

(Osborne, 2003, 3 - emphasis added)

# What is theology?

- Greek for study of God or discourse on God
- The term came to mean the academic rational study of Christian doctrine from the Bible and Church Fathers
- Francis is one of the first to be considered a “**vernacular theologian**” i.e. not an academic but one whose insights and spiritual vision were based on his reflections and own experience and understanding and expressed in the common everyday language of the laity

# What is Spirituality?

- “Spirituality is the way a person is attracted to the Lord and how he or she develops this attraction into a discipline of life.” (Campion Murray, OFM)
- Although all Catholics are united by the Catechism of the Church and Mass, there are different forms of spirituality and prayer which have developed over time. The major religious orders and lay associations have their own unique spirituality of prayer and way of living out the Gospel

- If Theology is theory, Spirituality goes from theory to application (praxis)
- As the OFS Rule in Chapter II “Way of Life” puts it in Rule 4 : “going from gospel to life and life to the gospel.” (vernacular theology?)
- My definition of spirituality: The practice of living the faith, both internally and externally: in church, family, society and the world
- Thus Franciscan spirituality is living our faith informed by Franciscan tradition and vernacular theology

# Diversity of theology

“In the Roman Catholic Church, there has never been a single christology; hence the better term is plural: “christologies.” Nor has there been a single theology of the Triune God; hence the better term is plural: “theologies of God/ Trinity.” Each theology ... has been *developed* through a lengthy *process*. Over time some of these theologies and christologies have become non-relevant. Others are still operative today.

## Cont'd

Most of those still operative continue to remain in process ... If one includes the Eastern churches ... the extent of the differences in these theologies of God and christologies becomes even more dramatic, since the several Eastern theologies on the Trinity and Jesus are quite diverse ... [although] they are based on the same three foundations as in the West - holy Scripture, holy Tradition and holy Doctrine.”  
(Osborne, 2003, 4)

“ This means that there is in the Roman Catholic Church no “one theology” or “one christology” that is definitive.”

“ The three major intellectual traditions are philosophical and theological interpretations of the Western Catholic faith.”

(Osborne, 2003, 4)



“At the end of the thirteenth century and beginning of the fourteenth century the Dominican Friars formally selected the teachings of Thomas Aquinas as the center of their theological formation. This formal move guaranteed a long life for the Dominican Intellectual Tradition. The Franciscans followed this pattern by selecting both Bonaventure and John Duns Scotus as the center of their Intellectual Tradition. “ (Osborne, 2003, 2)

- When Dominican and Franciscan traditions were being developed in the universities of Paris and Oxford starting in the 1220's they were alternative to, and in competition with, the older Augustinian tradition and with each other
- They were about equal in influence for several centuries e.g. at the Council of Trent (1545-63)
- Towards the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century the RC Church decided it needed to adopt one tradition in order to counter “modernism”
- It imposed the theology of St Thomas Aquinas, i.e. Dominican theology starting in 1907 & including it in the 1917 Code of Canon Law

# FIT

- All priests (even Franciscans and Jesuits etc) were taught Thomist theology in seminaries
- Although the FIT remained alive it was no longer as influential
- After Vatican II there was more openness to other traditions and a going back to our origins
- FIT is being rediscovered and regaining influence & we are invited participate

# Why study CIT & FIT?

## A personal view

- Many, including Pope Benedict XVI, think that the Christian (or *former* Christian Western?) world is losing its sense of both its history and tradition and the importance of Christianity in a secular world. This world is becoming indifferent to christianity, or anti-christian and relativist
- to counter this trend faith alone is not enough
  - knowledge of CIT & FIT, prayer and action (including political action) are necessary

“... the search for God required the culture of the word, it was appropriate that [we] should have a library, pointing out pathways to the word. It was also appropriate to have a school ..., [Catholicism] serves *eruditio*, the formation and education of man - a formation whose ultimate aim is that man should learn how to serve God. But it also includes the formation of reason - education - through which man learns to perceive, in the midst of words, the Word itself.”

(Benedict XVI, Collège des Bernardins, Paris, 12 September 2008)

# Retrieval, Rediscovery and Rebirth of FIT

In March 2001 the English Speaking Conference of the OFM (ESC-OFM) undertook to retrieve the FIT and formed the inter-obediential\* Commission on the FIT (CFIT)

\*OFM, OFM (Cap), OFM (Conv), TOR  
(OFS?)

# The Franciscan Heritage Series

The CFIT/ESC-OFM researched, conferred and published documents of an academic nature

It wanted also to make the retrieval, rediscovery and rebirth of FIT available to the laity and non-academics

It published *The Franciscan Heritage Series* starting in 2003 (so far eight booklets - which vary between 56-84 pp)

# Why read and study them?

- We are Franciscans!
- The CFIT/ ESC-OFM wants laity to use the series to present the FIT in simple every day language rather than academic language
- This is a challenge that our fraternity has accepted
- I am presenting this first one and others will present the other titles e.g. Ed will present *The Franciscan Vision and the Gospel of John: The San Damiano Cross*
- The Fraternity will buy copies for the library
- You can order your own copies though Ed



## The eight volumes are:

1. *The Franciscan Intellectual Tradition: Tracing its Origins and Identifying Its Central Components* by Kenan Osborne, OFM, 2003 (now out of print)
2. *The Franciscan View of Creation: Learning to Live in a Sacramental World* by Ilia Delio, OSF, 2003
3. *The Franciscan View of the Human Person: Some Central Elements* by Dawn Nothwehr, OSF, 2005
4. *The Franciscan Vision and the Gospel of John: The San Damiano Cross* by Michael Guinan, OFM

5. *Trinitarian Perspectives in the Franciscan Theological Tradition* by Maria Calisi, 2008

6. *Rejoicing in the Works of the Lord: Beauty in the Franciscan Tradition* by Mary Beth Ingham, CSJ, 2009

7. *Women of the Streets: Early Franciscan Women and their Mendicant Vocation* by Darleen Pryds, 2010

8. *Knowledge for Love: Franciscan Science as the Pursuit of Wisdom* by Keith Warner, OFM, 2012

More titles to come? What would you want to see?

# END OF SESSION 1

- Questions?

For small group discussion:

- What does spirituality mean to you and how does it relate to theology or doctrine?
- What is Franciscan spirituality?
- What are the sources of Franciscan spirituality and what does our rule say about them?

When we have finished Session 2 we could ask these questions again and see if our views have changed

# Session 2

The Franciscan Heritage Series

Volume One

20003, Kenan B. Osborne, OFM

*The Franciscan Intellectual  
Tradition: Tracing Its Origins and  
Identifying Its Central  
Components*

CFIT/ESC-OFM

Franciscan Institute Publications

St Bonaventure University

St Bonaventure, NY

# Review of small group discussions

- What does spirituality mean to you and how does it relate to theology?
- What is Franciscan spirituality? What is vernacular theology?
- What are the sources of Franciscan spirituality and what does our rule say about them?
- Why is knowledge of FIT important? What is its relevance to us?

*The Franciscan Intellectual Tradition: Tracing  
its Origins and Identifying Its Central  
Components* by Kenan Osborne, OFM, 2003

Part One: Author's Introductory Remarks

Part Two: Historical Review -  
30 C.E. to 1300 C.E.

Part Three: The Philosophical World of Aristotle

Part Four: The Gradual Development of the  
Franciscan Intellectual Tradition

Part Five: Distinctive Features of the  
Franciscan Intellectual Tradition

I will try to outline some of the main points in everyday language to whet your appetite to read the books yourself

I have not studied theology or philosophy and so am not an expert

Some points are beyond me but I am not discouraged as I understand most of the main ideas and find them interesting and helpful in deepening my Franciscan spirituality

So relax and take what you can and do not worry if you do not understand everything

Part Two explains  
Periods in the development of theology

First: 30-70 C.E. (Jewish)

Second: 70-100 C.E. (Christian - New Testament written)

Third: 100-325 C.E. (Council of Nicaea) Dual nature of Jesus

Fourth: 325-681 C.E. Councils of the Early Church (Christology - after which no further solemn christological declarations)



Fifth: 1000 - 1300 C.E. Development of Scholastic Theology (Augustinian renewal & development of Franciscan and Dominican ITs)

Key components:

1. Dialectical method (*sic et non* or *pro & con*)
2. Aristotle replaced Plato
3. Based on Peter Lombard's *Book of Sentences* (basic theology text at the time)

Each IT, in very distinct ways, connected Aristotlelian thought to five theological issues:

1. Relationship of God to creation
2. Relationship of creation to incarnation
3. Relationship of creation, incarnation and final risen life in God
4. Relationship of God's freedom to creation, incarnation and risen life (continuing creation)
5. Relationship of God and creation to reality of sin

# What are FIT's central components?

Without the spirituality and vision of Francis and Clare there would be no FIT.

A major Franciscan scholar, Ephrem Longpré, OFM (+1965), a French Canadian, considered “that one of the most important core elements of the spiritual vision of St. Francis was his astounding insight into ... the incarnation. **In this introductory volume, we build our synthesis around this insight.**” (Osborne, 2003, 32)

# Ephrem Longpré, historian, philosopher

1890-1965

His defence of the philosophy of Joannes Duns Scotus played a role in the background of Vatican II and in the opening of Catholic thought to traditions other than that of St Thomas. Longpré's French Canadian parents returned to farm at Upton, QC, when he was 4. He was educated at Montréal, where he joined the Franciscan order. He was cured of a serious illness at age 18 after an intervention by Brother André.

Longpré studied in Rome and then worked in Florence and Paris. His study of Scotus, whose philosophy combines a subtle metaphysics of community with a strong sense of the importance of individuality, strengthened his convictions about human freedom, and he was hunted by the Gestapo throughout much of the war. His resistance work was acknowledged by the French and British governments. His most important work is *La Philosophie de B. Duns Scot* (1924).

Leslie Armour, The Canadian Encyclopedia

- From this we get the two themes: *humility of the incarnation* and *love of the passion*
- Thomas of Celano “finds that **the humility of the incarnation is the key issue**, which relates all aspects of Francis’ life. ... In Book Two the **love of the passion** predominates. ... An understanding of these two themes, ... , will help us grasp the deepest dimensions of Francis’ spiritual vision, a vision he shared with St. Clare.” ” (Osborne, 2003, 33)

“The incarnation, as we shall see, is so central that it is related to first creation, to ongoing creation and to the future, which we call risen life. **The love of the passion is also central. [It] extends not only to the crucifixion of Jesus but also to the suffering of the crucified people at the margins of society.**\* In theology, the terms “incarnation and redemption” are the usual centering points for all christologies.

**[\*This relates to our focus on JPIC]**

The Franciscan vision of “creation-incarnation-redemption-glory” as intrinsically inter-united is a vision that comes from the gospels themselves, from the early Church Fathers and from medieval theologians. It initially received a systematic in-depth treatment in the thirteenth century through the writings of the first Franciscan masters, Alexander of Hales, Bonaventure and John Duns Scotus.”  
(Osborne, 2003, 40)



# Franciscan scholars

Osborne mentions 19. The most renowned are:

Alexander of Hales\*

Bonaventure\*

Roger Bacon

John Duns Scotus\*

William of Ockham

Anthony of Padua

Peter John Olivi

Ramon Llull (Raymond Lull) a layman,  
considered Third Order i.e. a Secular Franciscan

# What did they contribute or clarify?

In the first major production of FIT, the *Summa* of Alexander of Hales one finds several key aspects of the spiritual vision of Francis of Assisi. The four main ones are:

1. Love grounds the theology of Trinity, creation, incarnation and risen life
2. The humility of the incarnation and love of the passion begin to shape the Franciscan theology of Jesus

3. Creation contains the Word of God and Holy Scripture contains the Word of God, but they are not two Words of God. It is same Triune God who speaks in both

4. Spirituality and theology are put together, for theology without spirituality is empty, and spirituality without theology is a sham

(53)

“ these four ideas, stemming from the spiritual vision of Francis of Assisi became part of a distinctive theological tradition, particularly under the influence of Bonaventure and Scotus.” (53)

# Some differences between the Dominican and Franciscan IT are found in

- Trinitarian theology\*
- Christology
- Theologies of:
  - Redemption
  - Sacraments
  - Creation
  - Sin
- “Even more striking is the different way these traditions relate theology to spirituality.” (14)

# Aristotle

- All theologians used Aristotle's four categories (substance, quantity, quality, relation) to explain various Catholic doctrines
- It is in the interpretation of these Aristotelian categories that the FIT differs significantly from the Dominican
- The FIT emphasizes in a special way the category of relation
- (Osborne, 2003, 16-17, 20)

# Aristotle & Osborne again

“The basic interaction of all beings in the philosophy of Aristotle (substance, quality, quantity, and relation) is through causality.” (21)

Causality: efficient, material, formal & final.

FIT & DIT are miles apart on causality (23)

Bonaventure’s ‘moral causality’ means that we pray God will efficiently act and our prayer is the ‘moral influence’ (22)

# God (Osborne, 57)

## In the FIT:

“The mystery of the Triune God, however, stresses God as essentially relationship.”

“a relational Triune God is consistently seen as the basis for God’s own nature, which is love and goodness.”

“Bonaventure explains all of God’s attributes - omnipotence, omniscience, freedom, etc. - within a Trinitarian context.”



# God in the DIT

“In Aquinas, the main attributes of God are presented within his discussion on the *oneness or unity of God.*”

“... this difference between Thomas and Bonaventure marks a major distinction between the Dominican Intellectual Tradition and the Franciscan Intellectual Tradition.”

Scotus followed Bonaventure on this point

# Oneness vs trinity

“In much of Catholic theology , creation is presented as a divine work *ad extra* (outside of God’s own nature) ..... It is only the inner life of God (*ad intra*) that is Trinitarian. The activities of God outside this inner life are seen as activities of the One God or the unity of God. ... This is not the Franciscan view. Only a relational Triune God offers theological meaning for the created world.” (59-60)

# Theology of Francis

- Trinitarian communion - which will become the model for Francis' Order - structured as Fraternity - to mirror the love within the Trinity
- Also based on the Primacy of the Father

“ In creation itself, we experience the presence of a Triune God, not simply of a One God.” (60)

“Creation can be called the beginning of the incarnation, since the two are inseparable.”(61)

“The incarnation is not theologically an afterthought of God, occasioned by human sin.” (63)

# Bonaventure

“This is our whole metaphysics: emanation, exemplarity and consumation—to be illuminated by spiritual rays and to be led to the highest reality.”

“The created world is like a book [The Book of Nature] in which its Maker, the trinity, shines forth, is represented, and can be read at three levels of expression: namely, as a vestige, as an image, and as a similitude.” (63, 64)

# Emanation

Two modes of emanation

- Intellect - Beloved Son
- Will - Spirit = freedom's choice to Love

# Exemplarity

- makes visible the ideas, thoughts, actions [mind] of the Father
- “if you see me, you see the Father” (Jn 14:9)
- “And when did we see you sick or in prison and visit you? And the King will answer them, ‘Truly, I say to you, as you did it to one of the least of these my brothers, you did it to me.’” (Mt 25:39-40)

# Consummation

- A return to God



# Scotus

“All of creation is a gift. Nothing in creation is necessary. Everything, in this sense, is grace, an unmerited gift of God.”

“It is precisely in this vision of creation as gift that we see the validity and need for an ecological theology. A book by Leonardo Boff has a very important title: *Cry of the Earth, Cry of the Poor*. [based] on the reverence everyone should *give* to all people, including the poor, and *give* to all nature, for nature is God’s *gift* to us.”

(66)

# Scotus: *haecceitas* (*thisness*)

“ There is, however, a still deeper dimension of creation in the Franciscan Intellectual Tradition. In this also, Scotus is a leader.”

It is individuation (*haecceitas*) which invests the human person “with a unique value as one singularly wanted and loved by God ... haecceity is our personal gift from God.” [and to each other!]

(67)

# Scotus: contingency

Aristotle: an existent thing can be considered necessary as long as it is in existence. This was accepted by most theologians.

Scotus said it is still contingent on God's will and so nothing outside of God is "necessary".

"Rather than shaking the foundations of our faith, contingency calls us back to the Triune God. ... It takes us back to seeing creation in all its forms, as a gift, as unmerited grace, as radical giftedness." ( 68)

# To learn more

- Read the books!
- Wait for further presentations!

# That's enough for one day!

Any questions?

Please have a look at my Franciscan Heritage and other books and put your name down on the order form if you want your own copy and give the money to Ed the Treasurer

## Which pamphlets would you like to be presented?

Peace and all good

Paix et joie

## Group discussion - Pick one topic (5-10 mins)

- The link between Relationship in FIT: Trinity and how we live a Franciscan life
- How does Scotus' ideas about the Trinity and haecceitas (thisness) relate to community and individuality?
- The Incarnation: why did Jesus become human? Would He have come if there had been no original sin?
- How does "Thisness" relate to JPIC?
- What does Bonaventure mean about the Book of Nature?