

EMMANUEL FALQUE AND LAURE SOLIGNAC

Thinking in Franciscan

Part I

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THE FOLLOWING CONVERSATION between two scholars of St. Bonaventure, Emmanuel Falque (author of *Saint Bonaventure et l'entrée de Dieu en théologie* [Vrin, 2000] and many articles on Franciscan thinkers) and Laure Solignac (author of *La Théologie symbolique de saint Bonaventure* [Parole et silence, 2010], and *La Voie de la ressemblance. Itinéraire dans la pensée de saint Bonaventure* [Hermann, 2014]), took place September 5, 2014. During this conversation, the two philosophers tried to zero in on what it means to think “in Franciscan,” which is less about determining what theses the Friars Minor positively defended and more about reaching further back, to the very dispositions and interior accents of the thought that has been grafted onto Franciscan life.

LAURE SOLIGNAC (LS): You are proposing, we are proposing, Emmanuel Falque, to “think in Franciscan,” or rather, to formulate what “thinking in Franciscan” would mean, both yesterday and today. For you, for example, how does “thinking in Franciscan” differ, including at the time of St. Francis, from the act of “thinking in Dominican,”

or from every other mode of living and thinking in the Middle Ages? What is it that gives specificity to this Franciscan mode of being?

EMMANUEL FALQUE (EF): “Thinking in Franciscan” does not mean, first of all, to explicate Franciscan life or thought. There is a plethora of exposés on this subject, and to add here another treatise would only be a labor of erudition, which, while certainly necessary, is not the philosopher’s task. “Thinking in Franciscan,” seen from the starting point of contemporary thought (especially phenomenology) as well as, I think, from the starting point of mysticism, first of all comes down to “living in Franciscan,” and, precisely within the heart of this “life,” to thinking. What’s important is not the “matter” (*quid*), but rather the “manner” (*quomodo*). “Franciscan,” as your question suggests, indicates a specific mode of being, certainly at the time of its emergence but also today. The “following of Christ” or *sequela Christi* emerging at the end of the twelfth century marks another manner of being in the world, and indeed also of being toward God, to which the “mendicants,” as we know, will lay claim, if not through the title of an order, at least through a common belonging (Franciscan and Dominican).

Indeed, perhaps we do not take sufficiently into account the *kairos* or “opportune moment” that characterizes this period of the Middle Ages, in its full rebirth: the “founders” (St. Francis, 1181–1226, and St. Dominic, 1170–1221), the “transition to masters” (Alexander of Hales, 1180–1245, and Albert the Great, 1200–1280), and the “doctors,” seraphic and angelic (Bonaventure, 1221–1274, and Thomas Aquinas, 1224–1274). In the space of a century all, or almost all, is given, so that Franciscan life may endure, and with that life its manner of being and of thinking: the intuition (Francis and Dominic), the tools of formation (Alexander and Albert), and the conceptualization (Bonaventure and Thomas Aquinas). Kant’s dictum is well known: “Thoughts without content are empty, intuitions without concepts are blind.”¹ The founders’ intuition required, even contrary to their wishes, the formators’ transcription and the conceptualiza-

tion of the masters in order that what was given could last. One can always go back to an intuition (the founders) but it dies without its conceptualization (the masters). But one can also get lost in abstraction (the masters) if it is not fed by the origin that engendered it (the founders). Thus there is not, on the one side, the Franciscans of the first hour, faithful to the intuition of poverty, for example, and the Franciscans of the schools and of the *schola*, on the other, always too rich with their own elucubrations. “To think in Franciscan” is first of all to live as a Franciscan [*vivre en franciscain*], with the work of thought being nourished by this life and translating this mode of being, instead of objectifying it, or even detaching itself from it.

The *kairos* or “opportune moment” of this twelfth- and thirteenth-century period, clearly better named here under the term Holy Spirit, thus makes it so that no contradiction between “Franciscanism” and “thought” is possible, including in the unfolding of its prime origin. There is often great surprise at seeing Franciscans, apostles of simplicity, quibbling at the highest levels of complexity within the context of the university (Duns Scotus and William of Ockham in the quarrel over nominalism, for example). “Thinking in Franciscan” almost confines us to a pleonasm, with such professors and doctors included, because Franciscan life so precisely marks a mode of thought in which its transcription into the form of concepts is never detached from its rootedness in a lived experience issuing from the earth (*humus*), made of “humility” at the same time that it is fiercely laid claim to.

Nevertheless it remains the case that the “mode of Franciscan being,” and thus its “way of thinking,” does not, as we have suggested, share completely in the “Dominican” modality of existing. Where one of the modes (the Franciscan) lays out the “language of the flesh” in the experience of the *Song of Songs* or of the stigmata (we’ll come back to this), the other (the Dominican) refers to the “flesh of language,” precisely in the act of preaching, for instance in St. Dominic’s conversion of the Cathar innkeeper. “Word of the body” and “body of the word” are not identical, and each marks its specificity, as well

as their complementarity.² On this “mendicant” path Thomas Aquinas as a Dominican strongly criticizes precisely this difference, thus teaching us by default of the manner of living and thinking proper to Franciscans. To the question from the *Secunda pars* of the *Summa Theologica*, “Whether religious are bound to manual labor?” Aquinas answers as a good professor that “[i]t must . . . be observed that under manual labor are comprised all those human occupations whereby man can lawfully gain a livelihood, whether by using his hands [*manibus*], his feet [*pedibus*], or his tongue [*lingua*].”³ There is a triple nuance here, and it teaches us precisely, and profoundly, about what comprises the specificity of the “mode of Franciscan being,” even if it is paradoxically illuminated by a Dominican.

To begin with, the “work of the hands,” manual labor, no longer puts into operation the hands alone. Thus the mendicant, whether he is Franciscan or Dominican, has in a certain sense “free hands.” Or rather, and to put it this time in phenomenological terms that some will recognize, the world is no longer there for him “present-at-hand” (*vorhanden*) or “ready-to-hand” (*zuhanden*), as something that must be cultivated or worked, but he himself, as “mendicant,” is simply “there” (*Dasein*), of course with his hands, but also with all of his being, provided that it enables him to “lawfully gain a livelihood.” Detached from the agricultural world, and thus freed for urban life, the mendicant’s “manual labor” no longer employs his “hands” (*manibus*) to follow, for instance, the example of the Benedictines or the Cistercians; he no longer has to go out “to the fields” either to work or to gain a livelihood.

Two ways remain, then, for “working with the hands,” and this time almost without hands: the “work of the tongue” (*lingua*), and the “work of the feet” (*pedibus*). We recognize on the one hand the Friars Preacher, for whom “the small rudder of the tongue” guides the entire ship (Jm 3:4–5) to “preach the word . . . in season and out of season” (2 Tim 4:2); and on the other, the Friars Minor, “sent two by two [. . . carrying] no purse, no bag, no sandals” (Lk 10:1–4), so that “the greatest among you (*major*) becomes as the smallest (*minor*)”

(Lk 22:26). To live as a Franciscan, as well as to think as one, thus amounts to walking, to “itinerating,” to use here a neologism drawn from Bonaventure’s treatise (*Itinerarium*), going where “you did not think and did not wish to go” (Jn 21:18), quite simply because no road is marked out in advance. Metaphysics, if it is still necessary to speak thus, is “ontology,” the act of returning to oneself, *exitus* and *reditus*, an encompassing of the real and the synthesis of its parts. “Mysticism,” according to a term commonly used and which perfectly fits the Bonaventurian *Itinerarium*, is “hodology,” not the circular climb to the principle of being (ontology), but the linear ascension towards the origin of the Good (agathology).⁴ If in Bonaventure it is necessary to “return” in the act of leading back [*reconduction*] or reduction (we will come back to this), this has less to do with coming back to a starting point already posed (God as principle) than with giving thanks in an arrival whose end at the same time reveals its origin (the trinitarian God).

“Thinking in Franciscan,” then, is first of all to go “on foot”—*pedibus*, “with the feet” and “by the feet”—even if it means going on the path of conceptuality and, sometimes, using the methods of the university. Coming from the *alpha* (the innascible Father) and going toward the *omega* (*Christus totum*), the Franciscan stands completely within the assurance that nothing could ever stop him, sure that God himself will always give us the means to continue, and, therefore, to journey on [*pérégriner*]: “If you want to be perfect, go and put into practice what you have just heard,” Brother Francis famously tells Brother Leo upon hearing the very gospel of itinerancy (Lk 10:1–16). “This is what I want! This is what I desire with all my heart!” proclaims the saint who, without delay, “took off the shoes from his feet, put down his staff, denounced his wallet and money, and, satisfied with one tunic, threw away his leather belt and put on a piece of rope for a belt.”⁵

EF: Laure Solignac, itinerancy seems inseparable from the Franciscan experience. But in what, precisely, does this itinerancy consist,

and how is it to be distinguished from, say, a walk, or wandering? And above all, how does this mode of life lead into a thinking that is itself *en marche*, hodological?

LS: This question is fundamental because it allows us to distinguish Franciscan life from its romantic avatars. Let's begin with the difference between a walk and itinerancy. It is often said, following from *Sacrum commercium*, that the Friar Minors' cloister or enclosure is nothing other than the cloister of the world.⁶ From there it takes only a step to start imagining the itinerancy of the Friars Minor as an agreeable walk punctuated with human or animal encounters. First of all, itinerancy does not have the goal of relaxing or distracting a person whose life is elsewhere: on the contrary, it is itinerancy itself that confers its consistency on the whole life of the friar minor (whether he is a hermit or a missionary, whether or not he lives in a monastery). Moreover, the friar minor does not go according to his whims—he is pushed by the Spirit and entrusts himself to Providence, as the lovely text on perfect joy attests: his itinerancy does not belong to him, he doesn't know what he will find; knocking at the door of a monastery on a freezing night, he may find he has to stay outside!⁷ Nevertheless, we are not talking about wandering: living as a Franciscan is to be inscribed within a history that goes from the Alpha to the Omega; the eschatological dimension, in particular, has been frequently noted. This existence, caught up in the history of the world, espouses the world's movement, but insofar as it comes from God and goes to God: the point is not to approve open-mouthed all that happens in the world, but to find the meaning of its mystical history, of its holy history, which implies above all remembering that everything comes from God and everything "gives" [*rend*] him glory. This movement of going out from God towards his Omega can be read in the texts of Francis; it is an authentically Christian way to live and to think the Neoplatonic double movement of *exitus* and *reditus*, to which you made reference a moment ago—that is, the movement of going out (creation) and of return. Let's take the example of an extract from

the *Regula non bullata* of 1221, in chapter XVII: “Let us refer all good to the Lord, God Almighty and Most High, acknowledge that every good is His, and thank Him, ‘from Whom all good comes, for everything.’ May He, the Almighty and Most High, the only true God, have, be given, and receive all honor and respect, all praise and blessing, all thanks and glory, to Whom all good belongs, He Who alone is good.”⁸

What makes the action of grace possible is the consciousness that all the goods received proceed from the Lord Almighty and Most High. If there are “givens,” things to welcome and about which one should rejoice, it is because there is a gift; and if there is a gift, there is a giver, there is that one who dispenses every good, himself being the almighty good. The meaning of Franciscan itinerancy flows very naturally from this: learning to receive what is given and to “render” it in the form of praise. The apostolic writings themselves bear witness to this dynamic and this itinerancy: when St. John says that Jesus knows that he “comes from the Father” and that he will “return” to him, when St. Paul affirms that “from him and through him and to him are all things,”⁹ they each manifest the fact that a Christian must live and think within this élan of which he is neither the origin nor the end goal. This already tells us something significant about “minority,” but we will come back to this later.

For now, we must enter a bit further into the signification of this double movement of reception and restitution, which the Franciscan life demonstrates and of which the very meaning of our life consists. First, we receive; we do not begin by rendering a good that we have not first received. In order to receive, it is first necessary to have received a body and a soul capable of receiving, and the reception of everything that God gives us is often very problematic for us: there is the difficulty of considering oneself as a gift (and therefore as a creature), and the difficulty of putting one’s capacities of reception, notably those of the five senses, into operation. In every case, the members of the Franciscan family are very valuable helpers for advancing, because they themselves, due to the rules in force, had to learn to receive the gifts and recognize their absolute gratuity.

The second movement is precisely that of return, by which we “render” unto God—in the form of love, gratitude, and giving-up [*abandon*—all the goods received: if St. Francis speaks freely of “giving thanks” and of “giving back” [*rapporter*] (for example in the *Psalms of the Mysteries*¹⁰), St. Bonaventure likes to use the term “leading-back” (*reductio*) and recognizes that what is at issue is a collective and cosmic work that man must bring to perfection in conformity with his capacities—by making “use [of] sensible things correctly,”¹¹ without possession or appropriation, attitudes that prevent the itinerant from proceeding on his way. Thus the itinerary/journey is thoroughly eucharistic. Like reception, the work of leading-back (leading creatures back to the Creator, and allowing oneself to be led back by them) also requires an apprenticeship that Bonaventure describes in his spiritual works, and I think that it is from within this perspective that we must interpret the concept of “hierarchy,” which, for example, is treated in the fourth chapter of the *Itinerarium*. Why is it necessary to “hierarchize” the human soul? Hierarchization consists in an integral putting into order of the person, point by point, and in a reorientation of his entire being towards God, as if it was necessary to allow oneself to be transformed into a “canal” of leading-back or into a “ladder” in order to attain, with all of creation, the ultimate goal of the itinerary/journey. But here, all is gratuity and liberality: the itinerary or journey is not tit for tat, where no one is implicated. On the contrary, the journey allows us to experience that God has given everything, without calculation, at the risk of general ingratitude, and it is in seeing that God gave freely that the friar minor enters in turn into the general movement of the gift.

LS: Emmanuel Falque, if “thinking in Franciscan” consists essentially in going out from an alpha towards an omega, or indeed making the act of praise in a climb toward the origin, is there not then the risk of wanting, and even of having to “render” unto God what he first gave to us?

EF: This is an essential question—this is why it is necessary to comprehend the meaning of the *reductio* in St. Bonaventure. The “reduction,” as act of synthesis (which makes it different from the phenomenological suspension), does not consecrate giving [*la donation*] in the act of returning the gift. Put another way, this fundamental formula from the *Commentary on the Four Books of the Sentences*, according to which “one objects that the ‘spirit’ relates more to being than gift . . . in that the Holy Spirit *is because it gives (ideo est quia donum)*” opens to the “gift that gives being” and not the contrary.¹² The hypothesis of a “God without being,” most widely used and developed by Jean-Luc Marion, fits perfectly here, even when, of course, it would be just as difficult, indeed impossible, to attribute being to God as principle in Aquinas.

But there is more in Bonaventure. For if “gift” or the “Good” are names that are proper to God in the New Testament (Trinity), rather than “essence” or “Being” in the Old Testament (Unity) (to take up the famous articulation from the *Itinerarium*),¹³ it is, I believe, in this way that in Bonaventure we find an “ontology of poverty” that constitutes God himself, in his trinitarian structure, as well as man created in his image.

To begin with, in God, plenitude is not “plenty,” but “superabundance”: “The person who gives *even more with a big heart* is said to give abundantly (*ex majori corde donat*).”¹⁴ Bonaventure is a disciple of Denys through “participation,” following the example of Thomas Aquinas, but even more so through “donation.” The *bonum diffusivum sui*, or rather the *primum diffusivum sui*, since what is at issue is first of all the “fontality of the Father,” most properly characterizes him. The “first principle” is “not” first “because it is *a principle (non qui principium)*,” states the Seraphic Doctor word for word, but “because it is *first (sed primum)*.”¹⁵ The primacy makes for the giveability, because the Father as the one who gives does not await a return of the gift, but gives himself as well, as in the later example of his Son, with veritable abandon. According to a remarkable but often misunderstood reprise of Anselm’s ontological argument, Bonaventure shows

that only the Son measures with the Father, so that there is no other interpretation of creation itself than in its trinitarian design. Because the “diffusion (*diffusio*) is utterly final, in that the producer grants all that He can,” and since “the creature is unable to receive all that God [the Father] can give,” it is thus necessary, states the *Hexaemeron*, that “this diffusion in the fullness of its possibilities be in something [the Son] greater than which nothing can be conceived.”¹⁶ We thus understand what makes for the grandeur, and probably as well the specificity, of Franciscan thought. The “giving [*la donation*] of the Father” is diffused in such a complete and total manner that man himself, in his state as creature, cannot make himself the awardee [*le récipiendaire*] of such a gift; the Son alone reveals himself, in his very flesh, as the only adequate receptacle of such a giving [*une donation*]. To put it in the terms of Franciscan spirituality, which conceptuality here has the merit of definitively articulating: man in his smallness cannot receive the grandeur of God, and only God, in making himself small, shows himself worthy in his Trinity of this love that is at once both given and given away [*abandonné*].

What is true of God—a mode of poverty inscribed in the very structure of the Trinity—is thus also true of man made in the image of God, in whom the will or the obligation to “return the gift” (reciprocity) runs contrary to the Franciscan and spiritual laws of “giving away” or abandoning the gift. Of course one may “give” (the giving of the coat, for example), or indeed “give oneself” (the kiss given to the leper or the sharing of a tunic), but the radicality of the gift comes down to “abandoning” oneself, to giving the gift: “if you wish to be perfect, go, sell your possessions,” says the *Breviloquium*. “This is *perfect poverty* (*ecce perfecta paupertas*), which holds back nothing for itself (*quae nihil sibi prorsus retinet*).”¹⁷

For man, thinking in Franciscan is not to bet everything on poverty, which would be to mix up the means with the final end. Bonaventure himself constantly insists on this: poverty is “indigence,” which means that it is also and above all “dependence.” In its nature of “non-being” (nihility), the creature “receives its being from

another” (alterity). It follows, then, that man was created so that “because of [his] own indigence (*pro sua defectibilitate*), [he] would always stand in need of [his] Principle, and that this Principle, because of its benevolence, would never cease to communicate itself (*influere non cessaret*).”¹⁸ “Perfect poverty” indeed amounts to giving all, giving what one has (the coat), giving what one is (kissing lepers), but also and even more so, to “giving the gift,” in the sense that the greatest risk for the one who desires to be poor lies in becoming rich in his poverty. This “perfect poverty” (*perfecta paupertas*) thus “retains nothing for itself,” including poverty itself. This is the true meaning of the words of Christ to the Samaritan woman at the well: “if you knew the gift of God” (Jn 4:10). To “know” the gift of God would no longer be a true gift, or at least an abandonment, in that the knowledge of the gift most often kills the act of giving, recuperating it into the return of the gift [*le don*] against the abandonment. What therefore characterizes the mode of Franciscan being in itself—and here we come back to your question—is precisely not the recuperation of the gift, but rather the inverse: to forget it in a pure abandonment, in which poverty appears less as an idea to seek out than the means to a dependence that alone makes for filiality.

EF: One could say that thinking in Franciscan is to think in the light of the gift without return: we have seen that this is true of God and true of man. But how does this gift without any return from the one to the other, in which poverty shows itself, lead to a form of minority? And how does this minority or humility, as total dependence with regard to one who is greater, favor fraternity?

LS: You have just formulated a fundamental axiom of Franciscan life: poverty is not a goal, but a means. This means is necessary, and we know how hard the mendicant friars—Bonaventure in particular—fought so that their mode of life, implying above all mendicancy, would be considered a legitimate expression of evangelical life. First against the positions of Guillaume de Saint-Amour, and then

against the similar positions of Gérard d'Abbeville, Bonaventure developed a very precise and abundant thought that can be considered as a first Franciscan synthesis on the subject: to begin with, in the second of the four *Disputed Questions on Evangelical Perfection*, and then, probably around 1269, in the *Apologia pauperum*. Considering the amplex of these polemics, one might indeed wonder whether it is not poverty, in fact, that is at the center of Franciscan life. Nevertheless, it is to minority, and thus to dependence and humility, that one must look.

There are two ways to be poor: either the poor one is he who gives all that he has, including the gift itself, as you have just explained; or he is the one who receives everything without being able to give in return anything other than his life, himself and this gift itself, but without ever being able to exit from the radical dependence in which he finds himself, because he is "lesser." Thus, in the first case, we have primary poverty [*la pauvreté du premier*], while in the second, we have poverty of minority [*la pauvreté du mineur*]. Let me say a few words about the first, to begin with, since in order for there to be a minor there must first be a major, indeed an absolute major, recognized as such: St. Bonaventure seems to have been the first Franciscan author to have made primacy the cornerstone of his theology. You have even reminded us that in Bonaventure there is a primacy of the primacy in regard to principality! Who is the absolute First? The Father, He who is "innascible,"¹⁹ without birth, origin without origin: "'not to be from another' is 'to be first' (*non esse ab alio est esse primum*)."²⁰ This is the first or prime poor one (and yet there is none richer in goods), the first who gives everything he has to live on, like the widow in the Gospel, lauded by Christ himself. And it is from this first poor one that the second poor one arises, the one whom Bonaventure calls "Likeness"²¹ (following the editors of the *Summa Halensis*²²), the Child par excellence, the one that the Scriptures call the "firstborn" (Col 1:15). Now, the poverty of this second poor one, of this one who is born, has the name of dependence and minority: "The Eternal Word is God and is of Him alone, of whom there is a 'being conceived'

[*concupi*].²³ In this sense, there is nothing more normal than for the Son to say that the Father is “greater” than he (Jn 14:28).

Thus it is this fundamental poverty, this minority, that constitutes the ground of Franciscan life. Its cornerstone is the Son’s humility, and material poverty, bareness [*dénuement*], are its visibility. This is why Bonaventure always precedes his considerations on poverty with a focus on humility: we see this in the “Letter on the Imitation of Christ,” as well as in the first of the four *Disputed Questions on Evangelical Perfection*: “the height of all Christian perfection depends on humility.”²⁴ The development of the evangelical virtues begins with this consciousness of being smaller or lesser: poverty (q. II), chastity (q. III), obedience (q. IV). Because humility is “the dwelling place of grace (*habitaculum gratiae*),”²⁵ it deepens the capacity to receive the Father’s fullness, even if, as you have reminded us, only the Son himself is apt to receive fully the gift of the Father. Thus our humility will never be but a pale imitation of that of the Son.

Humility is therefore the foundation of Franciscan life, because it is the foundation of evangelical life, and even more deeply, the foundation of the person of Christ, lesser than the Father. Lesser, not in the sense of being less divine or not receiving the same glory;²⁶ rather, quite simply because he is the Son, and not the Father. This is why Bonaventure, in tracing the portrait of the ideal friar minor, goes straight to this Christic source of minority and humility: in sermon V on St. Francis, Bonaventure, having started with the chosen theme (developed at length): “Learn from me for I am gentle and humble of heart,” concludes: “thus, to be gentle and humble of heart is to be a Friar minor.”²⁷ The question of poverty, which is a radical, visible, concrete, *incarnated* way to live this minority, isn’t even raised here. Thinking in Franciscan thus amounts to recollecting this minority and this humility before the Father, and constantly seeking its concrete implications.

Now, to respond to your second question, namely, What are the consequences of minority for fraternity? Franciscan fraternity, established as it is on this cornerstone of humility, does not look like fra-

ternity as we usually conceive of it, that is, as a fraternity of equality. Indeed, on the contrary, it has to do with a fraternity of mutual minority and assumed asymmetry. Take this astonishing text from the *Salutation of the Virtues*, where it is stipulated that the friar minor must submit to every creature (even nonhuman ones)! “Holy Obedience . . . is subject and submissive to everyone in the world, not only to people but to every beast and wild animal as well that they may do whatever they want with it insofar as it *has been given* to them *from above* by the Lord.”²⁸

Thus the Friar minor is not fraternal in the sense of making himself the equal of the others—this would already be too much for us!—but in the sense of being lesser than all the others. This is how the link between humility, poverty, and fraternity becomes visible, on the scale of creation in its entirety.²⁹

LS: We have been speaking of the Franciscan’s minority, of his dependence, which constitutes his humility, and which seems to specify him. Nevertheless, a question arises, bidding that we not remain among pure idealities. Can you explain how the Franciscan mode of being is not satisfied by its own littleness or dependence alone, but both wants and tries to extend that littleness or dependence to the whole of its being, to its corporeity as well as to the totality of the created?

EF: There is indeed a cosmic aim in Franciscan thought that must not be neglected, even though it can often be badly interpreted. We will speak here, in a certain sense, of the “extension of fraternity” regarding both my own body and the whole of what is created. Franciscan life in its particularity remains always “attached,” to Christ of course, but also through him to our own incarnation and to the integrality of the created world. Nothing is further from Franciscan thought in my opinion than Eckhartian detachment, which precisely separates, at least according to a certain interpretation, from the relation to the created, or indeed from our own subjectivity. There are “spirituali-

ties of detachment,” calling for the disregard of the self in order to accomplish fusion in God (the Rhineland mystics, the French School, Carmelite aspiration, etc.), as Hans Urs von Balthasar underscores, and there are the “spiritualities of attachment,” seeking never to completely break from the earth or the flesh (Origen, Bonaventure, and Ignatius of Loyola, founders of the doctrine of spiritual senses, which you have already brought up).³⁰ The two types of spirituality are not opposed, but instead complete one another, like two different ways of being in regard to oneself and the world, and of relating to them.

Fraternity, to come back to St. Bonaventure, is in this sense at once both carnal and trinitarian. The famous “Canticle of the Creatures” is in fact a “Canticle to the Creator.” There is no question here of the “nature and form of sympathy,” as the phenomenologist Max Scheler will later claim, seeing in this song of praise the “introduction of a good dose of sympathy for the world,” or even of a “continued incarnation of God the Father in nature.”³¹ For “*brother sun*,” “*sister moon*,” “*sister water*,” or “*brother fire*,” to praise is not to love and become fused with creatures, but rather to recognize, with them, an identical, common source in the figure of the Creator. The mystery is that of filiation, rather than of identification, of trinitarian expressionism more than of cosmic pantheism. In a famous interpretation, Bonaventure writes: “By dint of *going back to the primary Source* of all things, Francis had conceived an overflowing love for all things, and called creatures, no matter how small, by the name of ‘*brother*’ or ‘*sister*,’ because he knew *they and he proceeded from the same, sole principle*.”³² Even better, the reference to our “*sister mother the earth*” in the “Canticle of the Creatures” makes evident, precisely, the gap between the Greek vision of the world and the Judeo-Christian one. Substituting for, or rather adding to the *chôra* of the “earth-mother” in Plato’s *Timeus* (51a) is the *sorella* or “little sister” that constitutes our earth, in that she too receives herself from a same Father: “If you regard Nature as a mother, you discover that she is a step-mother,” Chesterton rightly notes. “The main point of Christianity was this: that Nature is not our mother: Nature is our sister.”³³

What is true of the world “Canticle of the Creatures” is also true, and perhaps even more so, of our body (nakedness or stigmata)—the very body that the Poor One of Assisi calls our “Brother Ass.” The “language of the flesh,” which is so proper to the Franciscan world, is spoken in relation to a mute and silent experience, but always while listening for the braying of a companion that is certainly difficult to master, but which cannot be so easily done without or detached from. The “imitation of Christ” (*imitatio Christi*) here comes to the fore, in a Franciscan mode of course, over the simple “following of Christ” (*sequela Christi*). Where poverty made “dependence” visible, nakedness this time leads to “exposure” to a common authority. When in 1206 Francis delivers himself up naked before his father Bernardone and the incredulous inhabitants of Assisi, and the bishop covers him first with his mantle, and then the cloak of a farmer, Bonaventure interprets this cloak as “designating . . . the covering of a crucified and half-naked (*seminudi*) poor man.”³⁴ The “nakedness of the body,” like the “vulnerability of the face,” as Emmanuel Levinas’s well-known words put it, marks both the “exposure to the other” and “the absolute openness of the Transcendent.”³⁵ This uncovering of Brother Francis, carried out less in order to shock than to orient everyone in a different way, is probably the same. To follow and imitate Christ, “poor and naked,” is not a vain saying from the Franciscan tradition: the phrase is meant precisely to signify how the form of God’s expressivity must be radicalized.

The episode of the stigmata not only confirms this, but pushes it to its end, making visible that the way in which Francis’s new life had basically begun (the trial by his terrestrial father Bernardone) is also the way through which it must end (stigmata by the heavenly Father in his pierced flesh). The *itinerarium* to follow is none other than that which passes “through the most burning love of the Crucified,” states Bonaventure at the outset of *The Mind’s Journey Into God*; “This sort of love so absorbed the mind of Francis also that his spirit became *apparent in his flesh (in carne patuit)*; and for two years prior to his death, he carried the holy marks of the passion *in his body (in*

corpore deportavit).³⁶ Everything, or almost everything, is said in this formula about what “living and thinking in Franciscan” means. Not a cult of suffering, nor a sickly Christianity, but a true “expressionism,” through which the love of God is revealed and manifests itself even in human flesh. As “body” on the one hand, bearing the sacred stigmata (*corpus*), Francis on the other delivers himself as “flesh” (*caro*), making appear, through himself, the love of the Crucified. There’s no better way to state how Franciscan fraternity extends itself as far as our wounded corporality, provided that this corporality also expresses within it the love that has first imprinted itself there.³⁷

EF: “Brother Ass” thus participates in this life of minority and poverty, which paradoxically becomes the place where the love of God can show itself at its ease. When speaking of this, St. Bonaventure likes to use the word “expression,” and we ourselves have used it several times in the course of this conversation. But what exactly is expressionism? And how does this relation of expression between God and his creature protect us from actual pantheism?

LS: This is an important question that has been debated in contemporary philosophy as well. Gilles Deleuze, for example, in his *Spinoza et le problème de l’expression*, in the end removes Bonaventure from his list of “true” expressionists, because the Seraphic Doctor refuses precisely to enter into a pantheist and monist viewpoint.³⁸ But in order to understand properly what Bonaventurian expressionism accounts for in Franciscan experience, we can’t avoid a trinitarian perspective.

So let’s start again from the Trinity, that is, from the Father and the Son in the unity of their Gift. As Hans Urs von Balthasar recalled with force in his study of the notion of beauty in Bonaventure, the Son is the Revelation of the Father, his perfect expression.³⁹ Every expression of God is thus inscribed within this prime and matchless expression. But it is in the Incarnation that this appears to us most clearly, because the Son takes flesh, he has a body and enters into the

field of our vision and of all our senses, and it is through this body that he expresses the love of the Father for men and for the world—and it is of course from this state of affairs that the stigmatization, as impression/expression, takes on its full meaning. Does this form the ground for a great cosmic symbiosis in which everything, God and creatures, is mixed together? No, for there is a very strict distinction between the Word and the small words that are creatures: if the Word is born from the Father, creatures, as their name indicates, are created; they are secondary likenesses, either closer or more removed from the Trinity.⁴⁰ Their link of expression with the Son, and thus with the whole Trinity, does not suppress but rather grounds their status as creature. This is also why Bonaventure uses the word “participation” so infrequently: in his view it introduces a possible confusion between the Creator and the creature.

Once again we must conceive the different degrees of likeness at the very heart of the “world, creature of God” (the title of the second part of the *Breviloquium*). God is not alone in expressing God and in resembling him. There exists a degree of likeness that is universal, the vestige or trace. Of what is the vestige a trace? It expresses the unity, the truth (or beauty), and the goodness of God. Like a mirror, it reflects the one who looks at it to the One who is present without being able to be seen directly. This is why Bonaventure considers that the metaphysician is above all an expert in “reflection” and in mirroring: it is his task to penetrate not only the nature of creatures (like a physician) but also the symbols out of which creatures are formed. This attitude is manifest in the life of St. Francis, for whom the animals he encountered were not only animals belonging to such and such species, but equally figures of the Son: lambs and earthworms, for example. In this way, creatures are no longer a pretext for distraction from and forgetting of God, but an opportunity or site for conversion and contemplation. The point is to exploit fully the situation of clarity/obscurity in which our condition has placed us: God is never seen face to face, except in the state of glory; but to contemplate him “by enigma and through a mirror” thanks to his

creatures is not nothing—even if this task and this apprenticeship of universal expressionism are made difficult by sin.

In this great specular apparatus, it is necessary to return to the particular case of man, who is known to be not only a “vestige,” but also an “image,” according to a distinction that goes back to St. Augustine and of course is inspired by the verse from the book of Genesis, “Let us make man in our image, after our likeness” (Gen 1:26). Since Augustine it has been held that man’s spirit is in the image of God, while his body constitutes simply a vestige—the “most noble” of all.⁴¹ As inheritors of Augustine, the first Franciscan thinkers adhere to this doctrine—which does not seem tied to scorn for the body. But it is clear that Franciscan thought also bears the imprint of a doctrine that accords to man’s body a status of expression that is very specific, exceeding that which characterizes the schema of vestiges. If likeness reaches its paroxysm in the soul of the saint interiorly united to God, Franciscan experience shows that such a union, and such a degree of likeness, can only be manifested corporally. This is precisely what St. Francis’ stigmatization indicates, as you just pointed out: *mens in carne patuit*, says Bonaventure in commenting on this event; the spirit was seen in the flesh, and what it allowed to be seen was in particular the love with which he burned for the Crucified, and the love of the Crucified himself. Francis already announced it in an Admonition (is it prior to or after the stigmatization? I don’t know, but according to historians, the *Admonitions* were composed between 1223 and 1226)⁴²: “Consider, O human being, in what great excellence the Lord God has placed you, for He created and formed you *to the image* of His beloved Son according to the body and *to His likeness* according to the Spirit.”⁴³ As the expression of the Expression, the mirror of the Son, man occupies an important place for whoever thinks in Franciscan, yet it is necessary to emphasize immediately the fact that this anthropology is through and through Christological. The true center is not man as such, but the beloved Son, the originary model of man in his entirety, body and soul.

This body-to-body and heart-to-heart encounter between man and the Son reveals itself with a particular intensity in the experience of nakedness, which is so present in Franciscan lived experience. You have already evoked its importance, but I need to take it up again. Nakedness is often associated, in our minds, with vulnerability, suffering, or even with degradation—and indeed, Christ’s nakedness on the cross echoes all of our humiliations. But in Franciscan life—and first of all in the life of St. Francis—nakedness is the manifestation of the humility of birth, and not of humiliation. Let us return to Francis undressing publicly in front of the bishop and the people of Assisi, and in particular in front of Pietro Bernardone, his father. The first biographers (Thomas of Celano, Bonaventure) showed that Francis was not ashamed, but that he was signifying corporally—this gesture was not accompanied by a long discourse!—his birth to a new life⁴⁴: “When he was in front of the bishop, he neither delayed nor hesitated, but immediately took off and threw down all his clothes and returned them to his father. He did not even keep his trousers on, and he was completely stripped bare before everyone” (Ibid.).

Francis’s nakedness here, which stupefied his contemporaries, will astonish them further in the richness of its significations on the day of his death, where his pierced hands, feet, and side are offered to the view of all. Faced with these exposed wounds, the literal recollection of the horror of the Passion could predominate; but Francis’s nakedness unveils a further meaning that, while certainly assuming and embracing suffering, does so within the perspective of the resurrection:

They looked at his skin which was black before but now shining white in its beauty, promising the rewards of the blessed resurrection. They saw *his face* like *the face of an angel*, as if he were not dead, but alive. All his limbs had become as soft and moveable as in childhood innocence. His muscles were not taut, as they usually are in the dead, his skin was not hard, his limbs were not rigid but could be easily moved back and forth.⁴⁵

Between birth and resurrection there is, it is true, much suffering, sin, humiliation, and sickness, but Francis reminds us that the first vocation of man's nakedness is to manifest his filiation, the spirit that animates him and the love that consumes him. In the *Disputed Questions on Evangelical Perfection* Bonaventure remembered this lesson when speaking of the nakedness of Adam (like so many other Fathers and masters before him): nakedness is the original condition [*condition principielle*] of man, and Bonaventure associates it naturally with poverty: "Humanity was created naked (*homo nudus formatus est*) and, if it had remained in that state in which it was created, it would have appropriated nothing for itself."⁴⁶ And the Seraphic Doctor will return to this association between poverty and nakedness in the *Apologia pauperum*, not from an overly gloomy perspective, but in order to show that it constitutes the very condition of man—who must at least practice "nakedness of heart," the nakedness "of the body" being the literal expression of our minority.

Thus the key to Bonaventurian expressionism, which prevents any confusion between the Creator and the creature, is Christ himself, true man and true God.

The question that we can then ask has to do with the consistency of creatures: if they are fundamentally likenesses of God, which reveal that the Son himself is the eternally begotten Likeness of the Father, do they not then, paradoxically, fall into a sort of insignificance? At bottom, doesn't being only the likeness of another amount to being nothing oneself? In reality, in Bonaventure's eyes, being the likeness of another and owing him everything one has received is not "being nothing," but being nothing *of oneself*; this is what Bonaventure calls "nihility," which you evoked a moment ago: "Of itself, the creature is non-being."⁴⁷ No creature has given itself being. But, in order to be something, is it necessary to "make oneself," like the Dragon evoked by Bonaventure in his great Prologue to the *Commentary on the Sentences*? To be the expression of another amounts of course to being radically dependent on that other, but nevertheless without being identifiable with this other, for in such a case of identity there would

be no expression, nor any space of revelation. In fact, being the likeness of another implies having a proper identity, that is to say, being another. In the heart of the Trinity, this is true of the Son in relation to the Father, but it is also true, with the difference of nature making it still clearer to our eyes, in the relation between God and creatures.

Thus, the one who resembles Christ the most is indeed another person. Bonaventure wrote several times—this is something that is not always well understood—that Francis himself, whose form of life must be both admired and imitated by the Friars Minor, is nonetheless not imitable in every way, due to the particular circumstances of his existence, of his origin, his family, his character, etc. It is not required of everyone to die on the bare ground, under ashes and sackcloth, but it was thus that Francis expressed his desire to follow Christ to the end. This is probably why Bonaventure is less concerned than Thomas of Celano with fully reproducing the singularity of the saint in his biography. This is perhaps a shame for the historian, but it is a way to reorient the reader's gaze towards Christ himself, of whom Francis was a sign and a particularly expressive and unique reminder. In the same way, in the *Apologia pauperum*, Bonaventure shows how the saints of the past (and this is doubtless true for the saints of the present time as well!) distinguished themselves from Christ, some by dying in joy and exultation, others in refusing even the usage of a common purse in their fraternity—both attitudes that Christ himself did not adopt. And yet it is Christ who expresses himself in these differences and astonishing variations. The Franciscan family alone provides abundant witness to this immense variety, which shows that expressivity pairs up not with uniformity, but rather with the luxuriance of nature.⁴⁸

LS: We have emphasized the importance of this “likeness” for Bonaventure, as a configuring of man to the divine, just as the Son himself is “the visible icon of the invisible God” (Col 1:15). Does this mean that, when one thinks in Franciscan, likeness, in a certain sense, is more important than unlikeness? And in that case, wouldn't the gap

between Bonaventure and Denys [the Areopogite] signal a particular manner of being in the world, which precisely does not leave the world, and which makes the conversion of the senses the site for a new form of spirituality?

EF: I have said that there are two types of spirituality: the “spiritualities of detachment” (the Rhineland mystics, the French School, Carmelite aspiration, etc.), and the “spiritualities of attachment” (Origen, Bonaventure, Ignatius of Loyola, etc.). They should not be opposed: on the contrary, they are two different and complementary ways to live and discover one’s proper identity. Denys belongs to the first group (spiritualities of detachment), and Bonaventure to the second (spiritualities of attachment). It would be wrong to minimize the gap that separates Bonaventure and Denys, and when the latter is forced to be together with the former, what differentiates them is forgotten. As Hans Urs von Balthasar points out, “The Trinity for Bonaventure is not (as for Denys) the absolutely separated and unknowable,” but instead “the a priori ground of everything that exists in the world.”⁴⁹ Thus God is not “apophatic” or the issue of negativity in Franciscan thought, but rather “cataphatic” or said in positive fashion. What makes his reality is not his distance or his thick cloud, but his proximity and his condescension: “God, most highly cognizable in Himself (*in se*), is also most highly cognizable to us (*etiam nobis esset summe cognoscibilis*),” insists the *Commentary on the Sentences*; “and if He were not so, it would be due to a defect on the part of our intellect (*defectus ex parte intellectus nostri*).”⁵⁰ The “hyper-cognoscibility of God” in Franciscan thought thus marks a clear-cut line of demarcation (at the least!) from the “unknowing” of Dionysian thought. A “phenomenology of the limit and of the incarnation,” drawn from the heritage of St. Francis, and indeed from St. Thomas and Ignatius of Loyola, as well (this is my viewpoint), thus differs greatly from a “phenomenology of saturation and glory,” anchored in Dionysian apophaticism rather than in Bonaventurian cataphatism (the viewpoint of Jean-Luc Marion). Again, the point is less to oppose two

pathways than to mark out their difference and their complementarity. The Most High calls to mind the Most Lowly, and vice versa: “The depth of God made man, that is, the *humility*, is such,” emphasizes Bonaventure, using a particularly well-crafted formula, “that *reason fails*.”⁵¹

St. Bonaventure’s “symbolic theology” thus prevails over the “mystical theology” of Denys the Areopagite. The “metonymies of the sensible applied to the divine,” in Denys’s terms (anger, pain, grief, as well as enthusiasms, inebriation, and oaths)⁵², serve in Bonaventure as rules, and not as hapaxes, for God’s manner of speaking to us, as well as expressing himself. Returning to the “Canticle of the Creatures,” we thus see that the infinity of created beings is furnished by God less for the purpose of astonishing us (though this certainly is the case), than to give us different ways to clearly express him [*l’annoncer*]. The “usage of metaphor” or of “parable” does not signal something short of thought for Bonaventure, but on the contrary its highest conceptuality, precisely because the lived experience (*Erfahrung/Erlebnis*), in mysticism as in phenomenology, serves as the criteria for an impetus that forbids itself from abstracting to the point of forgetting its relation to the thing (itself) that it aimed at: “In view of the praise of God, it is necessary to have recourse to *metaphor (transaltio)*,” says Bonaventure in his *Commentary on the Sentences*. “Since God is very praiseworthy, lest it would happen that one cease from praise on account of a lack of words, Sacred Scripture teaches, that *the names of creatures are to be transferred to God (nomina creaturarum ad Deum transferri)*.”⁵³

Our very senses in this way become a sort of *sensorium for God*, the site of and the crucible for a transformation of what it is fitting to convert without ever forsaking it. There’s nothing better than the “doctrine of spiritual senses” to say what, in my view, “living” and “thinking in Franciscan” amounts to. Our spiritual senses are “none ‘other’ than [our] bodily senses,” says Hans Urs von Balthasar, “*these [same] senses in so far as they have been formed according to the form of Christ*.”⁵⁴ Put another way: yesterday as today, the Franciscan testifies

that he can *see* God in his brother, *hear* God in speech, *taste* God in the Eucharist, *breathe in* the pleasing odor of incense and *embrace* him in prayer. Which is not to deny that the canonical and apostolic era is closed, or to suggest that we could directly return to it; rather, it is to say only, yet completely, that all our being in God is whole and integrated, and that nothing of our incarnate life can be forgotten, precisely because the Word has married our flesh, which was also made to manifest him: “[When man possesses] the spiritual senses (*sensus spirituales*),” the Seraphic Doctor underscores in a particularly suggestive passage from the *Breviloquium*, “the sublime beauty of Christ the Bridegroom is seen (*videtur*), insofar as he is Splendor; the highest harmony is heard (*auditur*), insofar as he is Word; the greatest sweetness is tasted (*gustatur*), insofar as he is the Wisdom which contains both Word and Splendor; the most sublime fragrance is smelled (*odatur*), insofar as he is the Word breathed into the heart; the greatest delight is embraced (*astringitur*), insofar as he is the Incarnate Word.”⁵⁵

Notes

1. Emmanuel Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, trans. and ed. Paul Guyer and Allen W. Wood (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), A51/B75, 193–94.
2. On this distinction between “language of the flesh” and “flesh of language” as a means to divide the two intuitions, Franciscan and Dominican, see Emmanuel Falque, *Dieu, la chair et l’autre, D’Irénée à Duns Scot* (Paris: PUF, 2008, chap. 6), 289–351: “La conversion de la chair (Bonaventure)”; English translation: *God, the Flesh, and the Other: From Irenaeus to Duns Scotus*, trans. William Christian Hackett (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 2015), 167–201.
3. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa theologiae*, II-II, q. 187 a. 3, resp. English translation: St. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, vol. 2, trans. Fathers of the English Dominican Province (New York: Benziger Brothers, Inc., 1947), 1984, 1986.
4. On this distinction between “hodology” and “ontology” see Stanislas Breton, *Deux mystiques de l’excès: J.-J. Surin et Maître Eckhart* (Paris: Le Cerf, 1985), chap. 3, 167–91: “Transit.”
5. St. Bonaventure, *The Major Legend of Saint Francis*, chap. 3, 1, in Regis J. Armstrong, OFM Cap., J.A. Wayne Hellman, OFM Conv., and William J. Short, OFM, eds., *Francis of Assisi: Early Documents*, vol. 2: *The Founder* (New York: New City Press, 2000), 542.

6. After their very meager banquet with Lady Poverty:
 [The brothers] blessed the Lord in whose sight they found such grace and led [Lady Poverty] to a place where she would rest because she was tired. And so she laid down naked upon the naked ground. She even asked for a pillow for her head. They immediately brought a stone and placed it under her head. After enjoying a very quiet and healthy sleep, she quickly arose and asked to be shown the enclosure. Taking her to a certain hill, they showed her all the world they could see and said: "This, Lady, is our enclosure." *The Sacred Exchange between Saint Francis and Lady Poverty*, ch. 30, par. 63, in Regis J. Armstrong, OFM Cap., J. A. Wayne Hellman, OFM Conv., and William J. Short, OFM, eds., *Francis of Assisi: Early Documents*, vol. 1: *The Saint* (New York: New City Press, 1999), 552.
7. "True and Perfect Joy," in *ibid.*, 166–67.
8. *Ibid.*, 76.
9. Jn 13:3; Rom 11:36.
10. See the "Office of the Passion" composed by St. Francis, in *Francis of Assisi: Early Documents*, vol. 1: *The Saint*, *op. cit.*, 139–57.
11. Bonaventure, *Itinerarium Mentis in Deum*, 1, 7, in *The Works of St. Bonaventure*, vol. 2, trans. Zachary Hayes, OFM (Saint Bonaventure, NY: Franciscan Institute Publications, 2002), 2:51.
12. See Bonaventure, *I Sent.*, d. 18, dub. I, in Doctoris Seraphici S. Bonaventurae, *Opera Omnia*, Vol. I (Quaracchi: Collegii S. Bonaventurae, 1882), 334a. (Trans. note: Hereafter, all references to the Latin text *Opera Omnia* of St. Bonaventure will be indicated by "Quaracchi," followed by the volume number in Latin numerals and the page number in Arabic, in some cases followed by a letter to indicate the column). English translation: St. Bonaventure, *Commentaries on the First Book of Sentences of Master Peter Lombard, Opera Omnia: Tome I: On the One and Triune God*, A Replica Translation, in English, of the Critical Latin Edition, by the Quaracchi Fathers, of 1882, trans. Fr. Alexis Bugnolo (Mansfield, MA: The Franciscan Archive, 2014), 334 (trans. modified). See commentary by Emmanuel Falque in *Saint Bonaventure et l'entrée de Dieu en théologie* (Paris: Vrin, 2000), 141–50: "Le donable ou l'acte de 'donner le don'."
13. Bonaventure, *Itinerarium*, V, in *Works of St. Bonaventure*, vol. 2, 111: "Speculation on the Divine Unity Through God's Primary Name, Which is Being" (emphasis added), and VI, 123: "Speculation on the Most Blessed Trinity in its Name, Which is the Good" (emphasis added).
14. Bonaventure, *Commentarium in Evangelium Lucae*, ch. 21, no. 4 (Quaracchi VII, 521a [Lk 21:1–4]); English translation: *Commentary on the Gospel of Luke*, trans. Robert J. Karris, O.F.M., in *Works of St. Bonaventure*, Vol. 8, Part 3 (St. Bonaventure, NY: Franciscan Institute Publications, 2004), p. 1963 (trans. modified); see the commentary of Jean-François Bonnefoy, *Le Saint-Esprit et ses dons selon saint Bonaventure* (Paris: Vrin, 1929), 30.
15. Bonaventure, *I Sent.*, d. XXVII, p. I, a. un., q. 2, ad. 3 (Quaracchi I, 472a): "Utrum generatio sit ratio paternitatis, an e converso [Whether the generation is the reason

- for the paternity, or whether [it is] the other way around?"]; English trans. Bugnolo, 472. See my commentary in *Saint Bonaventure et l'entrée de Dieu en théologie*, 93–95: “Primauté et principalité.”
16. Bonaventure, *Collationes in Hexaemeron*, XI, 11; English translation: *Collations on the Six Days*, trans. José de Vinck, in *The Works of St. Bonaventure*, vol. 5 (Paterson, NJ: St. Anthony Guild Press, 1970), 163, 164 (trans. modified).
 17. Bonaventure, *Breviloquium*, V, ch. 6, no. 5 (Quaracchi V, 259a); English trans. Dominic V. Monti, OFM, *The Works of St. Bonaventure*, vol. 9 (Saint Bonaventure, NY: Franciscan Institute Publications, 2005), 193. See my commentary in *Saint Bonaventure et l'entrée de Dieu en théologie*, 145–50: “L’abandon ou la ‘parfaite pauvreté.’”
 18. Bonaventure, *Breviloquium*, V, chap. 2, no. 3 (Quaracchi V, 253b), 175, translation modified.
 19. See Bonaventure, *Breviloquium*, I, chap. 3, no. 7 (Quaracchi V, 212): “‘Unbegottenness’ (*innascibilitas*) designates [the Father] by means of a negation, but this term also implies an affirmation, since unbegottenness posits in the Father a fountain-fullness (*in Patre ponit fontalem plenitudo*)” (trans. Monti, 35).
 20. Bonaventure, *I Sent.*, d. 27, p. I, q. 2, ad 3 (Quaracchi I, 470); trans. Bugnolo, 470.
 21. See, among other places, Bonaventure, *Breviloquium*, I, chap. 3, no. 8 (trans. Monti, 36), and *Quaestiones disputatae de Mysterio Trinitatis*, q. IV, a. 2, resp. ad arg. 8 (I, 87) (where the Son is called “hypostatic likeness,” which is to say personified likeness).
 22. See for example *Summa Halensis*, I, no. 295, arg. 4 (Quaracchi I, 415): “The perfection and the nobility of a nature confers on this nature the power by which it can produce from itself something like itself, that is, a likeness to itself in nature (*simile sibi in natura*).”
 23. Bonaventure, *I Sent.*, d. 27, p. II, q. 1, resp. (Quaracchi I, p. 482); trans. Bugnolo, 483.
 24. Bonaventure, *Quaestiones disputatae de perfectione evangelica*, q. I, concl. (Quaracchi V, 120); English translation by Thomas Reist, OFM Conv., and Robert J. Karris, OFM, *Works of St. Bonaventure*, vol. 13: *Disputed Questions on Evangelical Perfection* (Saint Bonaventure, NY: Franciscan Institute Publications, 2008), 40.
 25. *Ibid.*; trans. Reist and Karris, 41.
 26. See Bonaventure, *Collationes in Hexaemeron*, I, 12 (Quaracchi V, 331): “These three Persons are equal and of equal nobility: for it is of equal nobility for the Holy Spirit to complete the divine Persons as it is for the Father to originate them and for the Son to represent them all” (trans. de Vinck, 7).
 27. Bonaventure, *Sermones de diversis II*, ed. Jacques-Guy Bougerol. *Éditions franciscaines*, 1993, no. 59, 787–812.
 28. “A Salutation of the Virtues,” *Francis of Assisi: Early Documents*, vol. 1: *The Saint* 165.
 29. On this point, see Laure Solignac, “François, les animaux et l’obéissance,” in *Christus* 241 (January 2014): 32–42.
 30. See Hans Urs von Balthasar, *The Glory of the Lord: A Theological Aesthetics*, vol. 1: *Seeing the Form*, trans. Erasmo Leiva-Merikakis (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1982), 365–80: “Aporetic of the Spiritual Senses” (Origen, Bonaventure, Ignatius of Loyola).

31. Max Scheler, *The Nature of Sympathy*, trans. Peter Heath (New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction, 2008), 89.
32. Bonaventure, *The Major Legend of Saint Francis*, VIII, 6, *Francis of Assisi: Early Documents*, vol. 2: *The Founder* 590 (translation modified).
33. G. K. Chesterton, *Orthodoxy* (New York: John Lane Company, 1909), 207.
34. Bonaventure, *The Major Legend of Saint Francis*, II, 4, *Francis of Assisi: Early Documents*, vol. 2: *The Founder* 538.
35. Emmanuel Levinas, *Totalité et infini* (La Haye: Nijhoff, 1961), Sec. 3, b, 2, 173; English translation: *Totality and Infinity*, trans. Alphonso Lingis (Pittsburgh: Duquesne University Press, 1969), 199.
36. Bonaventure, *Itinerarium mentis in Deum*, Prologue 2-3 (Quaracchi V, 295); English translation Hayes, 37.
37. See the overview provided in Falque, *Dieu, la chair et l'autre*, chap. 6 (Bonaventure), 297–301 (“le cantique des créatures”), and 338–43 (“les stigmates de frère François”); English translation: *God, the Flesh, and the Other*, 172–75 and 197–200.
38. Gilles Deleuze, *Spinoza et le problème de l'expression* (Paris: Éditions de Minuit, 1973); English translation: *Expressionism in Philosophy: Spinoza*, trans. Martin Joughin (New York: Zone Books, 1990).
39. Hans Urs von Balthasar, *The Glory of the Lord: A Theological Aesthetics*, vol. 2, *Studies in Theological Style: Clerical Styles*, trans. Andrew Louth, Francis McDonough, and Brian McNeil, CRV (San Francisco: Ignatius Press/ New York: Crossroad, 1984), 260 and following.
40. Bonaventure, *Commentarius in Ecclesiasten*, 1 (Quaracchi VI, 16): “Every creature is a divine word (*Verbum divinum est omnis creatura*).”
41. Bonaventure, *I Sent.*, d. 1, p. II, a. 1, q. 2, resp. ad arg. 2 and 3 (Quaracchi II, 42).
42. Jacques Dalarun, ed., *François d'Assise. Écrits, Vies, témoignages*, vol. 1 (Paris: Le Cerf—Éditions franciscaines, 2010), 274–75.
43. “The Admonitions,” V, in *Francis of Assisi: Early Documents*, vol. 1: *The Saint*, 131.
44. *Ibid.*, 193.
45. *Ibid.*, 280.
46. Bonaventure, *Quaestiones disputata de perfectione evangelica*, q. 2, a. 1, concl. (Quaracchi V, 129); trans. Reist and Karris, 70.
47. Bonaventure, *Breviloquium* V, ch. 2, no. 3; trans. Monti, 175.
48. See what Bonaventure himself says about the apparent disorder of Scripture in the *Collationes in Hexaemeron*, XIV, 5, and see Balthasar’s commentary, *The Glory of the Lord*, vol. 2: *Studies in Theological Style: Clerical Styles*, 266.
49. *Ibid.*, 261.
50. Bonaventure, *I Sent.*, d. 3, p. I, a. un., q. 1, concl. (Quaracchi I, 69a); trans. Bugnolo, (trans. modified). See commentary in Emmanuel Falque, *Saint Bonaventure et l'entrée de Dieu en théologie*, 71–75: “L’hypercognoscibilité divine.”
51. Bonaventure, *Collationes in Hexaemeron*, VIII, 5; trans. de Vinck, 124, trans. modified. Regarding the opposition of these two viewpoints in contemporary phenomenology,

- see Emmanuel Falque, *Passer le Rubicon, Philosophie et théologie: Essai sur les frontières* (Brussels: Lessius, 2013), 183–86: “Le phénomène limité”; English translation by Reuben Shank: *Crossing the Rubicon: The Borderlands of Philosophy and Theology* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2016), 145–47); as well as Emmanuel Falque, *Le combat amoureux. Disputes phénoménologiques et théologiques* (Paris: Hermann, 2014), chap. 4 (Phénoménologie de l’extraordinaire [J.-L. Marion]), 143–45: “Denys ou saint Bonaventure.”
52. Denys the Areopagite, *Théologie mystique*, in *Oeuvres du pseudo-Denys l’Aréopagite*, trans. Maurice de Gandillac (Paris: Aubier, 1943), chap. 3, 1033 B, 181; English translation: “analogies of God drawn from what we perceive,” in Pseudo-Dionysius, *The Complete Works*, trans. Colm Luibheid and Paul Rorem (Mahwah, NJ: Paulist Press, 1987), 139.
 53. Bonaventure, *I Sent.* d. 34, a. un., q. 4, concl. (Quaracchi I, 594a); trans. Bugnolo, 594 (italics added). See the commentary in Falque, *Saint Bonaventure et l’entrée de Dieu en théologie*, 165–84: “L’usage de la métaphore.”
 54. Hans Urs von Balthasar, *The Glory of the Lord: A Theological Aesthetics*, vol. 1: *Seeing the Form*, trans. Erasmo Leiva-Merikakis (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1982), 424 (emphases added).
 55. Bonaventure, *Breviloquium*, V, chap. 6, no. 6, English trans. Dominic V. Monti, OFM, *The Works of St. Bonaventure*, vol. 9 (Saint Bonaventure, NY: Franciscan Institute Publications, 2005), 194. See my commentary in *Dieu, la chair et l’autre*, chap. 6 (Bonaventure), 322–25: “Un sensorium pour Dieu”; English translation: *God, the Flesh, and the Other: From Irenaeus to Duns Scotus*, 187–89.