

Francis and the Dark Night of Creation:

A meditation on foolishness and discernment in St Francis of Assisi¹

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Introduction

In some ways we 'know' so little about Francis. We have many legends and accounts of his life, some written by those who were closest to him, some collated from earlier accounts by the Order as it grew in the century after his death. However, all of these chroniclers and interpreters shared one thing, they did not write as would an academic historian of today: they wrote to explain their devotion, to explain why one man should have had such a devastating and transforming affect on the religious life of his day. We can neither ignore these accounts because they do not fit the criteria that we demand of 'history', nor unthinkingly accept them as a 'scientific' biography. We are called always to interpret.

We know that Francis underwent a conversion and gave up a wealthy life to become one of the poorest of the poor. We know that gradually there gathered around him a body of followers who formed themselves under his guidance into a Brotherhood, and were eventually transformed into the more organised structure of an Order. He travelled far from his base in Assisi, from France to the Middle East, but always returned. Francis continually struggled to resist the urge to become anything but one of the poor, always fighting the acquisition of houses, possessions, learning, or any self-conceit. Eventually he gave up control of his Order to people with a different vision of their mission, preferring to become just another brother to fighting for control as the head of a large and expanding organisation. Two years before his early death he received the stigmata on the feast of the Holy Cross. His standing when he died in 1226, the victim of a life of fasting and near continual illness, was as great as it had ever been.

The accounts that we have been left are primarily theological. They attempt to show God at work through the life of Francis, to show how Francis came to understand the reality of God's presence before him. My aim here has not been to attempt a critical examination of the sources (though that has been one of the tools of research), but rather to get to the core of Francis's theological message. It is a message proclaimed not in writing, but in action. I have tried to look at some of the central themes in his life and interpret them in my own language. I have used psychological insights. I have attempted comparisons with Carmelite spirituality: but my aim has always been to see where God is at work in

Francis, both then and now. I have used the form of an extended meditation (though adding some biographical notes), thinking that the slow and thoughtful wrestling with words that this form entails was the best way to look for the hidden and complex spirit of Francis.

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I

Francis² was not just the simple hearted lover of nature, preacher to his brothers and sisters the birds, that he so easily appears. The dark ground of his intense involvement with nature is the rising abyss of insanity, the thread interwoven with his asceticism which drove him to 'Sister Death' at 45. Francis did not just rest in the simple 'permanence', the initial attractiveness of God as the creator, the builder of the intricacies of the natural world. It, He, is not there.³ There can be no romantic option of the security of some 'divine presence', merely 'immanent' in the beauty of nature. Francis was driven to the acceptance of the beauty, but beauty still in loving simplicity, of the harsher dynamic of nature as it is, 'Brother Wolf' and 'Brother Fire'.

Nor was Francis simply a hater of 'worldly' beauty. He gave up the beauty of the trappings of his former life for the *beauty* of the Portiuncula, of San Damiano,⁴ the quiet beauty of the stones he painstakingly—in fear and trembling—repaired. For us there are two equally difficult decisions here. Abandoning wealth, he yet managed to keep beauty, a beauty which motivated the manufacture of his previous possessions as well as the construction of the simple beauty of the small buildings he so loved. This consciously, carefully preserved link was a thread that could, and did, tug at his new life, back to the world before. At the same time he did away with the beauty that seemed closest at hand, the 'harmony', as we might put it, of the body, the cycle of food and sleep that upheld the personal 'beauty' given him at birth. He chose rather to mutilate this whole of which he must have been so much aware in the search of an even greater asceticism, on the way, eventually, to Mt Alverna.⁵ It is the origin of these two both very active paths, the renunciation of beauty, and its creative, insistent acceptance, that we need to seek out if we are to come again to the Francis who preached to the animals.

This origin lies in the dynamic of hope and despair that marks the way into Francis's particular dark night, a road we cannot truly follow. Here we are not simply equating John of the Cross's dark night with the experience of Francis: Francis's despair is that of unworthiness, a call by God which comes through and is accompanied by a growing sense of unworthiness to meet His demands, increased and made more acute by the knowledge that it is God who works the change, who demands and obeys the call (I Cor. 15, 10). Francis is consumed by his unworthiness of

a place in the divine plan, his inability to accept the worth he knows comes from God alone (I Cor. 3, 9). This is not mere self-disgust, unworthiness in the face of a clear and 'separate' divine command. As he must gradually realise, the unworthiness itself is inspired by the Spirit, it gradually moulds his understanding of place and purpose: it is the inner working of grace, of God's purpose—his sense of unworthiness does not discourage, but forces him on, into worldly 'foolishness', into the path already marked out.

The striving within him grew stronger the more he withdrew from the beauty of the world into the 'ugliness' of his ascetic life. On Mt Alverna, the site of his stigma, the complex beauty of his surroundings is reduced to a stark harsh backdrop for his ultimate seizing by God, his own assumption and transfiguration (Eph. 2, 10) from within. Nor is this the 'night' of John of the Cross; here in the darkness there is illumination, a consuming and overpowering—a 'self-destructive'—vision of the cross, his stigmata. Francis's night is one intimately connected with the world, with the dynamic of asceticism and beauty. His great fear, the root of his 'great temptation'⁶, is taking the easier option, the road that might lead back to the groundings in self-display and acquisition of property, back to his earlier life. Unable, because of his own sin, to accept the world as he might imagine it, creation at peace with God, he finds now a point at which to rest. 'Rest' can have only a searing irony—he finds somewhere from where to begin: Christ in agony until the end of time. Any attempt to stop and focus praise or reflection on an action, an object, fails; Christ draws us in, but only to a vision and grace that is *given*, that can only be given.

The simplest action is a way to God. In every turn of the body or word or thought there lies a path to Christ. The path is not *out* of each word and each action: it is *through*. It is the knowledge that it is God who makes each one possible, who forms each to point back, as the spoken word draws us back to the speaker. For Francis the terror is in knowing this, even feeling this, and yet—and *hence*—being unable to live it. What if there is no place in it for him? He acts but finds in his acts nothing that bears the marks of God. He looks back, he sees *as* he acts, but each act remains just that, an inconsequential stirring of atoms. He realises the terrible possibility that each act might remain only an act, that we are in fact overwhelmed in the crowd of inconsequent, pointless movements and attempts to focus on things which in reality are only part of a great stream. But he realises also that it is through these things which seem so mundane, so utterly dead to the thought of God, that God himself must come. It is in this world of normal existence that God comes to us in his depth. 'Religious experiences' become in the end only detachments from the reality of God's coming, his demanding presence. They remain pointers, but pointers large enough to hide the road. They become this, but still he has them, still he needs them.

Francis's night here demands naming in similar terms to John's. We

do not have the same precise dry spiritual terminology, but John's night is not only a 'spiritual' language—it *is* a language of prayer, but prayer as reflected in everyday life. Sterility, dryness, 'boredom' with God, begin and are continually reflected in the small and continual action of the everyday world. Prayer rises from, transforms, but must never leave the emotional and psychological life of each person. The 'night of the spirit' is a state in the life of prayer, but one that is profoundly linked to the world, in both its delusions and its results, not just to a 'spiritual state' relevant only in a separate 'reality'.⁷ Driven inward to the face of the abyss of total self-disgust, Francis is driven to Christ. His experience is continually one of God's absence from his creation in any form but absolute, sacrificing, demanding love. He is not faced with the experience of an 'absence' of God, it is rather the abyss of the total absence of worth, or the possibility of worth. It is the terrifying *continual* presence of God who reveals himself not as a supernatural tyrant, but as transforming, working through us, demanding, 'needing' us for the transformation underway, the work of resurrection in the Spirit.

II

This is of course an intentional caricature of his life, which is in reality a dialogue between hope and despair, the continual rediscovery, the affirmation of the way. He hopes, and at times his hope is clearly victorious, transforming, being allowed to reform his character. At times it is the sign of a battle won but not over, at times in the depths of spiritual despair his hope becomes only a terrible cry into the dark. In temptation he reaches towards answers in the 'foolish' and the 'absurd', and it is there, in the attempt to find the grace of discernment in the act of the fool, that we see the way back to Francis's preaching to creation.

Francis's 'foolishness' is his continual attempt to go beyond the expected, the norm, knowingly to exceed the biblical examples for his actions, in ways that seem contrary, *unnecessary* to all normal intuition. Watch, for instance, his love for Brother Fire:

... his garment caught fire just under the knee, and although he felt the heat, he did not want to extinguish the fire. His companion, seeing that his clothes were burning, ran to him to put them out, but Blessed Francis restrained him saying, 'Don't dearest Brother, don't hurt Brother Fire!' And he did not want the fire to be extinguished.⁸

This type of action takes place against the background of the demand for absolute poverty. Relying totally on certain central actions and sayings of Christ, certain phrases through which Francis has felt his call, he continually attests to the resurrection, to the essential importance of Christ's actions. He does not claim simply a special revelation from God, he attempts to become 'Christ-like'. For Francis, the ultimate danger is self-obsession, building a cocoon of self-estimation and possessions, material and spiritual, in which to hide from God; this is for him the

essence of his former life. Pleasure in his new life comes from abandoning claims to possessions, to self-opinion, to anything of one's own. This is what lies behind the absolutes of Brother Leo's⁹ questioning of Francis as to the 'ultimate joy', a story worth quoting at length:

St Francis called loudly: 'O Brother Leo, even if a Brother Minor could preach so eloquently that he converted all the infidels to the faith of Christ, write that not therein consists perfect joy.'

And thus he spoke for the best part of two miles, until Brother Leo in great amazement questioned him, saying:

'Father, I beseech you for God's sake, tell me wherein consists perfect joy!'

And Francis answered him thus:

'When we come to St Mary of the Angels drenched by the rain, numbed with cold, covered with mud and tormented by hunger, and knock at the gate, and the porter comes and asks: 'Who are you?' and we answer: 'Two of your brothers', and he says: 'You are lying, you are a pair of scoundrels who go around deceiving people and robbing alms from the poor, go away!' and refuses to open and leaves us standing outside in the snow and the rain, shivering and hungry until night time: then if we endure so much abuse and cruelty patiently and calmly and without murmuring, thinking with humility and charity that this porter knows us as we really are, and that God makes him turn against us thus, O Brother Leo, write that therein consists perfect joy... Above all grace and all gifts of the Holy Spirit which Christ vouchsafes to His friends, is that of overcoming one's self, and for the love of Christ gladly bearing pain, insults, disgrace and hardship. For we cannot glory in any other of the gifts of God, as they are not ours but God's. Therefore the Apostle says: "What hadst thou, that thou didst not receive? Now if thou didst receive it, why dost thou glory as though thou hadst not received it?" (I Cor 4, 7). But we may glory in the cross of tribulation and affliction, for that is ours, wherefore the Apostle says: "For God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ" to whom be honour and glory, world without end, Amen'¹⁰.

All of this is imitation of Christ, in whom Francis finds the route out of his former chains. The only way to follow is in humility and thus Francis tries always to follow:

... he was inspired by God to keep that Lent on an island in the said lake, and he entreated his follower for the love of Christ to row him across ... St Francis took nothing with him save two small loaves ... There he remained all through Lent without eating or drinking, except for half of one of the little loaves ... It is thought that he ate the half out of reverence for Christ's fast, when our Lord fasted forty days and forty nights without taking any material sustenance. And thus, by eating that half-loaf, St Francis banished the poison of vainglory, while following the example of Christ by fasting forty days and forty nights.¹¹

In each foolish act, the 'foolishness' of humility, all meaning and permanence is placed in the life and command of Christ. Each one of our acts is freed from the need for interpretation: our need to turn back and attempt to force answers and structure from a single event, itself only part of the continual sequence of life. In the action of humility Francis encounters God, he receives 'consolation'. 'Consolation' is at the deepest level an emotional and *personal* reality—the feeling of having met God, of 'having been' in God's presence in prayer, in some event or action. But consolation is also a *prophetic* experience; it is known not only that God has been there, guiding and leading, but also that he always *will* be there, inspiring, demanding and provoking vision. The vision is that of Christ, the hope of resurrection from death. In looking to each of Christ's actions, each moment of his life, Francis looks beyond, he sees that action as part of a drama complete, of which the end is ascension into the loving God. He sees an ascension which takes up suffering and promises him rest from the terror of despair, but a rest that can and must begin in this life through imitation. Consolation helps to draw us away from our own problems, into the 'drama', the pattern, the footsteps of Christ.

In practice, Francis's spirituality is a strong and self-denying asceticism—for all his gentle love he does not allow time to be wasted or attentiveness to be lost in the continual search for God in every moment. He does not allow 'Brother Ass', his body, the indulgence of resting in each act, in each experience of consolation. This is manifestation of just how near to the abyss, how far along the road, he stood. In a mixture of health and illness, of obsessive self-despair, he reaches out to Christ, to the intuitive source of healing. But his reaching itself is diseased, and God must come through both pain and illness, drawing into health, never with the assurance of success. Each moment must become an act of humility, an act of imitation; the process of transformation is insistently both continual—the pull being stronger as he grows in understanding—and yet more and more incomplete. There can be no simple doctrine of progress. The abyss of unworthiness is always there: only in the 'foolishness' of allowing God to answer, to provide both question and answer, can he come to find his true place in the mystery. The longer he walks in Christ's footsteps, the quicker an attempt to set his own pace will result in the death of prayer and vision in his own unworth. There is thus a continual tension, one of many, between the search for submersion into God and the revelation of immediate purpose, the change and development of his mission. His dark night is the terrifying experience of 'worldly' existence, the banal and the ordinary; his illumination is the constant learning through this night that God is teaching him a new path, the way of 'Christ-like' imitation.

Francis kisses a leper.¹² On impulse he reaches into the dark. He knows nothing of the way forward. In his kissing, his act of love, his act of imitation (Mt. 8,2—3), God comes to him. He knows that God has

come, that he had reached into the light, only in retrospect. He learns that each act of imitation, each act of 'foolishness' to the world, can lead to discernment: with the leper it seemed so only afterwards—later he reaches out again, this time searching to discern. In foolishness he steps out of himself, trying to learn as Christ learnt, through obedience. But each act risks more, each further step out of 'normality' stretches further towards God. Sometimes he is answered in vision, but mostly by 'absence', by the Spirit burning inside him, by God drawing in. He comes to learn the place of the Spirit, in what situations and actions the Spirit will come to him—not an answer in the form of 'heavenly' instructions. He does not seek for spiritual 'fortune telling'; he seeks to transform all action and thought into God. Every part of the emotional and mental complex which makes up a simple action is transformed through imitation, it attempts to become only the action of Christ, the showing of love for the Father.

As this transformation begins, his reaching out becomes clearer, more open to God's reply. He learns to reach in the right thoughts and deeds, he meets the Father coming to greet the Son, who searches in Francis. With the ultimate question, in the ultimate risk of his spiritual life, the outpouring of his nearness to the abyss, he prays on Mt Alverna. He prays to bear both the pain and the love of Christ. He is answered in his vision of Christ and his stigmata. Vision and the answer of absence are at last seen as one, the vision (his stigmata is more real than any 'vision') gives grace but at the same time is only a pointer drawing him deeper into God. He does not reflect on where to reach for answers, his path is too headlong, but even this is partly inspired. It is the attempt to move towards what Balthasar calls the 'Marian dimension' of Christian relationship:

(her) experience begins with the *tactus*—sensing by touching—and then unfolds from it only to return to it, to the point of developing a spiritual perception and sense of touch for all that pertains to her son ... (the believer) feels the grace that sustains him and forms him and keeps him together, and it could be that in the midst of this he becomes aware of the fact that this is not only a bestowed grace, but an answering grace, an assent with a definite shape ... a grace described in sensory terms in the Song of Songs ... a grace posited in John as perfect love and from the standpoint of which he thinks out Christian principles (1 Jn 2,5; 4,17).¹³

Foolishness becomes discernment when Francis asks the questions inspired by the Spirit; discernment is as much the knowledge of which questions to ask, the knowledge of which questions are asked in us by Christ, as it is the ability to discern answers. The freedom given by 'foolishness' is the lack of self-concern and self-awareness necessary to feel God. Francis's active life as well as his periods of contemplation are the stilling of the self that leads to the knowledge of God (Ps. 46, 8—11).
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The 'foolish' acts are a form of play, a release from the false 'seriousness' of the world, allowing the half-felt Spirit to take form and to lead us in the footsteps of Christ. It is both a terrifying and necessary 'play' that leads to discernment. Francis walks a complex path towards self-understanding, but self-understanding only as an abandonment of 'self' to Christ. Self-understanding becomes a learning of the place of the Spirit, learning new, ever-changing places for foolishness and seriousness (Lk. 7, 31—5; 9, 24). Self-understanding becomes a placing of the self in relation to others and to the Spirit who guides the transformation of relationships. In attention to the half-formed, 'forming', flowering and yet dependant Spirit, he feels this fragile growth as the very foundation of his person. Each act of humility moves him along the road to mental, spiritual health. Though to understand him here we must strip away our words until we come to the absolute reality of both the transforming of emotion, thought and reflection by the Spirit *and* the reality of Francis's condition, of how deep in spiritual and psychological anguish lay his search for the place of the renewing Spirit.

Once again, his mastery is turning this burning for, burning *of* the Spirit inside him out to the world. Participation in Christ is the key to his prayer, but it is not a withdrawal from creation into the abstracts of doctrinal symbols; his prayer is, in the end, expressed consciously in terms of the 'trinitarian' position of Christ because that is how he finds Christ in the world around him. Participation in the liturgy is not just an 'ascent' into or a 'descent' of a distinct 'heavenly' liturgy, rather it is the celebration of the fact that here in one church building, one particular, vulnerable *place*, God comes to us, speaks to us, heals us and creates us—in the words we speak, in the small gestures, in the seemingly ineffective and unnoticed handshakes; in the incoherent, incomprehensible images, longings and attempts to understand that serve as prayers. In all these God is there both giving and accepting.

In the search for the simplicity, the humility in which the words of Christ can come alive, each animal receives equal status, each is addressed in simplicity as brother and sister. The simple surface of the word 'brother' and the word 'sister' must be 'felt', the simplicity of this love cannot be explained further, it must be lived. This is not a statement about 'cosmic democracy', it is an act of salvation, indicating, revealing and creating the way forward. It is an act of love meant as it is said. Each animal, each part of creation, is of the same worth as Francis; all equally accorded a place in God's plans. Creation is taken up in the act of self-abandonment. If it is the nature of his relationships with animals that is the truly original element in his thought here,¹⁴ it is the utter equality and respect given in the simplicity of his feeling that is the heart of these relationships—each animal, each object is seen as both an opportunity to praise God, a focus of Love, and as part of the creation that in its own right praises Him. Francis goes out into the world to attempt to 'understand' by example, to comprehend such love by trying to show it

to himself in each act, to others: even, as with Christ, to those who cannot understand it. He lives in the second innocence of God's 'fool', in the innocence that this love is strong enough to overcome all incapacity—to transform all things into opportunities for Love.¹⁵ The expression of this love is the more striking because we must use words that seem so far from the harshness of his life and his self-disregard—courteous, gentle, innocent, respectful, accepting and encouraging:

He was wont to call all created things his brothers and sisters, and in a wonderful manner inaccessible to others he would enter into the secret of things as one to whom 'the glorious liberty of the children of God' (Rom. viii, 21) had been given ...¹⁶

When Francis preaches to the birds words fail.¹⁷ It is only in understanding of his simplicity that anything is to be learnt. The sermon to the birds occurs as part of his new burning for preaching after a period of doubt and uncertainty—it is an outpouring of consolation, of both question and answer received, it is an act of discernment, true simplicity, the triumph of the fool over the world. In his prayer Francis seems to have gone far along the road to living Christ—to the complex, terrifying, consuming and yet simple, gentle and beautiful knowledge of the joining of death and resurrection, of Good Friday and Easter Day. Christ is within, drawing him, demanding and giving a spirit which seems threatening to consume. He is led down the road of 'Christ-like' imitation as the only way to avoid the abyss of unworth, but his life is a constant reaffirmation of the terrible decision to take that road.

His challenge to us consists in knowing how far along his particular path we must go, and, even harder, how far along it we must go to gain the grace to discern when and if it differs from our own, however easier or harder that may turn out to be. Francis's acts and graces of discernment must point to the need for our own, not merely to the acceptance of his answers. Francis's answers become ours when we use them as questions for our own discerning, our own plea for grace. More almost than any other, he lives in joy and hope, hope in the presence of Christ. We can say two things. His simplicity, his true prayerfulness in the heart of Christ's command, is poured out in acts of 'foolishness', of transforming love for the world, all of which depends upon the Creator. At the same time this dependence on the Creator and Redeemer is the core of both his ultimate illumination and of his own harsh, dark night; it is both demanded from him and, as he comes to learn, as he becomes able to accept, it is given to him:

Swift as the waves beneath an east wind breaking
Dark as beneath a winter sky the sea,
So to my heart crowd memories awaking,
So dark, O love, my spirit without thee.¹⁸

- 1 I would like to acknowledge a special debt to Fr. R. Dodaro O.S.A., who forced
upon me many necessary corrections in the writing of this paper.
- 2 Born c. 1181—2, died Oct. 3rd 1226. For a comprehensive account of his life see
Fortini, A. *Francis of Assisi*, tr. H. Moak, New York, The Crossroad Publishing
Company, 1981. For a shorter and reasonably accurate biography see Green, J.
God's Fool: The Life and Times of Francis of Assisi, tr. P. Heinegg, San Francisco,
1985. For an interpretation, or rather a novel, owing more to the legends and to the
strengths of one man's imagination, but for all its inaccuracy deep and powerful, see
God's Pauper: St Francis of Assisi, Nikos Kazantzakis, tr. P.A. Bien, London,
Faber, 1975.
- 3 Pouring out a thousand graces
he passed these groves in haste
and having looked at them
with his image alone,
clothed them in beauty. St John of the Cross *Canticle*, Stanza 5.
- 4 During the process of his conversion in 1205 he visited the ancient and dilapidated
church of San Damiano near Assisi and there heard a voice from a crucifix which
said 'Francis, repair my house'. He returned and repaired the church with his own
hands. Because of this initiative the people of Assisi christened him 'Pazzo', the
Madman. La Portiuncla was a small shrine to our Lady of the Angels in the woods
near Assisi which he began to repair in 1207, and which became the home of his
Order in 1210.
- 5 In 1213 Orlando da Chiusi gave Mt Alverna in Tuscany to Francis and his
companions as a retreat. In 1224 Francis went there after attending his last Chapter
of the Order, and after learning of the dream of Brother Elias (the brother who
became head of the Order in 1221) that Francis would die within two years.
According to tradition, on September 14, the Feast of the Holy Cross, an angel with
wings of fire descended on him as he was praying and gave him the stigmata.
- 6 Referring either to the continual temptation in Francis to assume some property, or
to allow the Brothers to do so, or specifically the conflict within Francis towards the
end of his life, when he was torn between obeying the new rules allowing property
'in common', and following his own inner command.
- 7 'Below the level of consciousness we know that our pain is the effect of God's
closeness.' Ruth Burrows, *Guidelines for Mystical Prayer*, London, Sheed and
Ward 1977, p. 101, see esp. ch. 4.
- 8 *Speculum perfectionis*, 118 in *The Little Flowers, Legends and Lauds. St Francis of
Assisi*, ed. O. Karrer, tr. N. Wydenbruck, London, Sheed and Ward, 1979, p. 129.
For a short study of the various sources of Francis's life see Moorman, J.R.H., *The
Sources for the Life of St. Francis of Assisi*, Manchester, Manchester University
Press, 1940.
- 9 Brother Leo joined Francis in 1210 and was his constant companion and secretary
during the last years of his life. He left many writings about Francis which did not
toe the official line of the Order in the thirteenth century, and were thought to have
been lost until their gradual emergence during the second half of the last century,
and through the course of the twentieth. He died at Assisi in 1271.
- 10 *Fioretti*, I, VIII; tr. Wydenbruck, op. cit. pp. 185—6.
- 11 *Fioretti*, I, VII; tr. Wydenbruck, op. cit. pp. 183—4.
- 12 During the course of his conversion he obeyed a sudden urge to kiss a leper he met in
his path, a great struggle for Francis, who had been so squeamish. As Green (op. cit.
p. 74) says, the leper appears 'as if stepping out of one of the oldest stories in the
Bible.'
- 13 H.U. von Balthasar, *The Glory of the Lord*, Edinburgh, T. and T. Clark, 1983. Vol.
1, p. 362—4.
- 14 See R.D. Sorrell, *St Francis of Assisi and Nature*, Oxford, OUP 1988, chs. 3—4.
- 15 W.H. Vanstone, *The Stature of Waiting*, London, DLT 1982, esp. chs. 6—7.
- 16 *I Celano*, I, 29; tr. Wydenbruck, op. cit. p. 43.
- 17 The most famous occurrence of this took place in 1215 near Spoleto.
- 18 Venantius Fortunatus, *Ad Ruconem diaconem, modo presbyterum*, tr. H.
Waddell, *Medieval Latin Lyrics*, London, Constable 1975, p. 63.