

BONAVENTURE (Giovanni Fidanza)—theologian, philosopher, philosopher, doctor of the Church, called *doctor philosophicus* (to the beginning of the fifteenth century called *doctor devotus*), b. around 1217 in Bagnoregio, d. July 15, 1274 in Lyons.

Initially he was probably educated in the Franciscan cloister in Bagnoregio; from 1236 to 1242 he studied in the Paris faculty of arts where he entered the Franciscans in 1243; from 1243 to 1248 he studied theology under the direction of Alexander of Hales (to 1245) and John de La Rochelle, Wilhelm of Meliton, and Odo Rigaud.

From 1248 to 1250 he was biblical bachelor. From 1250 to 1252 he was a bachelor lecturing on the *Sentences*; in 1253 he obtained a licentiate in theology. Because of the conflict between the mendicant orders on the one hand, and the diocesan clergy and the university on the other, it was only in 1257 with the intervention of Pope Alexander IV that the Paris faculty of theology officially recognized Bonaventure's scholarly degree. From 1257 to 1274 he was general of the order. Because of his interpretation, defence, and organization of Franciscan life he was called the order's second founder. He took a moderate position in the order's internal controversies on the interpretation of poverty. He codified previous legislation (starting in 1260, *Constitutiones narbonenses* became the legal foundation of the order). He defended the ideal of Franciscan life and the order against radical spiritualism and the influences of Joachimism; he answered William of Saint-Amour's attacks on the mendicant orders in *Quaestiones disputatae de perfectione evangelica* (before 1256), and Gerard of Abbeville in *Apologia pauperum* (around 1269). By the intervention of Bonaventure and Peter of Tarentaise, the constitution of the Council of Lyons called *Religionum diversitatem*, which abolished mendicant orders and whose rules were confirmed after the Fourth Lateran Council, exempted the Franciscans and Dominicans. In a series of conferences *Collationes de 10 praeceptis* (1267), *Collationes de 7 donis Spiritus Sancti* (1268), and *Collationes in Hexaëmeron* (1273) he fought the erroneous theses of Averroism. In 1265 he did not accept nomination as Bishop of York. In 1273 Pope Gregory X named him Bishop of Albano and Cardinal. In that position Bonaventure played an important role in organizing the Council of Lyons (1274) and in preparing and forming a union with the Greeks. Bonaventure was canonized by Pope Sixtus IV on April 14, 1482, who included him at the same time among the Doctors of the Church. Pope Sixtus V solemnly declared Bonaventure a Doctor of the Church on March 14, 1588. His feast is on July 15, and up to 1969 it was on July 14.

Bonaventure's more important works include the following: philosophical-theological works—*Commentaria in IV libros Sententiarum* (1230–1252); *De reductione artium ad theologiam* (1250–1257 or 1273–1274); *Breviloquium* (before 1257); *Collationes de 10 praeceptis* (1267); *Collationes de 7 donis Spiritus Sancti* (1268); *Collationes de in Hexaëmeron* (1273); exegetical works—*Commentarius in Evangelium sancti Lucae* (1248–1250); ascetic-mystical works—*Itinerarium mentis in Deum* (1259); *De triplici via* (around 1259); *Lignum vitae*, *Soliloquium* (around 1259); concerning religious life—*Quaestiones disputatae de perfectione evangelica* (around 1255); *Apologia pauperum* (around 1269); *Constitutiones narbonenses* (1260); *Legenda major*, *Legenda minor sancti Francisci* (around 1261); homiletic works—*Sermones de tempore*, *de Sanctis*, *de beata Virgine Maria*, *de diversis*.

A critical edition of Bonaventure's works was published under the title *Doctoris seraphici sancti B. Opera omnia* (I–X, Q 1882–1902). F. Delorme published another edition (differing from the critical edition), *Sancti B. Collationes in Hexaëmeron et bonaventuriana quaedam selecta* (Q 1934). *Quaestiones disputées de caritate, de novissimis* not placed in the *Opera Omnia* appeared in a critical edition by P. Glorieux (P 1950). J. C. Bougerol presented a list of works by Bonaventure discovered after the critical edition was published in *Introduction à l'étude de saint B.* (Tou 1961, 246–250; including the important codex 186 with Bonaventure's notes on the *Sentences*, which was discovered in Assisi). A partial critical edition was *Sancti B. opera theologica selecta, editio minor* (I–V, Q 1935–1964), *Tria opuscula: Breviloquium, Itinerarium mentis in Deum, De reductione*

artium ad theologiam (Q 1938), *Decem opuscula ad theologiam mysticam spectantia* (Q 1949), *Sancti B. Legenda duae de vita sancti Francisci Seraphici* (Q 1923). Among translations, on account of extensive introduction and bibliography, an important edition is that of L. Amorós, B. Aperribay, and M. Oromi *Obras de san B.* (I–VI, 1945–1949).

PHILOSOPHICAL-THEOLOGICAL THOUGHT. The sources of Bonaventure's philosophy and theology were the thought of Plato, Aristotle, Pseudo-Dionysius Areopagite, and the Victorines, but especially the thought of Augustine. Bonaventure was the author of the most complete synthesis of Augustinianism in the thirteenth century. His thoughts concerned the concrete man created in the supernatural order and endowed with appetites that can find full satisfaction only in that order. Relying on ordinary, scientific, historical, and religious experience he arrived at the first cause—God, who constitutes the final answer as well to purely philosophical questions. The reason's effort would lead to love and change into prayer and union with God. In the Bonaventurian synthesis the personality of its author is reflected and it is full of the spirit of Francis of Assisi.

Philosophy as Bonaventure practiced it differs formally from theology but is internally ordered to theology. Therefore these two domains should not be divided. Although by the philosophical road one can know certain truths with certainty, without theology one cannot fully resolve even purely philosophical problems, e.g., the questions of man's end and the means to attaining it (since this end and these means have a supernatural character), the final cause (God in himself cannot be known by reason alone). Philosophy thus understood is necessary for practicing the three kinds of theology: speculative, symbolic, and mystical.

Bonaventure distinguished three kinds of cognition: (1) sense cognition of material things, which consists in this, that during the action of the object on the senses, the cognitive faculty immanently reproduces a similarity of the thing (*species sensibilis*); (2) the scientific cognition of material things in the process of intellectual abstraction, which is not understood in an Aristotelian way, although it is expressed in Aristotle's terminology: the process of abstraction is the intellect's reaction to a mental image, and a cognitive similarity (*species intelligibilis*) is the intellect itself determined according to the object; the active and potential intellect are the same faculty, but are named differently according to the function performed in the process of cognition; in both kinds of cognition the object is at least obliquely the cause of cognition; this guarantees the objectivity of cognition; (3) sapiential cognition of spiritual beings by illumination. Illumination consists in the presentation of the idea of the object with the exemplar idea in God, that is, with the intuition of things in their eternal reasons; this is the source of the universality and necessity of cognition. The subject knows and understands always in reference to eternal reasons; however, this is not a direct intuition of God or ideas themselves since an intuitive vision of God is impossible in this life. However, knowledge always occurs in reference to God conceived as a concrete and infinite reality that is the terminal point of knowledge and of the order of being (*contuitio*).

Bonaventure regarded God's existence as evident, since every intellectual activity presupposes the idea of God, and God's presence in the soul is the foundation for knowledge about him; since God is a pure being, to say that God is God means to state that he exists—*si Deus est Deus, Deus est* (this was how Bonaventure understood Anselm of Canterbury's ontological proof in *De mysterio Trinitatis*, I, 1, 29; V, 15). We may discursively prove God's existence by the principle of efficient and final causality and the need for order. Bonaventure aimed to multiply the points of view from which we can see God rather than to lead to God on a few well-worn paths; he was not interested in the technique and form of proofs. The affirmation of God's existence is inseparably joined with human nature, but the understanding of God's essence is not; one can grasp God's essence in a natural manner partially by the way of negation and affirmation, in creatures and through creatures, by the way of love and reason.

God is the fullness of being and happiness, and He is sufficient unto himself. God is also love, and so He created the world and man to give the creation a share in his being and happiness. Creation is God's free act and occurred in time; although men in fact learned this truth by Revelation, it may be demonstrated by rational arguments, since the thesis of an eternally existing world is contradictory in itself. Things were created in time according to exemplar ideas that are eternally in God's mind. God first created matter, then in the course of six days he put seminal reasons (*rationes seminales*) in matter, that is, formed after the model of the divine ideas, and the substantial forms potentially inherent in matter, which are manifested to the measure of the appearing of new individuals of a given species, and which direct the development of the species. Only God is a being in himself. All other beings are beings insofar as they participate in God's being as his trace, image, or likeness. Every being except for God is composed of a metaphysical potential element, namely matter, and an active element, namely form. Matter, conceived as the metaphysical element that introduces limitation in being may be spiritual or corporeal, depending on whether the being of which it is a constitutive element is or is not physically composite. Being constitutes a unity by the joining of matter and ultimate substantial form, but this does not exclude the presence of many inferior forms and incomplete substances in one being, e.g., the form of light is the first form common to all bodies.

Man is a unity that arose from the union of two incomplete substances: the soul and the body, joined with each other as form with matter; yet both the body and soul are composed of matter and form, since otherwise after separation from the body the soul would be incapable of its own activity; the soul naturally strives for permanent union with the body, hence the ultimate resurrection of the body is necessary. The powers of the soul constitute its essence and are reduced to intellect and will. The intellect's judgment makes rational choice possible, but does not necessarily entail a decision of the will, because it is by its nature a free faculty and the reason for its freedom is its openness to every good, including the infinite good. The soul is immortal by its nature (especially by reason of its end and physical simplicity). At the same time the soul's immortality is a gift of grace. There is no contradiction in this, since the soul's original ordering to the supernatural end required a natural constitution that was capable of receiving immortality. Man's final end is eternal happiness. This consists in man's participation in infinite knowledge, and especially in the infinite love of God. At the same time this is the full satisfaction of the soul's faculties, which are open to infinity. As he cooperates with grace, a man can merit happiness (Bonaventure accepted the existence of morally neutral acts, i.e., acts good in themselves, but performed without any supernatural intention). The conscience appraises the moral value of an act. The conscience acts in the cognitive order. Synderesis operates in the order of the will and makes accusations because of evil that is done and in a natural manner arouses and directs the will toward good. The conscience may be in error, but synderesis cannot be in error.

Bonaventure's entire doctrine may be described as an engaged description of man's return to God. Original sin destroyed the state in which man enjoyed a perfect vision of beings apart from himself—things, in him—the soul, and above him—God. Since sin is a certain kind of annihilation, a return to the original state is possible by the new creation in Jesus Christ, who is the only mediator of grace and the end of the road of sanctification. Christ-Man is also the crowning point of the work of creation. Therefore the incarnation still would have taken place if there were no original sin. Christ imparts grace. By the theological and cardinal virtues He restores to the soul its original rectitude, by the gifts of the Holy Spirit he disposes man to perfection, and by the beatitudes leads man to perfection. The soul "again" created and enriched aims at perfection by three ways. The ways are arranged in an hierarchy, but not as Plotinus or Pseudo-Dionysius understood it, since they are acts directed to achieve the basic elements of perfections, and the practice of these begins at the same time: (1) the way of purification consists in the active purification of the soul chiefly by meditation, prayer, contemplation, the practice of the virtue of humility, and remembrance of Christ's sufferings; (2) the way of illumination consists in knowing Christ and the divine economy

of salvation in the light of faith and the gift of wisdom; the basic means is the imitation of Christ, and the highest form of imitation is to practice the evangelical counsels, especially poverty; the imitation of Mary and devotion to her is closely connected with the imitation of Christ (in Bonaventure's Christocentric Mariology he accented the Mother of God's role in redemption and her salvific mediation); (3) the way of union consists in the practice and development of love to the point of mystical union. Bonaventure distinguished intellectual contemplation, a deep grasp of God in his works known under the influence of the gift of reason, and sapiential contemplation, the affective feeling of God's presence under the influence of the action of the gift of wisdom. The apex of contemplation is ecstasy of the intellect and will; ecstasy of the will is more perfect, since love reaches further than intellectual vision, but it always occurs together with ecstasy of the intellect. In ecstasy of the will, which is the most perfect knowledge of God possible on earth, the soul immediately experiences God in love; here the so-called mystical death takes place; the soul receives new knowledge, but it is not capable of grasping it conceptually. Ecstasy is surpassed only by rapture (*raptus*), which is an extraordinary gift, and it is characterized by this, that the completely passive soul temporarily and intuitively sees God's essence. Ecstasy is the end of all knowledge, and the desire for ecstasy is one of the conditions for arriving at it. At each stage of the interior life, Christ is the foundation and center, and at each stage all the faculties (sensory and spiritual) cooperate, and the order of intellect and will, nature and grace flow together.

INFLUENCE. Those who continued Bonaventure's philosophical-theological thought were predominantly Franciscans. The better known ones include the following: Eustache of Arras (d. 1291), Walter of Bruges (d. 1307), Matthew of Aquasparta (d. 1302), Bartholomew of Bologna (d. around 1294), Roger of Marston (d. around 1303), Peter Olivi (d. 1298), Peter of Trabes (d. toward the end of the thirteenth century), Vitalis of Four (d. 1327), William of Ware (d. after 1304), Raymond Lull (d. 1315). Bonaventure's students accepted the essential theses of this thought (illumination, exemplarism, plurality of forms) as the traditional doctrine of the order and developed it depending on the actual doctrinal situation. Although the Franciscans supported J. Duns Scotus, they were still keeping Bonaventure's thought alive in the fifteenth century, especially William of Vaurouillon (d. 1463) and Étienne Brulefer (d. around 1497). There was a renaissance of Bonaventurianism after the Tridentine Council and it was connected with the Collegium of St. Bonaventure founded in 1587 by Pope Sixtus V by the cloister of the Twelve Apostles in Rome. But its efforts the complete works of Bonaventure were published for the first time (1588–1599). The Capuchins (the most famous being B. Barbieri) held most faithfully to Bonaventure's doctrine. However, they did not regard Bonaventure as the only master of the order; almost always they tried to reconcile his theses with the doctrine of Duns Scotus and Thomas Aquinas. An important stage in the assimilation of Bonaventure's writings was the works of B. Bonelli, *Prodromus ad opera omnia sancti B.* (Bossano 1767) and *Sancti B. operum omnium supplementum* (I–III, Trento 1772–1774). There was a second renaissance of Bonaventure's thought at the end of the nineteenth century, chiefly due to a critical edition of his works by the Collegium Sancti B. in Quaracchi (1877, transferred in 1970 to Grottaferrata). Thereby Bonaventure's thought contributed to a general renaissance of scholasticism after Pope Leo XIII's encyclical *Aeterni Patris Unigenitus*. The seven-hundredth anniversary of his death (1974) became an occasion for special interest in Bonaventure's person and work. The memory of his death was celebrated at a central congress in Rome (November 19–26) and national congresses, including a congress of the Polish Franciscan family on November 18–24 in Kraków.

Bonaventure's mystical thought, which was the source of inspiration for J. Gerson, for *devotio moderna*, Francis de Sales, and others, had the greatest influence. Apart from Bonaventure's writings, e.g., *Lignum vitae* (because of this work iconography often presents him with a crucifix in the form of a tree), short works written in his spirit became widespread, e.g., *Meditationes vitae Christi*.

In Poland in the fifteenth century Bonaventure's ascetic writings especially were widespread. Around 1511 his *Breviloquium* was published by F. Ungler; the oldest Polish translation is *Żywot Pana Jezusa Krysta* [Life of the Lord Jesus Christ] ascribed to Bonaventure (Kr 1522), translated by B. Opec, and *Sześć skrzydeł seraficznych* [Six seraphic wings] (Lubicz 1612), translated by S. Rochowicz. His ascetical and devotional writings enjoyed the greatest interest, and among his works, especially in the eighteenth century, sermons of the panegyric type were predominant.

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