

FOR FATHER NOTA

Father Nota loved Love.
 As a priest first of all
 he loved God who was for him
 the holy one, the mystery of Divine Love.
 Father Nota loved Love's Light.
 As a philosopher he loved wisdom
 that mirror-image radiatrix
 who measures the universe from end to end
 and orders all things sweetly.
 Father Nota loved Love's Life.
 As a Jesuit in the Society of Jesus
 he loved the spirit of the risen Jesus
 who comes to bring life
 and to bring it more abundantly.
 Father Nota loved Love's Logos
 as a teacher even in dialogue
 he loved that word-breath mediatrix
 who in the beginning was the word
 and who became the word made flesh.

FATHER NOTA LOVED THE SPIRITUAL

As a youth, he looked into the faces
 of those who suffered and were in affliction
 and he was called to respond and to care.
 Father Nota loved his parents
 who nourished him to hear the call.
 He loved his family and relatives
 who encouraged him to respond to that call.
 He loved the lives of the saints
 who enabled him to follow his ideal.
 He loved the Holy Spirit
 who through each of them
 moved him in a vision as it were
 to follow the dreams of his youth.

For over fifty years Father Nota loved
 by being each day faithful to his call.
 He was faithful as a *Sacerdos Dei*
 set aside by discipline and anointment
 to offer sacrifice at the table of *Agape*.
 He was set aside as a sacred sign
 that we might each be reminded
 to make holy the so-called profane.

He was set aside as an anointed priest
to administer each of the sacraments
that the grace of God might come
to each of us in our needs.

He was set aside in the inner sanctuary
to attend to the *mysterium tremendum*
that he might mediate our tremors thence
and the blessings of that mystery hence.

He was faithful as a man of prayer
reciting each day the divine office
of *Matins, Lauds, Prime and Terce*
of *Sext, None, Vespers* and *Compline*.
In thus reciting the one hundred and fifty psalms
each and every week of his last fifty-three years
he became a vessel of the Holy Spirit
so that that Holy Spirit through him
could sing the divine praises
could implore the divine mercy
could offer the divine thanksgiving
could petition the divine assistance
for the Lord sits enthroned
upon the praises of his people
and it was Father Nota's sacred task
to begin each new day
with the intoning of those praises.

He was faithful as a child of our Lady
for throughout each day of his life
he meditated upon her joyful mysteries
lived with her son the sorrowful mysteries
prayed for his flock the glorious mysteries.
every day many, many times
he prayed those words
"Pray for us sinners
now and at the hour of our death."
I am sure she did pray for him
at the hour of his death.
And I am sure he was glad to have lived
the last years of his life
in this Holy Rosary Parish.

He was faithful each day
as a member of the Society of Jesus
for he always lived with:
the discipline of the soldier,

the energy of the missionary,
 the carefulness of the scholar,
 the probing prudence of the sage.
 He made his forty day retreat
 in meditation on the passion of Jesus
 and that meditation permeated
 all the rest of his relations.
 He was always very proud
 to be a part of that company
 of Loyola, Xavier and the Blackrobes,
 of Berchmans, Arupe and his own student
 who became the recent general of the society.

FATHER NOTA LOVED THE INTELLECTUAL

Father Nota'g a priest
 and his being a philosopher
 went hand in hand
 for he always thought that
 the love of wisdom
 and the wisdom of love
 were intimately connected with
 the love of God
 and the God of love.

Father Nota had a very exciting intellectual life
 perhaps, first of all, because he was a Dutchman.
 as a Dutchman he was a fine linguist
 who knew not only Dutch, Latin and Greek
 but also French, German and English.
 Thus he was alive in a very special way
 to the various cultural viewpoints of
 the intellectual centers of 20th century Europe.
 Holland was a Protestant country
 with a Catholic minority
 which, however, under the pressure
 of the two great wars
 came to co-operate with the majority
 and to respect many Protestant ways.
 Thus Dutch Catholicism became *avant-garde*
 in a way that others had to follow.
 The Dutch also developed a good system
 of social welfare by learning from
 especially the mistakes of their neighbors.
 And so, Father Nota had speaking within him
 these special Dutch voices with all

of their cultural, religious and social concerns.

Father Nota had a very exciting intellectual life also because he was a Dutch Catholic.

The Dutch church perhaps more than any other blazed the trail toward Vatican two.

Schillebeeks, was undoubtedly one of the council's leading theologians.

Cardinal Willibrands was undoubtedly one of the council's most outspoken churchmen.

Dutch Catholic Franciscans, Dominicans,

Holy Ghost Fathers and Carmelites

were going to and fro

to every part of the globe

especially to where Dutch colonies had been.

Father Nota was a part of all that ferment.

Father Nota had a very exciting intellectual life because he was a Dutch, Catholic Jesuit.

His very close friends were with the liberation theologians of South and Central America.

His very close friends were debating the issues of the second Vatican council.

His very close friends were bringing existential and phenomenological philosophy

first of all to Duquesne and then to the twenty-eight North American Jesuit universities.

He was one of those who first came as a kind of existential missionary to the philosophy departments of the fifties.

His confrere was Teilhard de Chardin.

His confrere was Bernard Lonergan.

His confreres were the Rahner brothers.

All of that was mixing and creating

in his Dutch Jesuit mind.

Father Nota had a very exciting intellectual life because he was a Dutch, Catholic, Jesuit philosopher.

He always loved the Greeks

and even more the passionate Augustine.

He knew well Descartes who had been trained by the Jesuits at La Fleche.

He knew the philosophy that went on on the other side of the Rhine.

But first of all he was trained

in the philosophy of St. Thomas
 and especially the new St. Thomas
 of the Gilson and the Louvain debates.
 His fellow Jesuits were new Thomists
 who emphasized the power of conatural knowledge.
 But most of all he was a specialist
 in phenomenology and existential philosophy.
 He read and worked on and taught
 and wrote on and published on the thought of
 Max Scheler, Gabriel Marcel and Edith Stein.
 Father Nota had a penchant for
 Various philosophies of the I-thou relation.
 These philosophers each valued the mix
 Of the saint and the sage.
 That was Father Nota's special love.

FATHER NOTA LOVED THE VITAL

When Max Scheler exemplified the four levels
 of the classical value hierarchy
 he saw saints such as the Buddha and St. Francis
 as embodying the realm of the spiritual.
 He saw geniuses such as Socrates and Goethe
 as embodying the realm of the intellectual.
 He saw heroes such as William Tell
 and Abraham Lincoln as embodying the vital.
 Father Nota loved the heroes and the heroic
 As well as the saints and the geniuses.

As a Hollander, Father Nota was
Klein Maar Daaper. For the Netherlanders
 take pride in being, "Small but brave".
 As a Frieslander, Father Nota had the spirit
 that stood up to the ocean with Dikes
 and made land out of the sea.
 As a son of Scaveningen he knew
 the Panorama of Mesdaag
 that painting of heroic proportion.

As a tennis player and a fan of sport
 Father Nota loved the flash of animal spirit
 and the burst of adrenalin that rises up
 to strive at the competitive edge.
 He loved the great soccer teams and games.
 He loved basketball and especially
 the team of Chicago's Loyola in '62

and when they won it all in '63.
 He loved the great tennis matches
 between Borg, Connors, MacInroe and Lendle.
 During the last two months of his life
 at the age of eighty-two he was delighted
 that the eighteen year-old Jerome joined his group
 and brought his tennis to that competitive edge.
 Just two weeks ago he said:
 "In some ways I think
 I am playing better than I ever did."
 And he played his heart out
 right down to the end
 just two days before he died.

Father Nota loved the vitality of North America.
 He loved Pittsburg, San Francisco and Chicago.
 He loved St. Catharines, Omaha and Thorold.
 In each of those cities he performed his sacred tasks.
 He did his philosophical reading and writing.
 He taught his students and tended his flock.
 In each of those cities he built up
 his network of friends and dear ones.
 As he life went on his litany of loved ones
 became longer and more deeply habitual.
 He was like a Confucionist sage
 praying for his ancestors and his family
 and all of his students and spiritual children.
 That was where vitality was for him.
 It was between him and each person he knew.

FATHER NOTA LOVED THE PHYSICAL

According to Scheler the embodiment of those
 who love the realm of physical value
 is the artist of pleasure or the Epicurean.
 It is only when we get down to the physical
 That we can be complete about the real Father Nota
 as each of us knew and experienced him.
 It was in wrestling with the flaws of his physicality
 that Father Nota became an artist of pleasure
 or one striving for a disciplined love of the physical.
 Father Nota in his physicality was a mixture of opposites.
 He could be as gentle as a lamb or as lethal as a tiger.
 He could become very impatient very quickly.
 Like St. Paul he had a certain thorn in the flesh.
 It had to do with his tongue which was

not always easily understood in this English world.
 It had to do with his ear which did not
 always catch the nuances of the other's message.
 These difficulties of communication oft triggered
 a shortness of temper and a brusque remark.
 But without this Father Nota
 would not have been one of us.

He believed that loving had to do
 with giving and taking
 as well as with forgiving and being forgiven.
 He could say he was sorry
 as quickly and sincerely as he could flare up.

It was perhaps because he learned
 to forgive his own flaws
 which must have bothered his oft
 that he could easily forgive us.
 I always felt very good with Father Nota
 because I believed that somehow
 he understood me and forgave me.
 I think that without his thorn in the flesh
 I perhaps would not have felt quite so affirmed.
 Father Nota was an artist of pleasure
 who could let even sinners take pleasure
 in being their own flawed and fallen self.
 His courage gave them the strength
 to persevere in patience even when they were
 receiving their terrible natural punishment
 or being afflicted by some mysterious evil.

And so, ladies and gentlemen,
 we are happy together here his morning
 because Father Nota give us a life
 that we can celebrate with Joy.
 And, Father Nota, it is your serve now.
 Pray for us now and at the hour of our death.
 Amen.

David Goicoechea, February 14, 1995