

The New Franciscans? New Monastic Appropriations of Saint Francis, 1990-2013¹

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In the 1990s, Rich Mullins was a household name in the burgeoning contemporary Christian music industry in America.² He was known especially for the praise song “Awesome God” that became a mainstay in evangelical worship.³ At the height of his music success, Mullins moved to the Navajo Reservation in New Mexico to teach music, not with evangelism in mind as much as his own self-formation: “People talk about me going out to the reservation to save the Navajos, but the opposite is what is happening,” he said, “I’m the one being saved by coming here.”⁴ Mullins successfully advocated for Compassion International, an evangelical relief organization, to work on Native American reservations.⁵ With a Quaker, Methodist, and Christian Church background, Mullins showed genuine openness to Catholicism, even enrolling in catechism, though ultimately choosing not to convert.⁶ His lyrics often emphasized the humanity of Jesus and the beauty of nature.⁷ To some observers, Mullins seemed something of an enigma, a humble and peculiar exception to the increasingly entertainment-oriented direction of the Christian music industry.⁸ His death in a traffic accident in 1997 led to an outpouring of grief and praise for the musician from many fans.⁹ He was, according to one commentator, “the most beloved troubadour in contemporary Christian music and probably came as close as anyone else in the field to being regarded as ‘a saint’.”¹⁰

Yet many of Mullins’ decisions were direct responses to the life of Saint Francis of Assisi.¹¹ Around the time of his high school graduation in

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1974, a young Mullins watched *Brother Sun, Sister Moon*, Franco Zeffirelli's film portraying a young, hippy-like Saint Francis of Assisi. The movie made a deep impression on Mullins. "I started to wonder," he reflected, "if maybe Saint Francis had found a more authentic faith, though he had found it so many years before."¹² Mullins later discussed following the example of Saint Francis with a friend known only as "Beaker." What would it look like, they wondered, to adopt the Franciscan values of simplicity, poverty and obedience while not being monks, let alone Catholics?¹³ Their answer was to form "The Kid Brothers of Saint Frank," a Protestant monastic experiment. They modified traditional Franciscan vows, interpreting chastity as selflessness and love of God, poverty as simplicity and stewardship, and obedience as submission to their own churches' traditions.¹⁴ Mullins and Beaker recruited three twenty-something students from Friends University to join the group. An accountant managed Mullins's music profits, and Mullins and the other Kid Brothers lived on an allowance that was then equivalent to a modest working wage.¹⁵ Mullins served as an overseer for the group, leading devotional times and, on occasion, making them all watch his favourite film, *Brother Sun, Sister Moon*.¹⁶ The group also wrote and recorded *The Canticle of the Plains*, a musical based on the life of Saint Francis, or "Frank," in the Old West, performed as a play at the evangelical Wheaton College.¹⁷

Mullins was not the first Christian musician to be attracted to Franciscan monasticism. Jesus movement folk artist John Michael Talbot's admiration for Saint Francis, for example, had led him to convert to Catholicism in the 1970s.¹⁸ But Mullins and his companions stayed within the evangelical Protestant world. These evangelical Franciscans sought to live a life of Christian discipleship by following in Francis's footsteps. For the Kid Brothers of Saint Frank, Saint Francis was not only seen as an inspiring and authentic Christian, but also served as a model for evangelical monasticism.

The Kid Brothers of Saint Frank anticipated a wave of attempts by other evangelicals to form neo-monastic communities inspired by the likes of the Desert Fathers and Mothers, the Benedictines and Franciscans alongside newer Catholic and evangelical movements. Many evangelicals who formed new monastic communities in the 1990s and 2000s appealed to Saint Francis as a quintessentially authentic Christian who provided historical justification for their critical community responses to dominant

evangelical church life and politics. These appropriations of Saint Francis of Assisi reflect increasing evangelical openness to Catholic ideas and figures, as well as changing conceptions among evangelicals of what constitutes true Christianity.¹⁹ This study examines writings, musical recordings, and video interviews of American, Canadian and British new monastic leaders and their responses to Saint Francis of Assisi.

American New Monasticism

On the cast of the Wheaton production of the “Canticle of the Plains” was a young Shane Claiborne.²⁰ In the mid-2000s, Claiborne became the popular face of the new monastic movement of young evangelicals forming communities in poor urban neighbourhoods. Communities such as Rutba House in Durham, North Carolina, and the Simple Way in Philadelphia served as models for a proliferation of similar groups.

Beginning in the 1990s, many young, usually white, evangelicals moved to form “intentional communities” among the urban poor.²¹ A 2004 conference of like-minded groups issued “12 Marks of A New Monasticism” – a list including relocation, economic sharing, racial reconciliation, peacemaking, environmental consciousness, and monastic-inspired community rule.²² While some older Catholic and Anabaptist organizations were part of the new monastic orbit, most were from an evangelical background.²³ These communities drew from a diverse number of modern inspirations including *Sojourners*, Tony Campolo and the older progressive evangelical movement, Dorothy Day and the Catholic Worker, John Perkins and the Christian Community Development Association, Mother Theresa and the Sisters of Charity, and Dietrich Bonhoeffer’s illegal seminary, among others.²⁴ They also interacted with contemporary evangelical movements such *Renovaré*, an organization promoting spiritual renewal through traditional Christian disciplines, and the then popular Emergent Church network.²⁵

Yet many of the most significant influences for these new monastics were ancient monks.²⁶ The editors of the “12 Marks” sought models for “radical discipleship” in “the best in the church’s long tradition.”²⁷ The authors contended that, “the church’s response to compromise and crisis has consistently been one of new monastic movements” – taken in a broad sense to include the Desert Fathers and Mothers fleeing imperial Christian-

ity, the early Anabaptists, underground slave churches in America, and, of course, Saint Francis. “In the midst of the Crusades,” the authors stated, “as religious violence raged, St. Francis rejected economic privilege and started a new monastic movement.”²⁸ New monasticism was an exercise in tradition retrieval and emulation of a select group of Christian saints.²⁹ “Could a new monasticism really be the hope of the Church in North America?” asked Jonathan Wilson-Hartgrove, a founder of Rutba House. “Is the Spirit calling us, as he called St. Francis, to ‘rebuild my church which is in ruins,’ by establishing outposts of God’s love in the abandoned places of empire?”³⁰

In America, in particular, new monasticism was also a movement built from opposition to war, nationalism, consumerism, and the powerful American religious right of the second Bush presidency.³¹ Their embrace of small, countercultural community was also directed against the evangelical baby boomer megachurches that had adopted large-scale, entertainment-driven church growth strategies.³² New monasticism was a movement of protest. The movement was widely covered by media. While its impact on young evangelicals was likely more in modest changes in behavior than in the creation of intentional communities, such new monastic communities continued emerged across the US, the UK, Canada, Australia and New Zealand, tripling between 2010 and 2015.³³

Saint Francis of Calcutta, Baghdad, and Wall Street

Dreadlocked and sporting baggy homemade clothes, Shane Claiborne brought the message of radical discipleship, peaceable resistance, relocation and community to evangelicals across America in the mid-2000s. He penned a bestselling book, *The Irresistible Revolution*. Claiborne made much of his former “Bible Belt” Tennessee evangelicalism, stating his rejection of the “Christian industrial complex ready to help with Christian music, bumper stickers, T-shirts, books, and even candy.”³⁴

Claiborne was a student at Eastern University in Philadelphia when he and other students befriended and advocated for local homeless families who were facing eviction in an abandoned Catholic church where they had taken refuge.³⁵ While they ultimately lost this fight, Claiborne likened their struggle to Saint Francis and his first companions in their effort to rebuild the church: “Now hundreds of years later, another bunch of young dreamers was leaving the Christianity that smothered them, to find God in

the abandoned places in the desert of the inner city.”³⁶ These restless young evangelicals moving to be with the poor were, for Claiborne, the new Desert Fathers and Mothers, Benedictines, and Franciscans.

As Claiborne recounts his pursuit of “looking for a Christian” who took discipleship seriously, in his words, “I kept coming across dead people – the desert fathers and mothers of the fifth century, Francis and Clare of Assisi, Dietrich Bonhoeffer, Martin Luther King, Jr., Oscar Romero” and Dorothy Day.³⁷ More contemporary inspirations, including Mother Teresa and Rich Mullins, whom Claiborne knew, served as living links to the faith of saints such as Francis, who embodied, for Claiborne, a radical, true Christianity.³⁸

Alongside Jonathan and Leah Wilson-Hartgrove, who went on to found Rutba House, Claiborne joined a delegation from Christian Peacemaker Teams to Iraq on the eve of the American invasion in 2003, where they witnessed the first American bombing of a hospital in the city of Rutba.³⁹ Claiborne’s team included a Franciscan priest, and discussion led naturally to Saint Francis:

We flashed back to another confusing time of conflict – 1219, during the Fifth Crusade. Christians and Muslims were slaughtering one another in the name of God. War had become a necessity and a habit. Centuries of church history, in which followers of the Way [an early term for Christianity] renounced their allegiance to the kingdom of the world and its kings, had been perverted by the seduction of gaining the whole world but losing our souls. And then Francis . . . had a vision of loving our enemies.⁴⁰

In Claiborne’s telling, Saint Francis marks a reconnection with the revolutionary and peaceable early church that had become compromised and institutionalized over time.⁴¹

In a later article, Claiborne called his readers’ attention to Francis – “one of the first critics of capitalism, one of the earliest Christian environmentalists, a sassy reformer of the Church and one of the classic conscientious objectors to war.”⁴² Claiborne highlights Francis’s connection of material possession with violence. “It does make you wonder if he’d be on Wall Street protesting today,” Claiborne claims, hearkening to the recent Occupy Wall Street protests.⁴³ Claiborne recounts the story of the visit to the Egyptian Sultan, placing it in the context of hate, war and

religious extremism. “We’ve seen Christian extremists burn the Quran,” Claiborne mourns, “blow up abortion clinics, bless bombs, baptize Wall Street and hold signs that say ‘God hates [gays].’ But Francis invites us to be extremists for grace, extremists for love.”⁴⁴ Claiborne proposes some responses to the life of Francis:

Maybe we can get rid of some of our stuff or spend some time with a homeless person. Maybe we can laugh at advertisements today that try to convince us that happiness can be purchased. Maybe we can hang out in the woods and spend some time with the lilies and the sparrows. Maybe we can take an enemy out for dinner.⁴⁵

Saint Francis is Claiborne’s ideal model for resisting violence, consumerism and economic injustice – a proto-activist of many causes, and a model for the life of radical discipleship in community.

The Bonhoefferian Francis

As new monastic intentional communities spread and became established in struggling neighbourhoods, some new monastics reflected on the meaning and example of Saint Francis for community life. North of the forty-ninth parallel, a Canadian Mennonite, Jamie Arpin-Ricci, leader of the aptly named Little Flowers intentional community in Winnipeg, published a book exploring the life of Saint Francis as a key to new monastic community called *The Cost of Community*. Alternating reflections on the Sermon on the Mount with stories and teachings of Saint Francis and the struggles of the Little Flowers community in Winnipeg, Arpin-Ricci portrayed Saint Francis as the model of truly committed Christian discipleship. “It was Francis’s commitment to live in solidarity with the poor as an expression of his allegiance to Christ that first led me to him,” Arpin-Ricci wrote, “And it was Francis’s radically embodied (if sometimes extreme) commitment to live the words of Jesus in the Sermon on the Mount that opened my eyes to the possibility of a way of life and faith that we had never considered before, one that promised the richest blessings but exacted the highest price.”⁴⁶ Just as the title of the book alludes to Bonhoeffer’s *The Cost of Discipleship*, it also resembles Bonhoeffer’s *Life Together*. Arpin-Ricci’s Francis is an example of costly discipleship and community. For Arpin-Ricci, as for Claiborne, Francis is

not an “unreachable holy man,” but a model for following Jesus in the contemporary world.⁴⁷

Francis was also something of a reformer. According to Arpin-Ricci, the medieval Church was “corrupted by power-mongering, greed and nepotism” and full of nominal Christians before Saint Francis and the early Franciscans showed the better way.⁴⁸ And for this Winnipeg intentional community, Saint Francis still showed the way. Arpin-Ricci is inspired by Francis’s simplicity as an alternative to greed;⁴⁹ the saint’s combination of gentleness, humility and love for the gospel in his visit to the Egyptian Sultan;⁵⁰ and Francis’s illumination of the path of asceticism without denigrating the value of the body.⁵¹ For Arpin-Ricci, Saint Francis illuminated the path of costly discipleship to Christ borne out in community with the poor.

New Friars

Scott Bessenecker, an InterVarsity Christian Fellowship staffer from Wisconsin, highlighted another side of the new monastic movement in his book *New Friars* (2006). Bessenecker showcased a group of young evangelicals who moved to urban slums around the world, taking vows of poverty and service. He differentiated these new friars from old monks and celibate ascetics with “unquestioned devotion to a hierarchical church structure.”⁵² While disappointed by his own encounters with actual Franciscan monks,⁵³ Bessenecker presented Francis and Clare as inspirations for service and love for the poor.⁵⁴ Bessenecker highlighted Francis’s emphasis on “the simple life of preaching and praying and caring for the poor.”⁵⁵ “Francis’s and Clare’s life,” he wrote, “[serves] as a picture of just how attractive downward mobility can be to the middle class and rich They wanted to en flesh the gospel to those at the bottom of the rubbish heap by stripping themselves of all worldly riches and seeking the endowment of spiritual wealth in its place.”⁵⁶ They were models for what Bessenecker called “incarnational” ministry.⁵⁷ He praised Francis’s and Clare’s poverty, mission and downward mobility.⁵⁸ For Bessenecker, they were saints for young middle-class Christians who wanted to follow God by serving the poor.⁵⁹

Abbots and Punks

Paralleling North American forms of new monasticism, a related movement began in 1999 in the UK that focused on communities of continual prayer. The 24/7 prayer movement, referencing the practice of community members praying in shifts over a twenty-four-hour period, came to coalesce around the idea of “Boiler rooms” – gathering places for prayer, community, and mission.⁶⁰ Inspired by accounts of the early church in Acts, Celtic monasticism, the Franciscans, and Dietrich Bonhoeffer, leaders in the 24/7 prayer movement sought to emulate monastic “alternative societies” of prayer in a “contemporary postmodern culture.”⁶¹ This more charismatic, evangelistic, and prayer-oriented wing of new monasticism became a significant inspiration for new monastic communities around the world.⁶²

Andy Freeman, so-called “Abbot” of the first Boiler Room in Reading, England, saw monastic movements as revolutionary and subversive in their original intent. In the aptly titled book *Punk Monk*, he wrote, “Nearly every monastic movement began as a violent reaction to compromised religion.”⁶³ Among these reformers of stale Christianity was Saint Francis, who “formed his Franciscan movement out of an increasing frustration with organized religion.”⁶⁴ Unlike Claiborne, however, Freeman and co-leader and co-author Peter Grieg were light on their critique of church and society, emphasizing instead the practice of communities of prayer, creativity, justice and mission, with stories of inspiration and miraculous events. Saint Francis and a cadre of ancient monastic groups inspired their community-based centres of prayer as guides to what these evangelicals saw as authentic Christian spirituality and mission.

Conclusion

For the Kid Brothers of Saint Frank and new monastic evangelicals, their discontent with popular evangelical faith and politics led them to seek “new” Christian heroes for faith in the contemporary world. Saint Francis provided such an example for community and justice, offering the possibility of connecting to what they perceived as true, authentic Christianity, by emulating the life Francis lived. While painting different pictures of the Saint’s life, new monastics saw Saint Francis as a guide to Christian faith and community in the contemporary world.

New monastic appropriations of Saint Francis reflect the declining hold of evangelical Protestant traditions on some young, educated evangelicals at the turn of the millennium, and even their rejection of many evangelical values. New monastics present their versions of Saint Francis in an increasingly fragmented evangelical world, invoking him to defend their religious and political protest. Yet the new monastic fascination with Saint Francis also reflected a larger change in what evangelicals more broadly value as true Christian faith, a move toward authenticity and holistic spirituality.⁶⁵ These changes within evangelical Protestantism coincided with changes in broader American culture. Sociologist Wade Clark Roof notes the rising interest beginning among baby boomer Americans in varieties of spiritual “holism” that embrace all of life rather than compartmentalize it in dualisms, as well as growing emphases on authentic personhood and language of experiential spirituality.⁶⁶ For many evangelicals in the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries, values of authenticity, experiential spirituality and discipleship superseded (or complemented) the centrality of older evangelical Protestant values of evangelism, belief, and traditional Protestant interpretations of scripture. These emerging evangelical values encouraged and informed the distinct evangelical new monastic appropriations of Saint Francis of Assisi.

Scholars have made much of the primitivist impulse in American religion, particularly among nineteenth-century groups such as the Mormons and restorationist “Christians.”⁶⁷ Timothy Weber extends the primitivist label to the Evangelical Orthodox Church of the 1980s in their attempt to connect with original New Testament Christianity.⁶⁸ Likewise, many new monastic evangelicals interested in Saint Francis linked his apparently authentic Christianity to a rediscovery or renewal of a purer age of Christian life undiluted by later corruption. Yet their primitivism was not like that of earlier restorationists who neglected Christian history for a direct application of the Bible; rather, these evangelicals saw themselves in continuity with Christian traditions before them and sought to reconnect with them. This traditionalist-primitivist tension among new monastics and other evangelicals is like the primitivism identified by Joel Carpenter among earlier twentieth-century fundamentalists: a qualified primitivism that saw the Protestant Reformation tradition as the restoration of the true church.⁶⁹ But for new monastic evangelicals, Saint Francis seemed to be elevated to a place above the Protestant reformers as truer to the spirit of early, “pure” Christianity.

This was a primitivism informed by a growing historicism and an attraction to an eclectic array of spirituality from throughout Christian history. Anything Christian was ripe for plunder including Roman Catholic figures such as Saint Francis, Saint Teresa of Avila, Oscar Romero, and Dorothy Day. These saints came alongside Protestant heroes such as Dietrich Bonhoeffer in a diverse collection of representatives of “true” Christianity.⁷⁰ In this eclecticism, new monastics were following the path opened by other evangelicals in the late twentieth century who selectively appropriated Catholic traditions. As early as the 1970s, evangelical proponents of classical Christian spirituality and tradition, such as Richard Foster, offered their fellow evangelicals a new cadre of heroes in some Catholic saints and mystics.⁷¹ By the early twenty-first century, this phenomenon became ubiquitous; from evangelical new monasticism to megachurch devotionals inspired by the rule of Saint Benedict, evangelicals openly plundered Catholic spirituality for what they found useful, or for what they thought might be lacking in their own evangelical traditions.⁷²

Does the new monastic impulse for appropriating Catholic spirituality signal a renewed collective interest in tradition, or does it reveal a selective cherry picking of Christianity’s greatest hits?⁷³ To an extent both are true. New monastics’ interpretation of Francis was individualist, selective, and Protestant. While Rich Mullins acknowledged Francis’s veneration of Mary and submission to church hierarchy, new monastic leaders tended to pass these by without comment. In their search for alternative models for Christianity, new monastic interpreters readily paralleled Francis’s age with the world of the early twenty-first century. Their appropriations served contemporary purposes, often at the expense of historical awareness.

Nevertheless, new monasticism also marked an attempt to forge community responses to perceived evangelical compromise.⁷⁴ In doing so, evangelical new monastics saw themselves in continuity with Christians of the past. New monastic communities were as decisive in their renunciation of the world and attempt to follow Francis’s example as any Franciscan third order. These evangelical Franciscans followed (their versions) of Saint Francis to a dramatic degree. Are these the new Franciscans?

Endnotes

1. This article is adapted from a chapter in Paul R. Foth, "The Born-Again Friar: American Evangelical Appropriations of Saint Francis of Assisi, 1972-2013" (Master of Theological Studies thesis, Trinity Western University, 2019).
2. Larry Eskridge, *God's Forever Family: The Jesus People Movement in America* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 268. Christian music comprised three percent of American music sales in 1999. Stephen D. Perry, and Arnold S. Wolfe, "Testifications: Fan Response to a Contemporary Christian Music Artist's Death," in *Religion and Popular Culture: Studies of the Interaction of Worldviews*, eds. Daniel A. Stout and Judith M. Buddenbaum (Ames, IA: Iowa State University Press, 2001), 251. Because of the genre's popularity, critics have called the 1990s the "golden age of Christian Music." Joel Heng Hartse, "A Peculiar Display," *Christianity Today*, November 2015, 74; Katelyn Beaty, "Holy Hip-Hop Grows Up: But I'm Still Grateful for CCM's Golden Era," *Christianity Today*, May 2013, 7.
3. Contemporary Christian music played a significant role in fostering and reflecting American evangelical identity. Mark Allan Powell effectively argues that the lyrics of these "popular theologians" reflected the political, social and religious mood of American evangelicals through the decades of the later twentieth century. Mark Allan Powell, "Contemporary Christian Music as a Window on Evangelical Piety," in *Evangelical Christians and Popular Culture: Pop Goes the Gospel Vol. 3*, ed. Robert H. Woods, Jr. (Santa Barbara: ABC-CLIO, 2013), 101. Surveying contemporary Christian music by decade, Powell notes an anti-institutional outlook during the Jesus People movement of the 1960s; an emphasis on positive feelings and sentimentality in the 1970s; triumphalism and militant imagery in the 1980s; and vulnerability and a conscious outsider status in the 1990s. Powell, "Contemporary Christian Music," 88-97.
4. James Bryan Smith, *Rich Mullins: A Devotional Biography: Arrow Pointing to Heaven*, rev. ed. (Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 2009), 117.
5. Smith, *Rich Mullins*, 116-17.
6. Thom Granger, "Hope to Carry On," *CCM Magazine*, May 1990. Popular Catholic writer Brennan Manning's emphasis on God's love had a particular impact on Mullins, leading him to name his band the Ragamuffin Band after Manning's book *The Ragamuffin Gospel*. Smith, *Rich Mullins*, 60.

7. For example, "Calling Out Your Name," is a reflection on the natural setting of the American Midwest, with prairies, buffalo and pheasants praising God. Rich Mullins, "Calling Out Your Name," on *The World As Best as I Remember It* vol. 1, Reunion Records, 1991. In "Homeless Man," recorded as a demo shortly before his death, Mullins sings "Birds have nests/foxes have dens/But the hope of the whole world rests on the shoulders of a homeless man." Rich Mullins and the Ragamuffin Band, "Homeless Man," on *The Jesus Record* disc one: The Jesus Demos, Myrrh Records, 1998.
8. Mullins' band mate Rick Elias claims that in the commercial Christian music scene of 1990s "the people that really had something to say were marginalized . . . except for Rich Mullins." Rick Elias interview, *Rich Mullins: A Ragamuffin's Legacy*, directed by David Leo Shultz (Color Green Films, 2014). Mullins' downward mobility and seeming disregard for the music industry raised eyebrows for some evangelicals who saw success as a means to ministry. "I wish he'd care more about his career," noted Ashley Cleveland, a Christian singer who toured with Mullins, "because here's one person who could reach a lot of people with the gospel." Lou Carlozo, "Christian Rocker Finds New Life in Desert," *Chicago Tribune*, 25 April 1996.
9. Stephen Perry and Arnold Wolf analyzed fan responses to the death of Mullins, with tributes reflecting life-changing inspiration, the effects of his music on personal conversion and ministry, and feelings of intimacy and connection with the artist. Perry and Wolf, "Testifications," 263.
10. Powell, *Encyclopedia of Contemporary Christian Music*, 614.
11. Smith, *Rich Mullins*, 54.
12. Jim Long, "The Dreamer and the Saint," *CCM Magazine*, July 1997.
13. Bob Michaels, "Canticle of the Plains World Premier," interview with Rich Mullins and Mitch McVicker, El Dorado-Wichita, Kansas Radio Station 99.1 FM, KTLL, 2 February 1997, <http://www.kidbrothers.net/words/interviews/ktli-feb0297-backup-copy.html>.
14. Carlozo, "Christian Rocker Finds New Life in the Desert"; Smith, *Rich Mullins*, 170.
15. Smith, *Rich Mullins*, 167-9.
16. Interview with Eric Hauck, *Rich Mullins*, dir. Shultz.
17. Kid Brothers of Saint Frank, *Canticle of the Plains*, Ragamuffin Records, 1997.

18. Powell, *Encyclopedia of Contemporary Christian Music*, 921.
19. Here “appropriation” does not connote a negative judgment, as in the case of insensitive cultural appropriation. Rather, it signifies the way evangelicals adopt Saint Francis and make him their own.
20. Shane Claiborne, *The Irresistible Revolution: Living as an Ordinary Radical* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2006), 96.
21. James S. Bielo, *Emerging Evangelicals: Faith, Modernity and the Desire for Authenticity* (New York: NYU Press, 2011), 33. According to *Christianity Today*'s Rob Moll, the term “intentional community” is shorn of the weird associations of Jesus movement communes. Rob Moll, “New Monasticism,” *Christianity Today*, September 2005, 39.
22. Rutba House, ed., *School(s) For Conversion: 12 Marks of a New Monasticism* (Eugene: Cascade Books, 2005), xii.
23. Wes Markofski, *New Monasticism and the Transformation of American Evangelicalism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015), 163.
24. Rutba House, ed, *School(s) For Conversion*, viii; Jonathan R. Wilson, “Introduction,” in Rutba House, *School(s) For Conversion*, 3; Charles Marsh, *The Beloved Community: How Faith Shapes Social Justice from the Civil Rights Movement to Today* (New York: Basic Books, 2005), 201. Markofski notes the deep similarities that new monastic communities share with the settlement house movement popularized by Jane Addams and Hull House in Chicago. That new monastic leaders do not cite this movement as an influence indicates, to Markofski, the entrenched fundamentalist liberal divide of the twentieth century where ideas did not cross the boundaries. Markofski, *New Monasticism*, 67-8. For an overview of the history of John Perkins' Calvary Ministries and the Christian Community Development Association, see Marsh, *The Beloved Community*, 153-8.
25. Rutba House, ed., *School(s) For Conversion*, viii. Many scholars have equated new monasticism with one branch of the emerging church. James Bielo claims that, “while all New Monastics are Emerging Evangelicals, not all Emerging Evangelicals are New Monastics.” Bielo, *Emerging Evangelicals*, 99. Marti and Ganiel claim that new monasticism “serves a sort of template for how people in the [emerging church] would like to live their lives, even if in actuality they do not. Gerardo Marti and Gladys Ganiel, *The Deconstructed Church: Understanding Emerging Christianity* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 149. Markofski challenges what he sees as an arbitrary grouping of the two. Both movements, according to Markofski, “have distinctive origins, movement leaders, institutional networks, position

takings, and trajectories as it relates to the evangelical field.” Markosfki’s offers this claim in a critique of Bielo’s “lived religion” approach to social analysis of emergent church. Markofski, *New Monasticism*, 76. Markofski also notes that emerging churches lack new monasticism’s social and political emphasis. Markofski, *New Monasticism*, 92. Accepting Markofski’s distinction, I contend that new monasticism and the emerging church are separate movements in origins and goals, but nevertheless share some characteristics and overlap in association. Shane Claiborne, for example, had clear connections with Emergent Village conferences and leaders. Marti and Ganiel, *The Deconstructed Church*, 220, n. 47.

26. Jon Stock, Tim Otto and Jonathan Wilson-Hartgrove, *Inhabiting the Church: Biblical Wisdom for a New Monasticism* (Eugene: Cascade Books, 2007).
27. Stock, et. al., *Inhabiting the Church*, ix.
28. Stock, et. al., *Inhabiting the Church*, ix.
29. James Bielo notes that New Monastics saw this tradition retrieval as a move toward authenticity, reconnecting with the authentic and early Christian past that had been corrupted over time. Bielo, *Emerging Evangelicals*, 99-100.
30. Jonathan Wilson-Hartgrove, *To Baghdad and Beyond: How I Got Born Again in Babylon* (Eugene: Cascade Books, 2005), 108.
31. Markosfki, *New Monasticism*, 28; and Rutba House, ed., *School(s) for Conversion*, ix-x.
32. Markoski writes “Neo-monastic evangelicals have constructed their holistic communitarian meaning system in an attempt to transcend what they perceive to be false antinomies and antagonisms – such as the antinomy between the spiritual and social gospel – inherited from the religious past.” But, Markosfki claims, they set up their own antagonisms, of authentic and small versus bureaucratic and large. Markofski, *New Monasticism*, 174. Shane Claiborne plays with his own evangelical identity, redefining the word evangelical based on purported ancient connotations of the gospel as the proclamation of Jesus’ kingship that challenges state power. Claiborne, *The Irresistible Revolution*, 23.
33. Young evangelicals inspired by new monasticism sought simplicity by downsizing, pooling resources, becoming debt free, dumpster diving, and intentionally resisting consumerism, and sought stability through commitments to stay in a neighbourhood, embrace community living, and practice regular prayer. Bielo, *Emerging Evangelicals*, 103-9, 116; and Markofski, *New Monasticism*, 15.

34. Claiborne, *The Irresistible Revolution*, 37, 39. James Bielo notes the role of “deconversion” stories emerging evangelicals tell, from pasts of conservative evangelical subculture. Bielo includes Claiborne among emerging church leaders. Bielo, *Emerging Evangelicals*, 31, 44-6.
35. Marsh, *The Beloved Community*, 201.
36. Claiborne, *The Irresistible Revolution*, 65.
37. Claiborne, *The Irresistible Revolution*, 72.
38. Claiborne, *The Irresistible Revolution*, 98.
39. For a detailed account, see Hartgrove, *To Baghdad and Beyond*. This event was memorialized in the name of the Hartgrove’s intentional community. Christian Peacemaker Teams (CPT) was formed in response to Ron Sider’s 1984 address to the Mennonite World Conference in Strasbourg, France, where Sider chastened Mennonites for their “isolationist pacifism,” calling them instead to a “costly pacifism” of creatively offering their lives in non-violent witnesses to peace on behalf of the oppressed. CPT soon began sending delegations to places of conflict around the world. Ronald J. Sider, “God’s People Reconciling,” Christian Peacemaker Teams, <https://www.cpt.org/resources/writings/sider>.
40. Claiborne, *The Irresistible Revolution*, 274.
41. James Bielo notes the new monastic assumption of church corruption over time. This narrative “could easily be read as a species of the broader eschatological impulse among Protestants.” Bielo, *Emerging Evangelicals*, 100. More than that, Protestantism at its foundation was premised on the idea that the church was compromised. Claiborne’s view of church history is not unique among many evangelicals, except in his Anabaptist-like emphasis on peace.
42. Shane Claiborne, “Praying with Francis, the Radical Christian Peacemaker,” The Blog, *Huffington Post*, 3 October 2011, https://www.huffingtonpost.com/shane-claiborne/st-francis-radical-christian-peace_b_992545.html.
43. Claiborne, “Praying with Francis.”
44. Claiborne, “Praying with Francis.”
45. Claiborne, “Praying with Francis.”
46. Jamie Arpin-Ricci, *The Cost of Community: Jesus, St. Francis and Life in the Kingdom* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 2011), 16.

47. Arpin-Ricci, *The Cost of Community*, 219.
48. Arpin-Ricci, *The Cost of Community*, 19.
49. Arpin-Ricci, *The Cost of Community*, 17.
50. Arpin-Ricci, *The Cost of Community*, 62-3.
51. Arpin-Ricci, *The Cost of Community*, 68.
52. Bessenecker, *The New Friars*, 26.
53. Bessenecker, *The New Friars*, 14.
54. Bessenecker, *The New Friars*, 70-3. Bessenecker also includes Brigid of Kildare and St. Patrick alongside early Nestorian missionaries as other historical models for new friars. Bessenecker, *New Friars*, 99-105, 129-33.
55. Bessenecker, *The New Friars*, 72.
56. Bessenecker, *The New Friars*, 73.
57. Bessenecker, *The New Friars*, 83.
58. According to Kenneth Stewart, "It is not monastic dress, communal life, or styles of devotion that fires the imagination of [Bessenecker], but the model of a voluntary, celibate, impassioned ministry to the poorest and neediest that he sees displayed in the careers of Francis of Assisi . . . Bartolomé de las Casas . . . and Mother Teresa." To Stewart, this is a romanticized version of monasticism. Kenneth Stewart, *In Search of Ancient Roots: The Christian Past and the Evangelical Identity Crisis* (Downers Grove: IVP Academic, 2017), 177, 183.
59. Francis and Clare even provide inspiration for navigating parental conflicts. Like Francis and Clare, young Christians who want to live the life of gospel poverty will have difficulties communicating what they are doing with their families. Bessenecker, *The New Friars*, 81.
60. The 24/7 prayer movement arising out of the UK began concurrently, though was not directly related to, a similar movement from Kansas City neo-charismatic centre the International House of Prayer. See Pete Greig and Dave Roberts, *Red Moon Rising: Rediscover the Power of Prayer* (Colorado Spring: David C. Cook, 2015), 174-5.
61. Andy Freeman and Peter Grieg, *Punk Monk: New Monasticism and the Ancient Art of Breathing* (Ventura: Regal, 2007), 16-18.

62. Over half of the boiler room communities are in the United States. Markofski, *New Monasticism*, 91.
63. Freeman and Grieg, *Punk Monk*, 37.
64. Freeman and Grieg, *Punk Monk*, 39.
65. Evangelical new monastic appropriations of Saint Francis of Assisi also bear the clear influence of earlier evangelical interpretations of the saint from politically progressive evangelical leaders such as Jim Wallis and Tony Campolo, both of whom Claiborne knew. See Foth, "The Born-again Friar," 61-8.
66. Wade Clark Roof, *A Generation of Seekers: The Spiritual Journeys of the Baby Boom Generation* (San Francisco: Harper San Francisco, 1993), 76; Wade Clark Roof, *Spiritual Marketplace: Baby Boomers and the Remaking of American Religion* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1999), 7.
67. See Richard T. Hughes, ed., *The American Quest for the Primitivist Church* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1998); and Richard T. Hughes and Crawford Leonard Allen, *Illusions of Innocence: Protestant Primitivism in America, 1630-1875* (Abilene: Abilene Christian University Press, 2008).
68. Timothy Weber claims that the creation of the Evangelical Orthodox Church and their move to the Antiochene Orthodox Church in the 1980s and 1990s reflects not only a growing historicism present in parts of evangelicalism, but also a primitivist tendency to seek a direct link to the New Testament church. Weber, "Looking for Home: Evangelical Orthodoxy and the Search for the Original Church," in *New Perspectives on Historical Theology: Essays in Memory of John Meyendorff*, ed. Bradley Nassif (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1996), 105.
69. Joel Carpenter, "Contending for the Faith Once Delivered: Primitivist Impulses in American Fundamentalism," in *The American Quest for the Primitive Church*, 101.
70. Dietrich Bonhoeffer's idea of costly, committed discipleship came to be a framework many evangelicals adopt when interpreting saints and heroes of the Christian past. See Foth, "The Born-Again Friar," 140. The allusion of Bonhoeffer's *The Cost of Discipleship* in the title of Arpin-Ricci's *The Cost of Community* is a clear indication of this association being extended to Saint Francis.
71. See Foth, "The Born-again Friar," 34-46.

72. Peter Scazzero, *Daily Office: Remembering God's Presence Throughout the Day* (Barrington: Willow Creek Association, 2008); the book was later expanded in Peter Scazzero, *Emotionally Healthy Spirituality Day by Day: A 40-Day Journey with the Daily Office* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2014); See also Stewart, *In Search of Ancient Roots*, 11-12.
73. Molly Worthen claims emergent and new monastic evangelical interest in pre-Reformation Christian traditions and practices is selective and individualist, and sometimes charged with no small hint of rebellion toward earlier generations of evangelicals. Worthen states, "Worshippers may join in medieval chants and patristic prayers, but church history serves as a resource, a liturgical larder, rather than a tradition to which today's believers must conform." Molly Worthen, *Apostles of Reason: The Crisis of Authority in American Evangelicalism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), 256-7.
74. Wes Markosfki claims new monastics formulated a "holistic communitarian perspective of religion and politics" as an alternative to the individualism of other evangelicals. Markofski, *New Monasticism*, 31.