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EX CATHEDRA.....J. Brian Benestad

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Scholarship Inspired by the Holy Spirit,
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Reminder: Membership dues will be mailed out the first of the year and are based on a calendar (not academic) year.

PRESIDENT'S LETTER

Dean Bernard Dobranski, President of the Fellowship of Catholic Scholars, is on a medical leave of absence from his position at Ave Maria School of Law and has asked Reverend Michael P. Orsi, Chaplain and Research Fellow in Law and Religion at Ave Maria School of Law, to write this column on his behalf.

Over the past months the media has been fixated on the sermons of Barack Obama's former pastor, the Reverend Jeremiah Wright, Jr. Wright's inflammatory words damning America and praising Nation of Islam leader Louis Farrakhan, as well as his bizarre remarks about black brains being different from white brains and accusations that the U.S. government invented the HIV virus to commit genocide against people of color have prompted widespread anger.

Undoubtedly, Wright has inflicted harm on Obama's campaign by exacerbating the racial tensions which the Illinois senator had attempted to transcend. And while there's no crystal ball to predict what future damage may flow from such intemperate remarks, this sad episode has demonstrated one essential fact: the extraordinary power of preaching. At the same time, falling as it did in close proximity to the papal visit, Wright's eccentric sermonizing presented some stark and edifying contrasts in style and content with the approach of Pope Benedict XVI.

Consider Benedict's closing words at the welcoming ceremony on the South Lawn of the White House. "[It is] my joy to be in your midst," the Holy Father said, "and my fervent prayer is that Almighty God will confirm this nation and its people in the ways of justice, prosperity and peace. God bless America!" In his address to the United Nations General Assembly the Pope noted the 60th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, reflecting on the dignity of each human person. "This document was the outcome of a convergence of different religious and cultural traditions," he told the assembled delegates, "all of them motivated by the common desire to place the human person at the heart of institutions." He reminded his listeners that human rights have their source in our common origin—God—and so cannot be denied "in the name of cultural, political, social and even religious outlooks."

Even when they don't have the dramatic effect of Rev. Wright's presentations or command the international attention of a papal pronouncement, the impact of a preacher's words can extend far beyond the moment in which they are delivered. A sermon is a powerful tool, with consequences that can be both temporal and eternal. So preaching must always reflect God, who is love and truth.

A good sermon rests on God's love for all peoples and the dignity of persons, who are, after all, made in His image. It brings people together. A pastor must exhort all humans to unity in achieving the common good — that unity which is Christ's clearly expressed intention. To not do so betrays the Gospel, drains the issues being addressed of their substance, and throws any solutions presented into question (indeed, by detaching them from the will of God, as known through Scripture, they may become downright destructive). This is true whether the context is traditional Catholic moral theology, the African-American liberation preachings of Rev. Wright, or anything else.

The words of St. Paul to “preach the truth in love” should guide a pastor's exhortations, whether they be ethical, moral or political. With that precept in mind, a preacher can deal with issues of race, social justice, sexual behavior, anything that is part of the human condition. In fact, when preachers avoid such subjects they leave unchallenged the sinfulness and disharmony that lead to a diminution of persons and a deterioration of peace.

Say what you will about the rhetorical style of Rev. Wright, he leaves little unchallenged, and perhaps there's a lesson in that for Catholic preaching. When was the last time you heard a good stem-winding homily on abortion, or parental notification about public-school sex education, or legal protections for the unique status of marriage, or any topic with political implications? For too long our priests have been subjected to an atmosphere of intimidation. In particular, they've been made to feel frightened by the threat of the IRS taking away the Church's tax-exempt status if clergy should make too public a stand on controversial issues or efforts to rally the faithful begin to look like lobbying. This intimidation has been effective, but the reality of that danger is way overblown.

Tax-exempt status is placed in jeopardy by *partisanship*, not advocacy. The current governing statute was enacted by Congress in 1954 to prevent chari-

table organizations (those designated as tax-exempt under section 501(c)(3) of the U.S. Tax Code) from campaigning for specific parties or candidates and thus creating the situation of an indirect government political subsidy by virtue of their tax-exempt status. However, because of the fear of crossing the line separating church and state, the IRS has always stepped lightly on any perceived violations of this restriction.

For example, in the 2004 election, over 40 complaints were filed against churches for backing or opposing particular candidates. While the allegations were substantiated in all but three cases, not a single house of worship saw its tax-exempt status revoked. Instead, according to a report in *USA Today* (1/29/07), the IRS issued advisories, warning citations that carry no punishment, or assessed excise taxes, the equivalent of light fines, on the offending churches. As a matter of fact, there is only one recorded revocation of a church's charitable designation. That happened before the 1992 presidential election, when as noted by the *Los Angeles Times* (11/7/05), a church in Binghamton, New York, ran an ad opposing the candidacy of Bill Clinton.

Any preacher should be comforted by Our Lord's words, “Be not afraid.” No priest need take an overly cautious approach to speaking on social issues or hesitate to hold politicians (especially Catholic politicians) accountable for positions that contradict Church teaching. Especially when politics impinges on the values of the Gospel, priests have an obligation to speak with the Church's prophetic voice, never ceding its expertise or authority in all areas of human need.

Keeping in mind the need for love and unity, I urge the members of our Fellowship to encourage their pastors to fearlessly proclaim the truth of the Gospel by getting involved in the many issues confronting our nation in the 2008 presidential election. Christianity was never meant to be a separatist sect. We are called to be, in the words of Vatican II's *Gaudium et Spes*, “leaven in the dough” of society.

In being so, we will transform the world. ✠

Emile Zola: *Improbable Defender of Life*

by Mary Shivanandan

Abstract

The subject of this paper is a novel by one of France's most esteemed novelists, Emile Zola. It was written and published in the last two years of the nineteenth century and never re-published. The novel bears the title *Fécondité*, in English *Fertility*. It is extraordinary because of who the author was, on the one hand, and his radical endorsement of a pro-life philosophy on the other, at a time when fellow novelists and social reformers accepted as inevitable or actively promoted small families, contraception, and population control. The paper will proceed by first giving some background on Emile Zola, especially his views on the Catholic Church and science. It will then take up his notion of "salvation through love" and its relation to the family and procreation. These set the stage for a discussion of his ideas on life, love, and the population question in the novel *Fécondité* or *Fruitfulness*.

Who was Emile Zola?

Born in 1840, Emile Zola spent his early life in and around Aix-en-Provence. His father, an Italian engineer, died when he was seven, leaving him and his mother in difficult circumstances. At the age of eighteen he went to Paris, initially working in a Customs House. After enduring a period of great poverty, a benefactor secured for him a position at the bookstore Hatchettes. It gave him the opportunity to begin the literary career he craved. There are two aspects of his character to which I particularly want to draw attention, his ambivalent attitudes toward Catholicism and toward contemporary science. Baptized a Catholic, Zola grew up to be an enemy of the Catholic Church. Yet his opposition was not total. One might

say that it was more of a love/hate relationship, with hate predominating at the end of his life.

In his trilogy *Lourdes*, *Rome*, and *Paris* Zola came to grips with his attitude toward Catholicism.¹ His visits to Lourdes were the turning point, for he declared himself disgusted with what he saw as the financial greed of the clerics in charge, but it was in his novel *Rome* that his ambivalence toward the Church became most evident. His own views are expressed mainly through the character Abbé Pierre Fremont:

We Frenchmen whose education is so full of the Catholic spirit, even in these days of universal doubt, we can never think of Rome otherwise than as the old Rome of the Popes.²

France is the only great Catholic country which has yet remained erect and sovereign, the only one on which the papacy can some day lean.... Apart from France there can be no salvation for the Church.³

Abbé Fremont speaks of his "dream of resuscitating a Christian and evangelical Rome, which should assure the happiness of the world." His visit to Rome to gain acceptance for his book on a "new religion" (which the Abbé envisioned as a return to primitive Christianity) ended in disillusion when it was put on the index of forbidden books. In real life, Zola did seek an audience with Pope Leo XIII, with whom he shared many concerns for the new industrial poor, but the request was denied since his own books were already on the index.⁴

The Dreyfus Affair finally tipped the balance to his total rejection of Christianity, and especially of Roman Catholicism. The failure of a Catholic bank aroused anti-Semitic feeling, particularly among Catholic royalists, and a Jewish officer in the army was falsely accused of betraying military secrets. When Zola learned the truth, he wrote a now famous letter (*J'accuse*) to expose the scandal. Zola had to flee to England to escape prosecution. From then on he was an implacable enemy of the Catholic Church.⁵

Zola's hatred of the Church as well as his atheism endeared him to the secular intellectual elite, who

have continued to claim him as one of their own, even today. His atheism was part and parcel of his commitment to contemporary faith in science and evolution as *the* explanation for things and *the* path to freedom and well-being for the human race. Yet here too he expressed great ambivalence. On reading Pascal's *Pensées*, he wrote:

I have been frightened by my own lack of beliefs; [Pascal] has given me cold sweats when he has shown me the horrors of doubt and yet I would not have traded my shivers for the shivers of his faith. Pascal proves my own misery to me without convincing me that I should share his. I remain myself although my soul bleeds.⁶

Zola's biographer Marc Bernard conjectures that his supreme confidence concealed great doubt.⁷ Vizetelly notes that he had an "unreasoning fear of death." He would wake up at night, spring out of bed and "remain for a moment in a state of indescribable fright."⁸ Rejecting the supernatural, he was a thorough-going materialist. In 1885 he outlined his philosophy of life:

My role has been to put man back in his place in the world, like a product of the earth still subject to all the influences of the milieu; and in man himself, I have put the brain back in its proper place among the organs, for I do not believe that thought is anything other than a function of matter.⁹

Both these strands of Zola's character, the Catholic and secular humanist, are important in assessing the contribution of his book *Fécondité* to the ongoing debate on sexuality and procreation.

Zola's commitment to reason must also be taken into account, especially in his contrast between faith and reason. In *Lourdes*, Abbé Pierre acknowledges that the multitude need faith, but that he prefers to take the "heroic path of reason." He repeats this affirmation in *Rome*: "Having lost his faith, and even his hope of utilizing old Catholicism for social and moral salvation, there only remained reason that held him up."¹⁰ "Ah! Reason, ...he would now always seek to satisfy her, even if in doing so he should lose his happiness."¹¹ In the novel *Lourdes* Zola, speaking through the character of Abbé Pierre, finally rejects what he calls "simple childlike faith" for reason:

It was reason...whose continual revolt at the Grotto, at the Basilica, throughout entire Lourdes had prevented him from believing. He had been unable to kill reason and humiliate himself. Reason remained his sovereign mistress, and she it was who buoyed him up even amidst the obscurities and failures of science.¹²

Science

Initially Zola had an almost religious faith in science, particularly the science of heredity. He has Dr. Pascal, his alter ego, confess that he was "determined, at any cost...to wring from science an absolute assurance that mankind could be made over in a better finer mould."¹³ Zola dreamed of integrating literature and science. He reserved a special place for poets in the advancement of science: "They often discover virgin territory and point the way to future investigations," he wrote. He sought in the novel a precision equal to that of scientists since he saw the novelist pursuing the same goal as the scientist, to grasp reality.¹⁴ Drawn to large subjects, caught up in the excitement of the day for science and scientific theories, he aspired to remake humanity on scientific principles.¹⁵ The passion for truth that he discerned at the heart of the scientific endeavor led him to write what he called the "experimental" novel.¹⁶ His major series, the *Rougon-Macquart*, which relates the fortunes of five generations of a French family at the time of the Second Empire, affords him the opportunity to examine every aspect of contemporary society.¹⁷ He exposes in graphic detail all the evils, including addiction, adultery in the middle class, and the appalling conditions of the new industrial proletariat.¹⁸ Frequently accused of pornography, he tries to expose all in order to heal all.¹⁹ He refers to his method as naturalism or realism.²⁰ For our purposes, his adoption of the experimental novel is important because the facts that he presents in his novels are based on personal observation, extensive research of written documents, lengthy conversations with those familiar with his subject, and liberal use of the notes written at the time.²¹ This culminates in an exhaustive phenomenological approach to all that presents itself to him.

Initially Zola's faith in the science of heredity took the place of religion as an explanation for the origin of man and for the nature of good and evil.²² Through Dr. Pascal he exclaims: "What an immense fresco to paint,

what masterpieces of human comedy and tragedy to write, on the subject of heredity, which is the very genesis of families, society and the world.”²³ Until his writing of *Dr. Pascal* (loosely based on his own life) Zola maintained an absolute belief in the all-encompassing efficacy of the science of heredity to explain all in order to cure all, but then a significant event occurred in his personal life.

Zola had a huge appetite for life, but until the age of 48 he lived in a strictly monogamous but childless marriage.²⁴ He passionately desired children. Becoming infatuated with a young seamstress, he fathered two children by her.²⁵ Recounted fictionally in *Doctor Pascal*, this event was instrumental in changing the focus of his work from the simple exposure of evil in the human condition to the proposal of remedies. The last novel of the Rolugon–Macquarts series is generally recognized as a turning point from the phenomenologically descriptive novel to the “prophetic.” It is also a turning point in another critical aspect. He began to express ambivalence on the efficacy of the theory of atavism as a way to explain everything and to have science alone produce happiness.²⁶ At the end of the novel, Dr. Pascal explains why he has given up his medical practice:

He abhorred empiricism.... Methods of treatment and remedies varied according to the theories of the moment; how many people must have been killed by methods that were now discredited? His clinical instinct was all that a doctor had to rely on; if he cured his patients it was because he had a gift of intuitive diagnosis, but he was merely groping and his successes were due as much to luck as to his own ability.²⁷

Nevertheless he continued to believe that, although theories may change every twenty years, “the acquired truths remained unshakeable, the foundation on which science continued to build.”²⁸ That foundation was evolution, but he began to see man’s relationship to evolution and nature in a different light—not as matter and process to be manipulated, but as something to be respected and nurtured. He also recognized the limits of science and he found a place for the unknown beyond. Dr. Pascal confesses to Clotilde, the niece with whom he falls in love in the novel:

I am full of doubts, I tremble at the idea of my twentieth-century alchemy. I am beginning to think

that it would be better and far wiser to allow evolution to go its own way.²⁹

Don’t you understand that to want to cure everything, regenerate everything, is a false ambition, inspired by our own egoism, a rebellion against life, which we declare to be evil, because our judgment is falsified by self-interest? I am convinced that I am more serene, that my vision covers a wider field, that my brain works better, since I have learned to respect evolution.³⁰

For Zola, respecting evolution was equivalent to respecting nature as a given. He was a firm believer that the only knowledge of the world comes through the senses. Our senses are indeed fallible. So, while it is possible that the world does not exist, this would be the “way of madness,” which he utterly rejects. “Can’t you see,” he asks Clotilde, “if you abolish nature, any form of order becomes impossible, that the only reason for living is to love life, to love it, to concentrate all the forces of our intelligence on arriving at a better understanding of it?”³¹

It is not coincidental that the last word in the novel is given to Clotilde after Pascal’s death. Dr. Pascal had cured her of the “delusion of religion,”³² but not of a belief in “the eternal question of the beyond.” Zola sees everything fused in her. He writes:

At this turning point in history, super-saturated with science, distressed at the havoc it had wrought, apprehensive at the approach of the new century, terrified of advancing further and intent on retreating into the past, she represented a happy mean, a passion for truth complemented by a concern for the unknown. Whilst the sectarian scientist, solely preoccupied with phenomena, barred the horizon, it was given to a simple creature like herself to strike an even balance between what she did not know and what she would never know.³³

Salvation through Love

When Clotilde leaves him, Pascal tries to drown his pain in work but fails. He cries out: “Was he whose existence had been devoured by incessant scientific labors, who considered work the mainspring of life, to be forced to come to the conclusion that to love and

to be loved was more important than anything else in the world?”³⁴ From now on Zola’s novels will be taken up with the theme of salvation through human love as well as with his perennial interest in the nature of truth and work. The two major and final series of novels that he composed after *Doctor Pascal* are occupied with these themes. Love of life and love as he understood it became the supreme value in his work.³⁵ Curiously his biographers only allude to this in passing, dismissively characterizing these works as “prophetic.”³⁶

Pascal refers to his “boundless faith in life.”³⁷ He speaks of the five branches of the Rougon-Macquart family tree as “filled with life, eternal life.”³⁸ Life with all its evil is to be celebrated:

Those who believe in God should say to themselves that, if God does not strike down the wicked, it is because he sees creation as a whole, and does not descend to the particular.... It is impossible to avoid admiring the courage and indefatigability of mankind; and the love of life is stronger than anything.³⁹ Essentially, Doctor Pascal’s only faith was his faith in life. Life was the unique manifestation of the divine. Life was God, the great motive power, the soul of the universe.⁴⁰

Salvation through life and love was to be the core of the “new religion.” When in the novel *Rome* Abbé Pierre’s book is rejected, he exclaims: “Oh! I cannot resign myself, my hope of salvation by the practice of love cannot die, and I shall answer my denouncers in a new book, in which I shall tell in what new soil the new religion will grow up.”⁴¹ It seems that the love that he intends is of two kinds, a universal love for the poor and the passionate love between husband and wife. The first is referred to in the novel *Rome* where Abbé speaks of “a Christian love for the lowly and the wretched.”⁴² It is the second that concerns us and relates particularly to the novel *Fécondité*.

The Family and Procreation

Placing his faith in the science of heredity meant that family, both the nuclear and extended family, was central to Zola’s concerns. Procreation was a given. Where other romantic novelists immersed themselves in the drama of love or the lack of it in a married couple, fidelity and pro-

creation were at the forefront of Zola’s understanding of conjugal relations. He himself, apart from the one lapse, was faithful to his wife. In fact, he prided himself on his chastity.⁴³ Through his alter ego Sandoz he explained to the artist Claude (reputedly modeled on his childhood friend, the artist Cezanne) his “middle class ideas” on marriage:

He considered [marriage] an indispensable condition for good work, substantial orderly labor among great modern producers. The theory of woman being a destructive creature—one who killed an artist, pounded his heart and fed upon his brain—was a romantic idea against which facts protested.⁴⁴

In this regard he differed from many nineteenth-century novelists, most of whom the historian Rudolf Binion characterizes as anti-family.⁴⁵ In his exhaustive survey of this anti-family literature, Binion ascribes a major cause of it to contraception.⁴⁶

Zola, on the contrary, considered procreation an essential component of the conjugal act. In *Doctor Pascal*, when Clotilde becomes pregnant, he exclaims: “What bliss! A new life was the only thing really worth creating!”⁴⁷ Clotilde says that she is well aware of his ideas that “if a child is not wanted, the act of love is useless and ignoble.” She knows that Pascal throws away novels that consider the child an interference in love.⁴⁸

She [Clotilde herself] was continually astonished and indignant when she found that stories and novels about love were never concerned with the child. No provision was made for the child and when, by chance, he came along and complicated the love interest, it was a catastrophe, a cause for dismay and considerable embarrassment. It never seemed to lovers when they possessed each other, that they were vehicles for life and that a child might be born.⁴⁹

She goes on to say that from her studies in natural history she had learned that nature was solely concerned with the fruit and took “every precaution” to ensure the preservation of the seed and the mother giving birth:

Man, on the contrary, had discarded the very thought of the fruit. The hero’s sex drive in refined novels was merely a lust-machine. They worshiped

each other, took each other, left each other, endured a thousand deaths, embraced, unleashed a tempest of social evils, all just for a few moments of pleasure, violating all natural laws, without even seeming to realize that making love was preliminary to begetting children. It was indecent and utterly stupid.⁵⁰

This paragraph has been quoted extensively because it epitomizes well Zola's attitude towards life, love, and procreation that he will expound more fully in the first of his four "gospels," *Fécondité* or *Fruitfulness*.

Fécondité (Fruitfulness)

Zola's novels *Lourdes*, *Rome*, and *Paris* (usually referred to as "the three cities"⁵¹) and later the "four gospels" (*Fruitfulness*, *Work*, *Truth* and *Justice*, which was never finished) enshrine his proposal of a "new religion" designed first to reform and then to replace Christianity. *Fécondité* is the first of the four gospels, and in it he proclaims the absolute primacy of life as the fruit of conjugal love, condemning contraception, abortion, and Malthus's theory of overpopulation. Fertility for Zola also encompasses the mother nursing her own child. The novel was written during his enforced exile in England in 1898 due to the Dreyfus Affair.

The novel contrasts a couple who welcome a large family in which the mother nurses each child with several Parisian couples who restrict the size of their families through various means, including contraception and abortion, and who refuse to nurse the one or two children who are born. Vizetelly, Zola's biographer, friend and publisher in English, writes that the subject of fruitfulness had "long haunted him." He was deeply concerned about the depopulation of France and deplored the "whole tendency of the times...to transform matrimony into legalized prostitution, in accordance with certain specious neo-Malthusian theories."⁵² He believed that without reform there could be no social regeneration. Vizetelly summed up Zola's view:

Fruitfulness...created the home, whence sprang the city, and from the idea of citizenship that of the fatherland proceeded. There could be no nation unless there were fruitfulness, which became then a first national duty.⁵³

Writing the novel Zola considered part of his own national duty.⁵⁴

Among the several themes that *Fécondité* takes up, in this paper I want to focus especially on Zola's treatment of the population question, which he refers to as neo-Malthusianism, morality, feminine beauty, nursing, and wet-nursing.

To the hero of *Fécondité*, Matthew Fremont, "this question of the birthrate seemed to him a frightful one, to be the foremost of all questions deciding the destiny of mankind and the world." He felt somewhat ashamed of his own four children (eventually he had twelve), but within him was "his faith in life, his belief that the greatest possible sum of life must bring about the greatest sum of happiness."⁵⁵ He believed that the nation that "no longer had faith in life must be dangerously ill." And he noted the endorsement of neo-Malthusian views by Schopenhauer and Nietzsche.⁵⁶ He declared:

In France...we are going backward, we are marching towards annihilation. The population of France was once a fourth of the population of Europe, but now it is only one-eighth. In a century or two Paris will be dead like ancient Athens and ancient Rome, and we shall have fallen to the rank Greece now occupies. Paris seems determined to die.⁵⁷

Zola puts in the mouth of Seguin towards the end of the novel all the neo-Malthusian arguments. Seguin, who was angry with his wife for bearing a third child and who wrecked his home by gambling away his fortune, stands in contrast to Matthew who had bought up Seguin's hereditary estate in order to support his wife and large family.⁵⁸ The ruined lives of the characters in the novel, who had resorted to various stratagems to avoid another birth, from condoning the husband's sexual infidelity to contraception, abortion, and even infanticide, are the main arguments that the novelist uses to make the case against Malthus's theories.

As a novelist, Zola's primary concern is not with morality except insofar as it destroys life and love.⁵⁹ For example, Beauchene's affair with one of his factory workers results in the destruction of his marriage, the abandonment of his child, a life of prostitution for the girl, and ultimately murder. As an artist Zola has a much greater concern for the perversion

of feminine beauty that these anti-values bring about. Seraphine, a Parisian sophisticate, believes that “maternity poisoned love, aged woman, and made her a horror in the eyes of man.”⁶⁰ Valentine, Seguin’s wife, consciously adopted masculine ways.⁶¹ The writer Santerre has a theory that all physical beauty belongs to virgins only. Matthew considers such views “thoroughly imbecile.” He points out that the contemporary standard of French beauty is a slim, almost angular figure, whereas Rubens, Titian, and Rafael painted robust figures and their madonnas have a motherly air.⁶² Matthew later passes a theater with a poster of “a carrotty wench with a long flat figure destitute of all womanliness, and seemingly symbolical of perversity.”⁶³ He concludes: “manners and customs, our notions of what is moral and what is not, our very conception of what is beautiful in life—all must be changed.”⁶⁴ He proposes that if the idea of feminine beauty changed, it might affect depopulation.⁶⁵ He puts forth his own idea of feminine maternal beauty:

A mother, is she not the symbol of all grandeur, all beauty? She represents the eternity of life. She deserves a social culture, she should be religiously venerated. When we know how to worship motherhood, our country will be saved.... I should like a mother feeding her babe to be adopted as the highest expression of feminine beauty.... Wherever that fashion prevails, we shall be the sovereign nation, the masters of the world.⁶⁶

Again,

There is no more glorious blossoming, no more sacred symbol of living eternity than an infant at his mother’s breast. It is like a prolongation of maternity’s travail, when the mother continues giving herself to her babe, offering him the fountain of life that shall make him a man.⁶⁷

When Norine decides to keep her second out of wedlock baby after she begins to nurse it, Matthew tells her, “You have saved him and now he saves you.”

The novel itself is an indictment of the contemporary widespread practice of wet-nursing. Either a wet nurse was brought into the home or the infant was sent to a wet nurse in the country for one or two years. If the desire was to get rid of it completely, the euphemism was used “until the first commu-

nion.” The latter was a virtual death sentence for the child. Boutan, the doctor in the novel, seeks to end the practice of farming out the infants to wet-nurses at the same time that he acts as a go-between. He says that to send a child away is almost certain death and that bringing a wet-nurse into the house is a cause of many evils that are graphically depicted in the novel.⁶⁸ This theme allows Zola to expose the wet-nursing business in Paris and its role in an anti-life, anti-family mentality. Unfortunately in France certain ecclesiastical circles fostered the wet-nursing business as a way to “protect” the marriage bed. Vizetelly himself reviewed many of the documents on which the novel is based and declared: “Far from *Fécondité* being an exaggerated picture, it did not represent more than two-thirds of the actual truth.”⁶⁹

The practice of wet-nursing goes back to the Middle Ages in France where it was much more widespread than in other European countries, extending throughout the social scale in cities such as Paris and Lyons. The increase in births, brought about by the absence of the period of amenorrhea occasioned by breast-feeding, stimulated a greater interest in contraception, especially after the French Revolution. Questions were posed to Rome by French clergy on the licitness of *coitus interruptus* or withdrawal. Later in 1853 a new question arose, namely, the use of a condom.⁷⁰ The whole issue of the wet nursing business in France is one that warrants treatment in another paper. Suffice it to say that the link between contraception, abortion, and the abandonment of maternal nursing is clear and not necessarily solved by recourse to artificial bottle feeding.

Zola seeks to present the greatest possible contrast between the anti-life mentality of his Parisian characters and Matthew and his wife, Marianne. Zola compares the “death, darkness, shame and crime” of the former with Marianne’s maternity:

Here was holy suffering that led to joy and pride, hope and trustfulness in the coming future. One single being born, a poor wee bare creature, raising the faint cry of a fledgling, and life’s immense treasure was increased and eternity insured.⁷¹

Matthew comments on the lack of true love in both Beauchene and Seguin:

They have never glowed with the supreme desire, the divine desire which is the world's very soul, the brazier of eternal life. And that explains everything. Without desire there is no love, no courage, no hope. By love alone can one create. And if love be restricted in its mission there is but failure.... It is desire and love that save. Whoever loves and creates is the revolutionary savior, the maker of men for the new world which will shortly dawn.⁷²

Conclusion

What do Zola and his novel tell us for today? Zola's atheism vitiates his understanding of the gift of life and love and his total rejection of consecrated celibacy.⁷³ Nevertheless, his novels are a testimony to natural law and the goodness of life and love. Chaste feminine, especially maternal, beauty aroused his awe and reverence. "Salvation through love" became a watchword for him. Ultimately his "new religion" and philosophy of life and love are bankrupt because they are not grounded in God as Creator and in Jesus Christ as redeemer.⁷⁴ Zola denied any truth beyond the experimentally verifiable. Faith for him was simply an illusion, yet necessary to sustain the multitude.⁷⁵ As a secular saint—his remains were finally removed to the Pantheon in 1908—he is lauded for his early novels and castigated for his later works, which are derisively referred to as belonging to his "prophetic" period.⁷⁶ Atavism, which is a form of Darwinism, informed his early novels. In other words, they also have an ideological foundation, but one that is acceptable to the modern secular mentality. His commitment to truth as he saw it—he took a heroic stand in opposing anti-semitism in the Dreyfus case—led him to write the truly prophetic but unpopular novel on population, love, and procreation *Fécondité*.¹² ❧

Endnotes

- ¹ Vizetelly remarks that although Zola eventually lost his faith in the dogmas of the Catholic Church, he continued to be impressed by its pomp and cult. He kept on his desk an ivory crucifix, a chalice, a pyx, and a small case with the picture of the Madonna. Emile Zola, *Rome*, trans. Ernest Alfred Vizetelly (New York NY: Macmillan, 1896), p. 40.
- ² *Ibid.*, p. 226.
- ³ *Ibid.*, p. 383. The Church is called "an immense moral force" (p. 384).
- ⁴ Ernest Alfred Vizetelly, *Emile Zola, Novelist and Reformer: An Account of His Life & Work* (Freeport NY: Books for Libraries, 1904; reprinted 1971), p. 411. Zola concluded that the papacy was impotent, not only in clinging to temporal power but by being chained to dogma and tradition. He also rejected Catholicism as incompatible with democracy. Yet in *Rome* he has

a character criticize Pope Leo XIII for making concessions to the republic. He has Abbé Pierre "ask the decisive question: Could Catholicism be renewed? Could it revert to the spirit of primitive Christianity, become the religion of democracy, the faith which the distracted modern world, in danger of death, awaits in order that it may be pacified and live?" He answered in the negative. Zola, *Rome*, p. 447.

- ⁵ Vizetelly comments that Zola "desired the suppression of all noxious agents, and it was because he regarded the Church of Rome as such that he assailed it so fiercely." Vizetelly, *Emile Zola*, p. 538.
- ⁶ Marc Bernard, *Emile Zola*, trans. Jean M. Leblon (New York NY: Grove Press, 1960), p. 157.
- ⁷ Bernard, p. 162. Zola regarded it as the greatest misfortune to be in doubt about anything. Vizetelly, *Emile Zola*, p. 398.
- ⁸ Vizetelly, *Emile Zola*, p. 211.
- ⁹ Cited in Bernard, *Zola*, p. 114.
- ¹⁰ Zola, *Rome*, p. 462. He goes on to say: "It was his mother, so to say, who had wept in his heart, who had filled him with an irresistible desire to relieve the wretched and prevent massacres which seemed near at hand; and his passion for charity had thus swept aside the scruples of his intelligence. But it was his father's voice that he now heard, lofty and bitter reason which, though it had fled, at present came back in all its sovereignty."
- ¹¹ *Ibid.* "Pierre amidst his anguish—having on one hand that need of the divine which tortures man, and on the other sovereignty of reason which enables man to remain erect—was only sure of one thing, that he would keep his vows, continue a priest, watching over the belief of others though he himself could not believe, and would thus chastely and honestly follow his profession, amidst haughty sadness at having been unable to renounce his intelligence in the same way as he had renounced his flesh and his dream of saving the nations."
- ¹² Émile Zola, *Loures* (Stroud, Gloucestershire, UK: Sutton, 1993), p. 485.
- ¹³ Émile Zola *Doctor Pascal*, trans. Vladimir Kean (London UK: Elek Books, 1957), p. 113.
- ¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 36.
- ¹⁵ Zola was inspired by Claude Bernard's *An Introduction to the Study of Experimental Medicine* (first published in 1865), Charles Darwin's theory of evolution in the *Origin of Species* (1859), Hypollite Taine's *Philosophy of Art* (1867), and Prosper Lucas's *Philosophical and Physiological Treatise on Natural Heredity* in two volumes (1847, 1850). Appearing about the same time when Zola was in his twenties, they had a determining influence on his art.
- ¹⁶ So enamored with science and its products were novelists and artists that they often referred to their works as "machines." Emile Zola, *His Masterpiece* (Stroud Gloucestershire, UK: Sutton, 1991), p. 33n.
- ¹⁷ Vizetelly recounts that the germ for the series originated in his first youthful planned poetic trilogy, *Genèse*, which was to have covered the "advent, development and destiny of mankind." The first poem was to chronicle "The Birth of the World" according to modern science, the second called "Mankind" would be a synthesis of the whole of history, and the third, "The Man of the Future" was to reveal man mastering every force of nature, rising higher and higher to a god-like status. Vizetelly, *Emile Zola*, pp. 111, 58. The poem was never written. Instead Zola transposed his ideas into the form of the novel.
- ¹⁸ *L'Assommoir*, (*The Dram Shop*) published in 1877, on alcohol addiction took Paris by storm. *Pot-Bouille* (*The Restless House*, 1882) probed adultery in the middle class and *Germinal* (1885) exposed the appalling conditions of miners. Vizetelly, *Emile Zola*, pp. 161, 207, 227.
- ¹⁹ His biographer Vizetelly writes that in his novels Zola "made it his purpose to inquire into all social sores, all the imperfections and lapses of collective and individual life that seemed to require remedying. That everything should be made manifest in order that everything might be healed, such was the motto he adopted." Vizetelly, *Emile Zola*, p. 184. A contemporary biographer notes that he was frequently accused of obscenity. Bernard, *Zola*, p. 43. In the preface to the second edition of *Thérèse Raquin* Zola defends himself against the charge by comparing his work to that of a painter before a nude. He describes himself as "simply an analyst who may have become engrossed in human corruption, but who has done so as a surgeon might in an operating theatre.... I wrote every scene, even the most impassioned, with scientific curiosity alone." Emile Zola, *Thérèse Raquin*, trans. with introduction by Leonard Tancock (London UK: Penguin Books, 1962), pp. 23, 24.

- ²⁰ Zola acknowledged that “the realist screen has all my sympathy; it satisfies my reason, and I sense in it immense beauties of strength and truth. He goes on to say that it is not a perfect reproduction. “I fully accept the method which consists of standing squarely in front of nature and reproducing it in its entirety without omission.” Bernard, *Zola*, p. 22. Zola further stated, “By naturalism I mean analytical and experimental methods based on facts and human documents. There must be agreement on the social movement which is the cause, and literature which is the effect.” Vizetelly, *Zola*, p. 174.
- ²¹ Vizetelly gives a detailed account of Zola’s research methods in his biography, Vizetelly, *Zola*, pp. 414-15.
- ²² He believed that the family tree reveals mathematically the laws of heredity and environment and that they explain all passion, virtue, and vice. ²³ Zola, *Doctor Pascal*, pp. 93, 236.
- ²⁴ “I come to live life aloud.” Zola wrote in *Mes Haines* 1866. Bernard, *Zola*, p. 157.
- ²⁵ According to his biographer, Ernest Alfred Vizetelly, this was his one lapse from the moral life.
- ²⁶ Zola writes: “Innumerable questions clamoured for an answer. Had there in fact been any physical and intellectual progress through the ages? ... Was it legitimate to hope that, in the long run, human conduct would become more reasonable and that the sum total of human happiness would increase?” Zola, *Doctor Pascal*, pp. 33, 34, 74. In *Germinal*, which recounts a strike of coal miners, his protagonist Etienne (again his own mouthpiece) reflects: “Was Darwin right...was this world nothing but a struggle in which the strong devoured the weak so that the species might advance in strength and beauty? The question disturbed him although as a self-styled scientist, he could only settle it one way.” *Germinal*, trans. Leonard Tancock (New York NY: Alfred A. Knopf, 1991), p. 496.
- ²⁷ Zola, *Doctor Pascal*, p. 170.
- ²⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 253, 73. At the end of the novel *Rome*, there are sweeping denunciations of the Catholic Church and a panegyric of science as sovereign and sweeping all before it. Zola, *Rome*, pp. 455, 456-57, 459.
- ²⁹ Zola, *Doctor Pascal*, pp. 166, 167.
- ³⁰ *Ibid.* Earlier in the passage, Dr. Pascal says, “Correct nature, interfere, modify and venture to disturb its balance, can one justify such an objective? ... Perhaps it is right and we who are on the wrong track. Perhaps we are running the risk of killing love, genius, life itself” (p. 166). “His faith in life had become intensified, so much so that he now believed that life was omniscient as well as all-powerful, that it alone, unaided, was able to ensure health and strength” (p. 170).
- ³¹ *Ibid.*, p. 71.
- ³² *Ibid.*, p. 145.
- ³³ *Ibid.*, p. 286.
- ³⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 236.
- ³⁵ Love had not been absent in his previous work. After *L’Assommoir* he wrote a gentle love story, *Le Page d’Amour* (A Love Episode), but it did not meet with the success of his more brutal novels. Bernard, *Zola*, p. 65.
- ³⁶ Vizetelly places the beginning of his role of reformer after *L’Assommoir* (1877), Vizetelly, *Zola*, p. 182.
- ³⁷ Zola, *Doctor Pascal*, p. 86.
- ³⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 91.
- ³⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 108.
- ⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 34. Dr. Pascal loses faith in the physicians’ power to heal, but “he was so in love with life that he was left with unlimited faith in life alone, convinced that life was the only source of health and strength” (p. 253).
- ⁴¹ Zola, *Rome*, p. 236. Again at the end of the novel: “He [Abbé Pierre] would never submit, would never be able to resign himself and kill his hope in salvation by love, but would rather reply by a fresh book, in which he would say in what new soil the new religion would spring up” (p. 453).
- ⁴² Zola, *Rome*, p. 250.
- ⁴³ Bernard, *Zola*, p. 71.
- ⁴⁴ Emile Zola, *His Masterpiece* (Dover NH: The Alan Sutton Publishing Co., 1986), pp. 147-48. Zola’s first successful novel, *Thérèse Raquin*, is a chilling indictment of adultery ending in murder and suicide.
- ⁴⁵ Rudolf Binion, *Past Impersonal: Group Process in Human History* (DeKalb IL: Northern Illinois Univ. Press, 2005), p. 26. Binion includes Zola’s novel *The Earth* among these anti-family novels because of his exposition of degeneration resulting from heredity (p. 21), but he acknowledges that the heroine acts out of “a deep family sentiment stronger than hatred or the need for revenge” (p. 23).
- ⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 26: “The first place to look for an answer [to this anti-family literature] is in the family itself, to see whether something did not change radically in those same years. And something there did change radically. For those were the years when conjugal birth control first spread throughout the European population as a whole.”
- ⁴⁷ Zola, *Doctor Pascal*, p. 245.
- ⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 221.
- ⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 168-69.
- ⁵⁰ *Ibid.*
- ⁵¹ These took up the three theological virtues of Faith, Hope, and Charity, all of which Zola found wanting, necessitating in his view four new virtues of the salvation of mankind.
- ⁵² Vizetelly, *Emile Zola*, p. 495.
- ⁵³ *Ibid.*, p. 496.
- ⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 498.
- ⁵⁵ Emile Zola, *Fruitfulness*, trans. and ed. Ernest Alfred Vizetelly (New York NY: Doubleday Page & Co. 1900), p. 15.
- ⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 42.
- ⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 43.
- ⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 350-51.
- ⁵⁹ Zola does not ignore the immorality of bringing children into the world without taking care of them. Not to do so is to be “guilty of criminal providence.” *Ibid.*, p. 112.
- ⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 33.
- ⁶¹ *Ibid.*, p. 45.
- ⁶² *Ibid.*, p. 42.
- ⁶³ *Ibid.*, p. 53.
- ⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 19.
- ⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 42.
- ⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 148.
- ⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 104.
- ⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 147, 148.
- ⁶⁹ *Ibid.*
- ⁷⁰ John T. Noonan, Jr. *Contraception: A History of its Treatment by the Catholic Theologians and Canonists* (Cambridge MA: Harvard Univ. Press, 1986), pp. 396-400.
- ⁷¹ Zola, *Fécondité*, p. 104.
- ⁷² *Ibid.*, p. 189. The omissions were intentional to protect the novel from obscenity charges in England.
- ⁷³ He expresses harsh criticism of consecrated celibacy in his account of the death of Bernadette in *Lourdes*. “It was life which menaced her, and it was life which she cast out, in the same way as she denied life when she reserved to the Celestial Bridegroom her tortured crucified womanhood. That dogma of the Immaculate Conception, which her dream had come to strengthen, was a blow dealt by the Church to woman, both wife and mother. To decree that woman is only worthy of worship on condition that she be a virgin, to imagine this virgin to be herself born without sin, is this not an insult to Nature, the condemnation of life, the denial of womanhood, whose true greatness consists in perpetuating life?”
- ⁷⁴ Zola seemed to have an intuitive understanding of the value of suffering. In *Doctor Pascal*, he has the protagonist, who desperately desired a child, say: “The more he suffered, the more consoling it would have been, in the light of his boundless faith in life, to have been able to hand down that suffering” (p. 86). Zola recognized the role of pain in redemption. In *Lourdes*, when discussing the suffering of Bernadette, he exclaims, “Jesus died in three days, but a longer agony fell to her, who again brought redemption by pain, who died to give others life.” Yet he revolts against it. “How absurd that in the eternal evolution of worlds, it should be necessary for this poor being to be tortured! ... Where is the reason in this useless cruelty, in this revolting glorification of suffering, when from the whole of humanity there ascends but one desperate longing for health and happiness? Zola, *Lourdes*, pp. 478, 479.
- ⁷⁵ Again in *Lourdes* he writes: “Where was the man hard enough, cruel enough, to prevent the lowly from believing, to rob them of the consolation of the supernatural, the hope that God troubled Himself about them, that He held a better life in His paradise for them?” Zola, *Lourdes*, p. 484.
- ⁷⁶ In a certain sense, Zola is a tragic figure. He was unable to find a home either in faith or science. In this he represents the drama of his age. He finally sought refuge in a new kind of paganism that worshiped youth, health, and physical beauty.

Ravenna and the Roman Primacy: *The Issues Joined*

By Msgr. Daniel Hamilton, Ph.D.

After two decades of modest progress, the Joint International Catholic-Orthodox Theological Commission, meeting in Ravenna, Italy, October 8-14, 2007, issued a study document on ecclesial communion, conciliarity and authority¹ which acknowledged the Roman primacy in the universal Church as an historical fact, but called for an extensive study and clarification of its basis and nature, issues hotly debated for centuries.

My purpose here is to outline the conflicting positions on the basis and nature of the Roman primacy as these issues are presented generally by leaders and scholars of the two Church communions, including Anglicans, and to suggest how these mutually opposed positions may be brought closer together, followed by a personal reflection.

I. The Catholic Position

Some may be surprised to learn that Orthodox leaders and theologians, together with classical Anglicans, do not dispute the historical fact of Rome's universal primacy from the earliest Christian centuries; but they differ radically with the Catholic Church regarding the basis and nature of this primacy, arguing, in some cases, that because of heresy it has been lost.

The Catholic Church has insisted from time immemorial—and indeed dogmatized this conviction—that our Lord Jesus Christ gave the ministerial leadership of His Church to Peter and intended this office (like the Church itself) to continue permanently and, by the guidance of the Holy Spirit at least, in the leadership or episcopate of the Roman Church, in the city where Peter exercised initial Church leadership, where both Peter and Paul were martyred, and in the city which was the capital and

center of the Church's first principal missionary field; namely, the Roman Empire.

This leadership derived from Peter, the chief apostle, was first exercised, then specified and later defined by the Church itself in the course of history as a leadership of real and final authority to be invoked when needed for the good, above all, of the unity of all the Churches. This authority was spiritual, doctrinal and governmental—and in all cases decisive. Vatican Council I, reaffirmed by Vatican II, taught that the Roman bishop has the same authority within the whole Church that a diocesan bishop has within his own diocese, that this universal authority inheres in the Roman bishop's office and that it can be exercised independently and personally without need for recourse to any other authority. Inherent also in this office of the Roman bishop is the charism to teach inerrantly under precise conditions specified by the conciliar definition.

The Catholic teaching on the Roman primacy is thus clear, precise, forthright and, for many, overwhelming.² It is accompanied by a long list of supportive testimonies from Scripture, the apostolic and post-apostolic Church, the patristic age and subsequent centuries.³

II. The Orthodox and Anglican Position

The Orthodox and the Anglicans generally, leaders and theologians, have no dogmatic position on these issues; but they nonetheless have a long tradition of firmly rejecting the Catholic position. They have evaluated the factual and historical Roman primacy as, variously, 1) an office inconsistent with the nature of the Church as a Eucharistic communion of local Churches all equally the Church, where primacy on all levels is exercised only in a conciliar context; 2) an office needed in the universal Church and perhaps

providentially initiated but actually conferred upon the Roman See and its bishop by the other ancient local Churches, as witnessed by ecumenical or other councils such as Nicaea (325), Sardica (342), Constantinople I (381) and Chalcedon (451).

This designation of Rome as having the universal primacy came understandably, it is maintained, by reason of Rome's position at the center of the world—the Roman Empire—in which the Church was then planted and growing. The city and its Church also enjoyed the unique heritage of the two Apostles Peter and Paul, both having ministered there and been martyred there; and, as the centuries followed, it boasted a Church whose authority grew tremendously in the religious and political circumstance of the times and, also, it is said, by arrogating authority to itself within the communion of Churches.

Such commentators view the legitimate original Roman primacy of leadership—in the sense of a norm of faith and practice—as having evolved or devolved into a “papalism” or “papal supremacy”, terms and phrases which signify a kind of distortion or wrongful aggrandizement of the original office, which was Peter's or was conferred on the Roman See by its ancient sister Churches. The Roman primacy became, in this perspective, a supreme, monarchical and dictatorial office analogous to an oppressive secular power.

Thus at best, though universal primacy may have emerged in the Church because of a need for such leadership, the kind of primacy that factually developed rather quickly, asserting its foundation in the indemonstrable claim of the Lord's gift to Peter had, in any case, evolved into this objectionable papal supremacy that ever since has become a stumbling block for Christians who do not admit it.⁴

III. A Resolution?

How are these conflicting positions to be harmonized? Clearly, the path of resolution will be neither easy nor short. Already in 1995, however, Pope John Paul II (*Ut Unum Sint*)⁵ invited the leaders and theologians of all the Christian Church Communities (a sparse response) to join him in a dialogue as to how the Roman primacy, its essential mission preserved, may best

be exercised in our time. This dialogue was not to obscure, however, the basis and nature of this primacy.

All parties to this dialogue would need to commit themselves to a thorough and objective examination of the extant data, beginning with the Scriptures, the very early Church testimonies, those of the Fathers, of the major councils and of the Eastern and Western Churches' twenty centuries of mutual relations and doctrinal teaching, distinguishing the various levels of authority in this teaching. A sifting and evaluating of all this material would follow. Joint committees would appropriately pursue these tasks, as well as individual theologians.

True, this task has been done in large measure before. But, today joint committees of scholars are needed to replicate, authenticate and, if need be, correct the work of the past and accomplish new research called for now. Scholars striving equally for objectivity will evaluate evidence differently. Scholarly thoroughness and objectivity will, therefore, not eliminate all differences but will narrow them. Ultimately conclusions from a scientific point of view will need to be drawn in some cases on the basis of the preponderance of evidence and possible alternative interpretations noted.

But scholarship alone—even the most professional and objective—is not enough. Beyond scholarship there is needed prayerful intercession. The Church is not a community of scholars but the Mystical Body of Christ into which we are ingrafted by faith and baptism for the conversion of hearts, the healing of memories, and the gift of reconciliation. We must have an intensified dialogue of love and that mutual cooperation which the Church Communion has sought with greater or lesser success over these last fifty years. We must seek the guidance of the Holy Spirit for a full reconciliation and we must dearly want it.⁶

IV. How a Catholic Looks at the Issues

What does Scripture, history, the Church's teaching office, reason and experience tell us about what Christ wanted and what was needed for His Church? For Catholics this answer

is already definitively provided by the Spirit-guided magisterium of the Church. But even within this framework of truth definitively taught, there is room (again Pope John Paul II told us in *Ut Unum Sint*, 1995)⁷ for a dialogue on how the Roman primacy may best serve the universal Church in our time. Could it be, he suggests at least indirectly, that every exercise of the papacy in the past was not a necessary or desirable exercise of that primacy?

The words Jesus spoke to Peter, Catholics believe, in conferring and then confirming his special leadership position are striking, stunning and unforgettable: the ambit of this leadership grant “whatsoever you bind or loose” is equally extraordinary, especially when spoken singly to Peter in the Rock passage. Can it be thought that the continuing Church would not need, the more it grew and diversified throughout the Roman Empire and beyond, such a decisive leadership? How is it that no other bishop but the Roman bishop ever claimed a universal primacy in the Church? Is it credible that we have beheld in the continuing Roman primacy the defacement of our Savior’s original gift to Peter as this office has responded to two thousand years of Church growth? Though Antioch and Alexandria anciently, and, Constantinople more latterly, after becoming (330 A.D.) the imperial capital, were large and influential sees, no one of these sees made any such claim. Only Constantinople, in its glory time, claimed to hold the place “after Rome”.

Testimonies from the early Church (1st-3rd centuries) though relatively few, all support the Roman primacy as it was being exercised at the time. No testimonies dispute it. As the Church expanded numerically and geographically, so did the primacy expand in the depth and breadth of its activity, responding to the dynamic inherent in the original gift to Peter and the need for decisive leadership throughout the ecumenical Church.

As with other major doctrines—for example, the Christological Trinitarian and Eucharistic doctrines—the Church needed time to clarify and set the limits of belief. We should expect no differently with the fuller understanding and appreciation of the Roman primacy in that trajectory that moves from Clement of Rome’s (96 A.D.) remonstrance to the Corinthian Church over the deposition of presby-

ters to the actions of Gelasius, Damasus and Leo the Great in the ecumenical Church of their day when at the Council of Chalcedon (451 A.D.) the Fathers exclaimed that Peter was speaking through Leo!

Long before any “patriarchates” existed, (late 5th and 6th centuries), before Constantinople had emerged from little Byzantium, been acclaimed as “New Rome,” and become rival to “Old Rome,” Old Rome enjoyed without question its unique primacy in the universal Church of that time. That leadership was spiritual, doctrinal, administrative, decisive, and virtually unopposed. A universal “jurisdiction” can plausibly be traced from Clement of Rome’s (96 A.D.) remonstrance to the Corinthian Church to the many other interventions in subsequent centuries. The Anglo-Catholic church historian Beresford Kidd concluded in his *The Roman Primacy to A.D. 461*, that the developed expression of the primacy had already reached its apogee by the death of Pope Leo the Great in that year.

Whatever was claimed for bishops of Rome or patriarchs after the Constantinian peace, the promise to Peter and his successors and their exercise of this charism already had long been fixed in the life of the Church and acknowledged broadly. That factual primacy may not have entailed the acceptance by all explicitly and at once of the sequence the Lord Jesus—Peter—the Roman bishop. Some have maintained that Rome had no individual bishop until about 100 A.D. but the positive testimonies predominate. History over all points to a given primacy that grew by recognition, and need, not a fictitious primacy built upon ambition.

Is it credible that other ancient sees conferred the primacy on Rome? Did Antioch, Alexandria or any other ancient see ever claim such a primacy for itself? No cogent ancient testimony establishes such views. No, only the bishop of Rome claimed it and exercised it and was acknowledged to have it. And this primacy has been exercised to this day. Let scholarship bring the evidence of history to light. Then let the dialoguing churches reflect upon and discuss how this factual primacy, its basis and nature known, may best be exercised in our time.

We look for the self-heading Churches of the Orthodox Communion to consider whether they have now or can achieve without the Roman

primacy that unity—beyond faith and sacramental life—in mutual harmony, effective coordination and governance and united action for mission that surely belongs to that full unity which Christ willed for his Church. Will the Roman primacy by the grace of the Holy Spirit in its renewed exercise for our time bring trust, healing, new evangelistic faith and fervor and an empowering charism to all the churches everywhere? We think it will. ✠

Endnotes

1. *Ecclesiological and Canonical Consequences of the Sacramental Nature of the Church: Ecclesial Communion, Conciliarity and Authority*: available from http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/pontifical_councils/christian/ch_orthodox... 2007
2. Definitive Catholic teaching on the Roman primacy is summed up in

- Schmaus, Michael, *Dogma 4: The Church: Its Origins and Structure*, New York, Sheed and Ward, 1972. Chapters 14–20.
3. Testimonies in support of the Roman primacy from the East and the West, 96–454 A.D., are gathered together in *Documents Illustrating Papal Authority*, AD.D.96–454, edited and introduced by E. Giles, London, SPCK, 1952. Testimonies from the Eastern Churches to 900 A. D. are presented in *The Eastern Churches and the Papacy*, S. Herbert Scott, London, Scheed and Ward, 1928.
 4. Representative Orthodox positions on the Roman primacy can be found in *The Primacy of Peter*, by J. Meyendorff, A. Schmemmann, N. Afanassieff, and N. Koulomzine, 2nd ed., translated from the French, London, Bedminster, The Faith Press and American Orthodox Book Service. Representative Anglican positions are presented in Kidd, B.J., *The Roman Primacy to A. D. 461*, London, SPCK, 1936; Stone, Darwell, *The Christian Church*, London, Rivington, 1905; and Moss, C.B., *The Christian Faith*, London, SPCK, 1963.
 5. Relevant sections are found in *The Christian Faith in the Doctrinal Documents of the Catholic Church*, 7th and enlarged eds. Rev. J. Dupuis, New York, ALBA House, 2001, pp.402–09.
 6. A similar position is advocated by Adam A.J. De Ville, in *Ecumenical Trends*, Vol. 37, No. 4, April 2008, pp.6/54–7/55.
 7. See note 5.

The Four Senses of Scripture

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There is something deeply important about finding just the right distinction for the resolution of a confused issue. Every discipline has its share of such distinctions, but when involved in a discussion outside one's own field, one can easily be at a loss. Invariably Catholic scholars across the disciplines will find themselves involved in discussions of biblical interpretation. It may be helpful to bear in mind some of the crucial distinctions that the Church offers about the principles of scriptural interpretation.

A mindfulness of the need for some kind of distinction here will presumably be obvious from the training one has received in one's own field. But which of us hasn't felt a pang of conscience in a conversation with a fundamentalist when one tries to urge that there are different levels of meaning in the scriptures? If one were to carry that too far, it would easily seem that one has ventured into the just the opposite sort of problem by explaining away some text of scripture whose plain or literal meaning seems

too difficult to accept.

Curiously, one of the most important tools by which one can prepare for discussions with fundamentalists who want to read everything in the bible at what they consider to be the literal level may be the same resource that one needs for one's next conversation with those inclined to take little or nothing from the scriptures to say what they plainly say. It is the section of the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* that deals with the interpretation of Scripture—paragraphs §101 to §119.¹

Many a fundamentalist warns us of the need to read all of Scripture literally (or should we say, all but a few verses, such as the passages that confer on St. Peter and his successors the authority to govern the Church?). Many a modernist (who curiously tends to have trouble with the same verse) prefers to take almost none of it literally, except perhaps certain passages thought useful for constructing a social gospel *al dente*.

What the Catholic will find in these paragraphs of the *Catechism* is a brief account of the long and venerable tradition of the four senses of Scripture. These are the four levels of meaning that must be

assessed to plumb the depth of a sacred text. This indispensable aspect of the Church's understanding of how to interpret the Bible is all too often forgotten, even in Catholicism, ever since the quarrels of the Reformation and the Counter Reformation got tangled up in efforts to promote and to refute the claim of *sola scriptura*. The doctrine of the four senses of Scripture goes back to the beginning of the Church and remains the cornerstone of the Church's principles of interpretation.² It is frequently used within the Bible itself, and it is the mainstay of writers in the apostolic and patristic periods of the Church's history.³ For medieval writers, this hermeneutic was so pervasive that someone like Dante even proposes to Can Grande della Scalla it as the key to understanding his *Divine Comedy*.⁴ The mystics of all ages have never been able to do without it, but the logic-chopping nominalists who desiccated scholastic humanism tended to jettison it. In trying to force the language of Scripture into the narrow confines of logical formalisms, they were increasingly forgetful that the Holy Spirit often teaches by image and symbol and story.

The four senses of Scripture, as the Church teaches this doctrine, are: (1) the *literal* level of the text's meaning, within which can be found three spiritual levels: (2) the *typological* sense (often called the *allegorical*), (3) the *moral* sense (sometimes named the *tropological* sense), and (4) the *anagogical* sense. These three spiritual levels of meaning are called the *spiritual* senses because they are levels of meaning that the Holy Spirit inspired in the human author, whether the human author was fully conscious of those meanings or not.⁵ The *literal* sense is "literal" in the sense of being located in the letters and words of the human author. But it is important to note that this term does not mean what the fundamentalist supposes it to mean—as if every line of scripture were the equivalent of, say, a newspaper report or a history book. The literal level of meaning certainly includes historical accounts such as those found within the Gospels or Old Testament books like *Judges* or *Kings*, but it also includes the figures of speech that a human author uses (e.g., "The Lord is my rock," Ps. 18:2) and a wide variety of literary genres (e.g., the creation stories, the narratives of the patriarchs, laws and moral tales, prophecies and jeremiads,

visions and laments, and so on).

Through the entirety of the Church's history there has been need of careful scholarship to establish the authentic text of the Bible and to understand the *literal* sense of Scripture.⁶ The *Catechism* summarizes this need for careful scholarship when it explains: "In order to discover the sacred authors' intention, the reader must take into account the conditions of their time and culture, the literary genres in use at that time, and the modes of feeling, speaking, and narrating then current. 'For the fact is that truth is differently presented and expressed in the various types of historical writing, in prophetic and poetical texts, and in other forms of literary expression.'"⁷ It is this concern that drove St. Jerome to collate the texts that he used to produce the Vulgate and that has more recently brought the new edition of the Vulgate.⁸ It is the same concern that has led to countless scholarly editions and biblical commentaries.

But in addition to what the human author has written under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit,⁹ one needs to be alert and attentive to the spiritual levels of meaning that can be found within the texts of Scripture. The *Catechism* makes this point very directly: "Since Sacred Scripture is inspired, there is another and no less important principle of correct interpretation, without which Scripture would remain a dead letter. 'Sacred Scripture must be read and interpreted in the light of the same Spirit by whom it was written.'"¹⁰ For this reason the Church insists on several important criteria for one's interpretation to be in accord with the Spirit: (1) attention to the "unity" of the entire Bible as flowing from the divine authorship of all of the Scriptures (CCC §112), (2) respect for the fact that the Scriptures are part of the "living tradition of the whole Church" (CCC §113),¹¹ and (3) regard for the "analogy of faith," that is, "the coherence of the truths of faith among themselves and within the whole plan of Revelation" (CCC §114). By observing these criteria, interpretation can be faithful to the teachings of the Church and open to discovery of the three spiritual levels of meaning that the Holy Spirit has given.

At the heart of the *typological* sense of the Scriptures is the notion that the life of Christ provides the way to understand the entirety of the Bible. Everything before Christ leads up to Him and only He

was able to open the minds of the apostles and those of us who follow them to understand many things that were contained in the Scriptures (see Luke 22:44-45). Accordingly, the Church has always held that the Old Testament contains (besides its literal sense) mysteries that have been “hidden of ages in God” but “now revealed” (see Ephesians 3: 9 and 3:5). The reason for calling this sense the *typological* sense is the pairing of an Old Testament *type* with Christ as the *antitype* who completes what is incomplete, who perfects what is imperfect, and who sanctifies what is sinful. In the single lifetime of Christ that is recounted in the Gospels he recapitulates the whole life of Israel, as if it were one lifetime. Articulating the full range of this notion would require a complete monograph,¹² but one can easily see the Bible’s own use of typology when it calls Jesus “the new Adam.” In turn, each Christian is expected to learn how to live and grow in Christ, that is, to recapitulate His life in our lives. Understanding how He recapitulated the life of Israel shows us the pattern of how we are to recapitulate His life at every stage in our own existence.

The *moral* sense includes not just things like the Ten Commandments recorded in Exodus and Deuteronomy and the Two Great Commandments uttered by Jesus, but all of the events in Scripture that disclose God’s will for human conduct, including the lists of virtues that Paul describes in great detail, the record of human sinfulness recounted in many Old Testament narratives, and the fiery denunciations of idolatry and adultery in the pages of the prophets.

The *anagogical* sense is named from a Greek word

(*anagoge*, “leading”) and refers to the relation of the realities and events recorded in the Scriptures in terms of their eternal significance and especially as they lead us toward heaven, “our true homeland.”¹³ It is this spiritual level of meaning that lets us see how the sacraments truly are symbolic signs instituted by Christ to give the grace that they signify, for these sacred actions and the objects that He directed the apostles to continue to employ, communicate a meaning by their symbolism as well as actually convey the sanctifying grace that they signify. The water of Baptism, for instance, effects the cleansing from sin that washing suggests, but the Church’s understanding of this sacrament also makes use of the anagogical sense of the Scriptures to link the physical sign used in this sacrament to the passage of the Israelites through the Red Sea, with new life for the people of Israel and death by drowning for their pursuers. The Church’s understanding of death to sin and new life in God’s grace is not merely some imposition of meaning by the Church from without, but a discovery of the *spiritual* meaning of various texts of Scripture that were implanted by the Holy Spirit centuries before the practice of Christian Baptism.

It is with great wisdom that the Church proposes to us these four senses or levels of meaning for the proper interpretation of Scripture. The method is necessarily demanding, but the results are rich in insight, and crucial for understanding why the Church understands the sacraments the way she does, takes many of the positions on questions of morality that she does, and insists in her creeds on affirming these as truths necessary for our salvation. ✠



Catholic Colleges and Online Pornography

by John M. Grondelski

What should Catholic colleges and universities do about surfing—especially by students—of on-line pornography? That provocative question was posed

by the *National Catholic Register*, when it reported that St. Vincent's College in Latrobe, Pennsylvania, had blocked access through the campus server to pornographic websites.¹ The newspaper surveyed a number of other Catholic institutions of higher learning to ascertain what, if any, policies they had or were planning to introduce. The general consensus from its random survey was that most schools either do nothing or have no formal policies. The Information Technology Director at Minnesota's St. John's University was quoted as saying "Our students are 18 or older. We do not filter at the college."²

This author maintains that Catholic institutions of higher learning should prevent on-line pornography access through institutionally-provided Internet access. Perhaps FCS faculty can play a leadership role in addressing this question.

At first glance, the general lack of regulation and/or school policies may be understandable. The Internet was born of the free and unfettered exchange of ideas, and a certain libertarian, *laissez-faire* ethos informs it as well as many of the "techie" who best understand it and who maintain computer networks. (Just as ecclesiastical documents have stressed how vital it is to have a critical mass of committed Catholic faculty if a Catholic college or university is to be faithful to its institutional mission, so perhaps the ethos of the support staff is also important to furthering—or at least not to hindering—a robust Catholic institutional identity, particularly in student services).

Another factor that could hinder adoption of effective anti-pornography Internet access policies at

Catholic colleges or universities is the almost knee-jerk opposition in some quarters to any "threat"—real or perceived—to "academic freedom." An uncritical dedication to "openness" coupled with claims of "censorship" and "limits on academic freedom" are likely to be advanced as justifications why a Catholic college should not filter access to pornography. In the case of Catholic colleges, the opposition is also likely to trot out claims of "Inquisition" and "ecclesiastical repression," ready to invoke Galileo in defense of the right to view naked women online. *Ad hominem* arguments that Catholic colleges are not moral nannies and that college students are adults capable of choosing what they view should also be expected. Colleges, the argument will run, do not act *in loco parentis* for adults.

Aware that such opposition is likely to be forthcoming, why should an effort to ban on-campus, on-line pornography access be pursued? Would it not be better prudently to pursue that seemingly most important virtue of many Catholic college administrators, holy peace and quiet? My answer is "no," and for three reasons: the pervasiveness of today's pornography, the meaning of pornography for the follower of Christ, and the role of a Catholic institution of higher learning.

Contemporary pornography is graphic, pervasive, and almost omnipresent. As Pamela Paul has noted, pornography today is markedly rawer than in the past. "Old school defenders of pornography may not be familiar with the direction in which Internet and DVD-era pornography has gone. They might not understand the infinite possibilities offered by online pornography and the intoxicating effects of the anonymity, accessibility, and affordability of the Internet."³ When contemporary Internet pornography offers live sexual acts, heterosexual, homosexual, or variants, available on-line, we must admit that the "genre" has changed qualitatively from the days of "girlie" magazines sold furtively in the corner of a store.

Paul's research also shows the corruptive social effects of nearly ubiquitous pornography. While its old school defenders insist that viewing pornography is a "victimless" crime, Paul reports how social standards and expectations are becoming increasingly "pornified" (hence, the title of the book). Perhaps the most important impact lies in the "dumbing down" of standards of sexual behavior and expectations to the level of the "porn star." Given the fact that viewing pornography is primarily a male activity, ongoing exposure to and progressive desensitization by pornography tends to cause males to measure and evaluate their real, interpersonal relationships against expectations of what they see in pornography. This trend, together with a concomitant fixation on the self and on self-pleasure, is often reinforced by masturbation accompanying pornographic viewing. As many confessors could confirm today, the incidence of sexual obsession and compulsion that begins with exposure to pornography is growing exponentially.

Pornography is not "victimless," and perhaps it most victimizes the user's healthy view of sexuality and marriage. As Benedict Groeschel has noted, the moral problem in pornography essentially lies in the fact that it involves willingness—at least at the level of thought—to treat the other sexually in ways that simply are not compatible with being a Christian.⁴ As Karol Wojtyla noted almost a half century ago, there are reductively two ways in which one person can relate to another sexually: one can love the other, or one can use the other.⁵ The exploitive, "using" nature of pornography should be self-evident.

So what does all this have to do with the role of a Catholic university? A Catholic university has a formational responsibility towards its students. A Catholic university exists to form the whole person: intellectually, interpersonally, and spiritually. A Catholic university does not exist to form amoral intellects, technocrats proficient in their specialty bereft of a moral context for that specialty. A Catholic university addresses the integral person with an integral vision of reality, a vision informed by faith and reason.⁶

Positively, this means that the Catholic university has a responsibility to put forth a vision of marriage and sexuality that safeguards the dignity of love and the human person, as Catholic sexual ethics does. It needs to be a witness, advancing a vision of love

and sexuality consistent with its *Weltanschauung* as a Catholic institution of higher learning. Negatively, it means that the Catholic university should counteract those visions of sexuality that ridicule and reject this vision. A Catholic university that truly reads the *signa temporis*—as a good Catholic university should—must recognize that pornography is an extremely ubiquitous and lucrative business that makes lots of money by hawking a vision of the human person as a sexual object and exploiting concrete persons to incarnate that vision. A good Catholic university must recognize that pornography exposure is an increasingly problematic and addictive phenomenon, particularly among male students, with deleterious moral and psychological consequences, including likely impact on the person's ability to form healthy, morally good sexual relationships. A good Catholic university must recognize that pornography is not a "victimless" activity but an activity with corrosive social, interpersonal, psychosexual, and moral effects. A good Catholic university cannot remain indifferent to those problems and should provide counter-cultural witness.

Undoubtedly, there will be objectors who insist that a Catholic university *qua university* cannot advocate a particular moral code or sexual ethic. Put bluntly, this is nonsense. A Catholic university *qua* Catholic university should have a particular worldview, about which it cannot pretend to be agnostic. In reality, few Catholic universities are agnostic. Boards vote to disinvest from socially irresponsible companies. Few are the Catholic college presidents who would invite a racist or an anti-Semite Holocaust denier to use campus facilities. Nobody would claim that a Catholic university was imposing morality on people if it stood up against genocide or for the moral claims of the poor. Why, then, should that same university should not be coy about the principles that animate (or at least should animate) its vision of interpersonal sexual relations?

Objectors will also argue that blocking access to Internet pornography interferes with academic freedom and freedom of inquiry. Again, this claim is risible. Does anybody really believe that an eighteen-year old male in his dorm room Saturday night viewing Internet pornography is actually boning up on his anatomy and physiology homework? Finally, ob-

jectors are also likely to assert that any restriction on the “free exchange of ideas,” even if the “ideas” are conceded to be worthless, is censorship. Not giving ideas a venue (in this case, an Internet platform) is tantamount to suppression. As noted above, however, colleges do not provide venues to every seeker purveying ideas, especially when the ideas are inconsistent with the school’s mission. Given, too, the political correctness regnant on some campuses, apparently some ideas are freer than others. Having said all these things, however, there remains one clear argument disproving the claim of “suppression.” While the lack of pornography available through campus Internet services will realistically not suppress the multibillion dollar pornography industry, it does make the statement that Catholic colleges, through their IT infrastructures, will not facilitate that industry. Students truly intent on viewing their XXX-sites can order their own personal Internet connection from the multitude of available providers ready to offer on-line access. Pornographic ideas will not die because they are not coming over the campus server. (If that were true, it would make an even stronger case for Catholic colleges to bear witness against pornography). But regardless of whether or not pornography is somehow accessible, the Catholic university—through its services, its information technology systems, and its server—need not cooperate in making them available. Catholic institutions of higher learning have a legitimate interest in ensuring that institutionally-provided services coming over institutionally-maintained infrastructure is not complicit in the exploitation of pornography.

Catholic universities should set standards, including moral standards, for their students. Catholic universities should be communities of standards. One of those standards should be that they do not provide their IT infrastructure to make pornography available. Given the ubiquity of pornography in contemporary American culture, they also seem to have a responsibility to address this issue proactively. Some suggested ways might include: addressing this issue within campus ministry/retreat contexts; ensuring that campus spiritual and mental health counseling includes private and public programs aimed at addressing Internet sexual addiction⁷; including language in student life handbooks stressing the in-

compatibility of pornography use with the identity of a student (regardless of personal faith) at a *Catholic* university; and having clear policies in faculty and staff handbooks about access to pornographic sites by employees using college computer systems. The author is not seeking rigid disciplinary rules and, given the addictive nature of on-line pornography, urges that any effort to control this phenomenon be coupled with effective support for those who have become entangled in it. On the other hand, let’s help our students not to get caught up in the first place.

The technology is there. Explicitly pornographic sites can be filtered off campus-provided Internet service. Usage monitoring is also available. Various U.S. Government agencies, for example, makes clear that employees using government-provided Internet services have “no reasonable expectation of privacy” and are subject to potential disciplinary action by human resources for accessing pornographic sites through their employer’s computer. Is it not time for Catholic universities and colleges to decide whether they choose to be accessories in the viewing of smut by their students? Presumably, the U.S. Government’s standards—a government that disavows a sectarian identity—should not be higher. ✕

Endnotes

- 1 Tim Drake, “Elephant in the Dorm Room: Catholic Colleges Beginning to Block Online Porn and Gambling Sites,” *National Catholic Register*, February 10-16, 2008. The article also reports that Franciscan University in Steubenville, Ohio, blocks access to pornographic sites.
- 2 The article notes that the institution does filter online access for the preparatory school on campus.
- 3 Pamela Paul, *Pornified: How Pornography Is Transforming Our Lives, Our Relationships, and Our Families* (New York: Times Books/Henry Holt and Company, 2005), p. 8.
- 4 Benedict J. Groeschel, *The Courage to Be Chaste* (New York: Paulist, 1985).
- 5 Karol Wojtyla (Pope John Paul II), *Love and Responsibility*, trans. H.T. Willetts (New York: Farrar, Straus, and Giroux, 1981), pp. 31-33. Wojtyla specifically refers to pornography on pp. 192-93, noting that “. . . pornography is not just a lapse or an error. It is a deliberate trend” (p. 193). “Pornography is a marked tendency to accentuate the sexual element when reproducing the human body or human love . . . with the object of inducing the reader or viewer to believe that sexual values are the only real values of the person [or at least the only ones that matter—JMG], and that love is nothing more than the experience, individual or shared, of those values alone” (p. 192). *Love and Responsibility* originally appeared in 1960.
- 6 For a fuller articulation of this philosophy of Catholic education,

see Karol Wojtyła, “Uniwersytet katolicki: koncepcje i zadania” [The Catholic University: Concept and Mission], *Zeszyty Naukowe Katolickiego Uniwersytetu Lubelskiego*, 11 (1968), no. 3/4: 13-16.

7 There appear to be a spate of books, often from non-Catholic Christian publishers, on Internet sexual addiction. The author

has not evaluated them, for example, P. Carnes, *In the Shadow of the Net: Breaking Free on On-Line Compulsive Sexual Behavior*, 2nd ed. (Center City, MN: Hazelden, 2007). A related topic, increasingly appearing in books and magazine articles, is the proliferation of on-line pornography viewing and its impact on marriage, which is beyond the scope of this article.

Is Death Evil? A Question for Father Peter Ryan, S.J. Part I

By Fr. Michael McDermott, S.J.

In a recent article the Rev. Peter Ryan appreciated the role of the body in the Christian economy of salvation. Contrary to the modern technological view of the body as an instrument, which allows pornography, non-marital sexual intercourse, and physician assisted suicide, he insisted that the body belongs essentially to the human being and is taken up into the mystery of salvation: its destiny is the resurrection, which is anticipated in the Eucharist and marriage; for these sacraments effect unity with God and fellow men in and through material realities. One can only praise this synthetic vision and hope for its diffusion. Yet at one point Fr. Ryan wrote, “In itself dying is not good. Death itself is not the sacrifice we offer, for death is bad. In itself death just means losing the life we have here. If there were no sin there would be no death.” Since death is an evil, it apparently cannot be put to a good purpose. For Fr. Ryan affirmed that “Jesus’ sacrifice was not precisely his death but the way he lived his life. He fulfilled His mission despite the fact that it meant freely accepting his death.” Fr. Ryan distinguished Jesus’ acceptance of death from His intention of it.¹ Unfortunately his position contradicts Scripture. But it raises some important philosophical and theological questions. After a review of Scripture’s witness to the significance of Jesus’ death, this essay will trace the understanding of death through leading theologians in the Western tradition who affirm that it is both natural to man and due to sin. How these two apparently contradictory aspects can be reconciled comprises the essay’s final section which relies upon a new understanding of the relation of personal freedom and nature that may assist Catholic-Protestant ecumenical dialogue.

Jesus’ Saving Death

Already in the earliest pre-Pauline creedal formulas one finds the clear confession, “He died for our sins according to the Scriptures” (1 Cor. 15:3). The Greek word, *hyper*, translated “for” can mean “for the sake of” or “in the place of” or “because of.” Paul will later reformulate that thought: “He was handed over on account of (*dia*) our transgressions and rose on account of our justification” (Rom. 4:25). The Greek *dia* provides the cause of Jesus’ death and resurrection, our sins and our justification. Jesus’ death seems to be the very reason for our salvation because “God established Him the propitiation through faith in His blood for the showing forth of His justice on account of the forgiveness of previous sins” (Rom. 3:25). The word used for propitiation, *hilasterion*, indicates most probably the “mercy seat” over the ark of the covenant in the Jerusalem Temple’s Holy of Holies on which the high priest sprinkled the blood of bullocks and goats on the day of atonement and for other sin offerings (Lev. 4; 116:11-19). There the Lord communicated with His people (Ex. 25:17-22; Num. 7:89).² But essential for us is the blood of Christ which effects reconciliation with God and in which all are called to believe. We are “justified now by (in) His blood” (Rom. 5:9), saved and sanctified by it (Apoc. 1:5; 5:9 16:12). For Christ “has made peace through the blood of His cross” (Col. 1:20). In Christ “we have redemption through His blood, the remission of sins” (Eph. 1:7; cp. 1 Cor. 6:20; 7:23). The Church, God’s flock, has been obtained and ransomed through the blood of God’s Son (Acts 20:28; Apoc. 5:9). “Though we were enemies, we have been reconciled to God through the death of His Son”

(Rom. 5:10). Christ's blood purifies of sin, sanctifies, and gives access to God (1 Jn. 1:7; Rev. 1:5; Heb. 9:14; 13:13; Eph. 2:13); through the Lamb's blood the martyrs conquered and in it whitened their robes (Apoc. 7:14; 12:14).

Baptism introduces believers into the Church; they are baptized into Christ's death and become "connatural to the likeness of His death" in order to rise with Him (Rom. 6:3-5). But baptism just initiates a process; all during his life St. Paul was striving to be conformed to Christ's death (Phil. 3:10). Jesus Christ comes through water and blood (1 Jn. 5:6). Baptism leads to the Eucharist. All the sacrificial imagery playing upon the death of Christ in terms of blood is doubtless related to the Eucharist, which Christ identified as "the new covenant in (by) my blood" (Lk. 22:20; 1 Cor. 11:25). For Christ is "the Lamb sacrificed from the creation of the world" (Apoc. 13:8), the Lamb of God killed as the Paschal lambs were being sacrificed (Jn. 1:29; 19:14,36). Reception of the Eucharist bestows communion with Christ (1 Cor 10:16). Salvation is attained only by drinking His blood, poured out on the cross (Jn. 6:53-56; 19:34). His blood of the eternal covenant sanctifies (Heb. 10:29; 12:24; 13:20). 1 Pet. 1:18-20 well sums up the doctrine of the New Testament:

You know that you were ransomed from the futile behavior handed on from your fathers, not by perishable things, by silver or gold, but by the precious blood of Christ as of a lamb without blemish or spot. He was destined before the creation of the world but was made manifest at the end of the times for your sake.

The early Church's belief was bound not only to Jesus' institution of the Eucharist but also to His proclamation that He came to give His life as a "ransom for many" (Mk. 10:45). This logion most probably took up the Old Testament theme of the Suffering Servant who was led like an innocent lamb to the slaughter. In any case the early Church used the Suffering Servant image to interpret Jesus' life, Passion, and death (Mt. 8:17; Lk. 22:37; Acts 8:32; Jn. 12:38; 19:37; Heb. 9:28). The Servant went willingly to His death: he did not open his mouth under oppression and, though the Lord's will bruised him,

he made himself an offering for sin, bore the sins of many, and made intercession for sinners (Is. 53:7-12). Jesus acted with the same freedom. On Holy Thursday He offered the Eucharist, anticipating and ratifying His coming death. "The Father loves me because I lay down my life in order to take it again. No one takes it from me, but I lay it down of my own. I have power to lay it down and I have power to take it up again" (Jn. 10:17-18). So St. Paul reported: "While we were still weak, at the proper time Christ died for the impious. For scarcely does anyone die for a just man. For a good man one perhaps may even dare to die. But God established His love for us because while we were still sinners Christ died for us" (Rom. 5:6-8). There is no essential difference between "God's love" and "Christ's love" since Paul employed the two terms interchangeably (e.g., Rom. 8:35,39). Christ actively fulfilled the Father's will (Lk. 22:42). "Because He was in the form of God He did not consider equality with God something to be exploited, but He emptied Himself, taking on the form of a slave, becoming in the likeness of men; found as a man in shape, He humbled Himself, becoming obedient unto death, even the death on a cross" (Phil. 2:6-8). Thus on the cross, He actively "handed over the spirit" after announcing "it is consummated" (Jn. 19:30).

Death Due to Sin

If Jesus saved us by His death, death cannot be evil in itself. Yet St. Paul writes, "As through one man sin entered the world and through sin death, so also death has penetrated to all men insofar as all sinned" (Rom. 5:12). For his part the Apostle is doubtless reflecting the account of Genesis 2-3, whereby God threatened man with death on the day he would disobey the command not to eat of the tree of good and evil in the midst of Paradise (2:17). Upon Adam's transgression God announced the execution of the threat, "In the sweat of your face you shall eat bread till you return to the ground, for out of it you were taken; you are dust, and to dust you shall return" (3:19). Yet God did not immediately kill Adam.³ Instead He exiled from Paradise Adam, who had come to know good and evil, "lest he put forth his hand and take also of the tree of life, and

eat, and live forever” (3:23). Beyond Adam’s and Eve’s condemnations the serpent was cursed to crawl upon the ground, eat dust, and know mankind’s enmity (2:14–15). So the Book of Wisdom drew the conclusion, “God created man for incorruption, and made him the image of His own eternity, but through the devil’s envy death entered the world, and those who belong to his faction experience it” (2:23–24). The righteous only appear to die since their souls are in God’s hands (3:1–3). “God did not make death nor does He enjoy the destruction of the living. For He created all things for existence” (1:13–14).⁴ Since the devil was a murderer from the beginning (Jn. 8:44), Jesus took on a mortal nature in order that “though His death He might render ineffective the one possessing the power of death, i.e., the devil, and liberate whoever were subject to slavery all their lives because of fear of death” (Heb. 2:14–15; 1 Jn. 3:8). Christ’s death was such a blessing that to St. Irenaeus even the death bestowed on Adam manifested God’s mercy; death prevented Adam from remaining forever a sinner with “unending, incurable evil” and brought it about that “by ceasing at a certain time to live to sin, but by dying to it man might begin to live to God” (*Adversus Haereses*, III, 23, 6). But Western tradition soon reacted to other dangers than Gnosticism. A brief tour will highlight the problems.

The Witness of the Magisterium

Against Pelagius and Celestius, who stressed nature’s sanity and sufficiency, the North African bishops appealed to Scripture and interpreted it in several councils. Doubtless because upon his arrival in Africa Celestius began preaching, among other opinions, that “Adam, created mortal, would have died, whether or not he sinned,”⁵ in 418 Aurelius of Carthage and Augustine of Hippo moved the Council of Carthage to resolve: “If anyone should say that the first man Adam was made mortal such that, whether or not he sinned, he would die in the body, i.e., he would depart from the body not because of sin (*peccati merito*), but by necessity of nature, let him be anathema” (DS 222). A bit more than one hundred years later with Rome’s collaboration Caesarius of Arles convoked the Second Council of Orange—actually only thirteen bishops

beside himself—to rebut the Semipelagian doctrine of Faustus of Riez, dead already thirty years. Its first canon reads:

If anyone says that through the offense of Adam’s transgression not the whole man, i.e., according to body and soul, has been changed for the worse, but believes that, while the liberty of soul perdures uninjured, the body alone is subject to corruption, as one deceived by the error of Pelagius, he contradicts Scripture which says: “The soul which sinned itself will die” (Ezech. 18:20); and: “Do you not know, that to whomever you exhibit yourselves as slaves unto obedience, you are the slaves of him whom you obey?” (Rom. 6:16); and: “Someone is considered the slave of the one by whom he is conquered” (cf. 2 Pet. 2:19). (DS 371)

The second canon is also relevant:

If anyone asserts that Adam’s transgression injures him alone and not his offspring, or if anyone testifies that only the death of the body, which is the penalty of sin, but not also sin, which is the death of the soul, has passed into the whole human race through the one man, he attributes injustice to God and contradicts the Apostle who says: “Through one man sin entered into the world and through sin death, and thus it has passed over into all men in whom (*in quo*) all sinned” (cf. Rom. 5:12). (DS 372)

By the time of Orange Celestius’s view of Adam’s mortality was no longer a pressing problem meriting censure. Faustus apparently agreed with the assembled bishops in attributing Adam’s physical mortality to sin. It seems probable that an original list of nineteen *capitula*, drawn up for condemnation possibly by Caesarius or the Theopaschist monk John Maxentius, was reduced to eight by the Roman Curia before adding sentences borrowed from Prosper of Aquitaine. Among the omitted *capitula* was the second, which maintained that “death is the punishment for sin, not an accident resulting from the condition of nature.” The council, accepting with slight modification the revised Roman list, received papal approbation. Boniface II’s letter “confirmed by the authority of the Apostolic See” the view that prevenient grace gives rise to faith. But Boniface did not

mention the first two canons or say anything about man's corporeal death being due to Adam's sin.⁶ Apparently Rome saw no need to extend condemnations beyond what was absolutely necessary. Orange was so successful in aiding Caesarius to extirpate Semipelagianism from southern France that it slipped into oblivion until the sixteenth century when Protestants began to use its Augustinian theology against the Catholic Church. Hence at Trent the Council Fathers, careful to demonstrate that they rejected Pelagianism, took up its doctrine on original sin and canonized it with minor variations. In its fifth session (June, 1546) that council proclaimed:

If anyone refuses to acknowledge that Adam, the first man, when he transgressed God's command in paradise, at once lost the holiness and righteousness in which he had been constituted, and by the offense of this disloyalty incurred the wrath and anger of God and consequently the death with which God had threatened him, and with death, slavery under the power of him who henceforth would hold dominion over death (Heb. 2:14), namely the devil, and that, by this sin, Adam whole and entire, as regards body and soul, was changed to a worse state, let him be anathema (DS 1511).

If anyone maintains that Adam's disloyalty harmed himself alone and not his offspring, and that he lost for himself alone and not also for us the righteousness and holiness that he had received; or that being himself tainted by the sin of disobedience, he only transmitted to the human race death and other bodily pains, but not the sin which is a death of the soul, let him be anathema. For he contradicts the Apostle who says: "By one man sin entered into the world, and, through sin, death; and so death passed into all men, in whom all sinned" (DS 1512).

Evaluation of the Magisterial Tradition

The clearest testimony to physical death as due to Adam's sin is found in the Council of Carthage. Its canons were submitted to Rome, but it is not at all certain that the pope approved them. For Zosimus's *Tractoria*, which

finally condemned Pelagius and Celestius, has been lost; only some fragments survive. That complicates already complicated issues. Acceding to the requests of North African bishops, Pope Innocent I had condemned the two Englishmen in 416. Yet Celestius appealed to Innocent's successor, Zosimus, and after a hearing he was acquitted of charges against him. Then a council reconvened at Carthage in 418 to re-condemn Pelagius and Celestius; its president appealed to Emperor Honorius, who issued a rescript against the two heretics. Thereupon Zosimus wrote his *Tractoria*. Some scholars point to differences in terminology between Zosimus and Carthage to claim that while both Innocent and Zosimus considered baptism necessary to liberate from perdition, they were unwilling to accept the North Africans' notion of hereditary sin and only under political pressure did they condemn Pelagius and Celestius. Others hypothesize that Zosimus was misled by an evasive confession of Celestius but upon better information condemned him and Pelagius; differences in terminology were merely terminological. Correspondingly Augustine's own report that the Englishmen were condemned by the council and the Apostolic See has been accepted as true by some; but, since he refrained from quoting the pope, the others interpret it as an attempt to stretch the papal document to cover his own position. Despite the uncertainty about papal approval of Carthage the first canon of Carthage first testifies to an ancient theological tradition that sees physical death as the result of Adam's sin.⁷

The bishops assembled at Orange in 529 certainly presupposed that corporeal death resulted from Adam's sin but they did not define it. Faustus disputed only the effects of that sin on human freedom and nature, wishing to uphold man's native ability to do good. The council's first canon affirmed the injury done to human freedom, the second defined that sin possessed all Adam's descendants from the beginning. Boniface II saw no reason to approve these canons explicitly. Similarly Trent's two canons presupposed the death of the body but only defined that the soul's death followed upon Adam's sin for all his progeny.⁸ Hence a corporeal death due to sin was defined by neither the Council of Orange nor the Council of Trent. Moreover, even if Boniface had approved the first two canons, it is disputed what

binding authority that provincial council would possess before its incorporation into Trent.

Augustine's Theology of Death

Behind the Council of Carthage stood St. Augustine and his elaborate theology of original sin. In the thirteenth and fourteenth books of *De Civitate Dei* Augustine laid out the reason why God allowed death to enter the world. He considered death an evil, whether it be death of the body or death of the soul, which includes the second death, final damnation. As the body's death is due to its separation from the soul, so the soul's death results from God's departure from it. From the beginning God did not intend death; He created Adam good without any defect. Not only was Adam's body subject to his will and his will to reason, but also he was subject in obedience to God. His happiness consisted in adhering to the Good, God. Yet, since man was created from nothing, he could decline or defect from the good.⁹ Death is the punishment for sin, for which bad will is responsible. Adam did not yet have a spiritual body, which would come with the resurrection. Then God's Spirit would render him impeccable and completely immortal, removed from all possibility of corruption. In the meantime his animal body was exempt from death as long as he obeyed God. Not yet in the resurrection where dying is impossible (*non posse mori*), he could not die (*posse non mori*) by keeping God's rule. Adam had no reason to disobey God except pride, wanting to be like God, determining for himself good and evil. To some degree Augustine explained Adam's choice to sin as dependent on his desire to remain with his wife, whose weakness had been deceived by Satan; Adam supposedly considered his trespass to be a venial sin. Actually the sin was mortal; its evil was not attenuated. For God's command, intended to help Adam recognize his dependence on God and grant him a healthy obedience, could have been obeyed easily. Adam in Paradise lacked nothing for his happiness.¹⁰

As long as Adam ate of the tree of life, he was not subject to death nor aging nor any injury from without. The animals were innocuous and subject to him. Though his body required nourishment,

enough food and drink remained always available. He was hungry and thirsty only when he wanted to be. There was no fatigue from laborious work nor boredom nor physical or mental sickness. He felt no heat or cold. He enjoyed total tranquility of mind with perfect harmony between soul and body. He controlled completely his own faculties; his body obeyed his will, which followed reason, and his reason was subordinate to God. His mind dominated his passions. Even copulation for procreation was under the control of the mind, without any violence. Similarly Eve's childbirth would be without pain. Adam consequently lived in a state of continual joy without fear or sorrow. For "he was living, enjoying God from whose goodness he was himself good" (*vivebat fruens Deo, ex quo bono erat bonus*).¹¹

"Even if in Paradise [Adam] was not able to do everything before sin, nonetheless what he could not do he did not wish to do; therefore he could do everything which he wished." For he wished nothing except what God wished for him. He could have lived in Paradise as long as he wished to live as God willed him to live. He only had freely to accept God's help. Had Adam remained obedient, he would have passed into permanent felicity like the blessed angels: "A greater happiness would be given... where there would be the secure certitude that no one would sin or die; such would be the life of the saints after no experience of heavy labor, suffering, or death, as will come about after all these things when bodies are rendered incorrupt by the resurrection of the dead." For bodies can be made eternal. But misled by pride, Adam sinned. Sin occurred by the will's defection, which is contrary to nature; thus man lost freedom by deserting the immutable God, who enlightens the mind and kindles the will. Once his subordination to God was lost, he was changed for the worse and rebellion entered also into his members. No longer controlling his mind or his passions, he incurred spiritual death; he was also doomed to sickness and physical death. Due to sin his flesh became corruptible. The threat of death, an object of dread, was intended to prevent sin; but sin brought death in its train. "It is a firm belief among Christians who hold truly the Catholic faith that the death of the body was inflicted upon us not by the law of nature, by which God did not bring about (*fecit*) death

for man, but by the fault of sin (*merito peccati*); for, punishing sin, God said to the man, in whom we all were at that time: ‘You are earth, and you will go into earth.’” As the just punishment for sin, death is an evil to be suffered.¹²

Although God could have prevented man’s fall as well as the devil’s, He allowed this evil in order to let man appreciate what he is without grace, what his fault demanded, and how gracious God is in bestowing grace through Christ and liberating him from sin. Thus from the evils of sin and death God can bring about good. “The One who in His providence and omnipotence distributes to each his own, knows how to use well not only the good but also the evil.” Martyrs and other Christians use death well and thus let an evil become good for them. “Not that death, which was previously evil, has become something good; rather God granted the grace of faith in order that death, which is certainly the contrary of life, might become the instrument through which the transition to life occurs.” At the resurrection the omnipotent God will transform the substance of flesh and make bodies spiritual, i.e., retaining the same substance of flesh but leaving behind all that is corrupt, heavy, burdensome, and bound to die.¹³

Augustine’s exaltation of Adam’s gifts in Paradise also served to protect God against any blame in Adam’s fall. The first man’s nature lacked nothing by which he might be tempted to disobey. Neither death nor injury was to be feared; food, drink, and sleep were entirely subject to his will. Completely controlling his passions, Adam was as close to an angel as it was possible for man to be. It is hard to explain how with his complete control, fulfillment of all his desires, and unclouded knowledge he could sin. Augustine actually gave two explanations of Adam’s sin. The first expanded the suggestion of 1 Tim. 2:14 that Eve, not Adam was deceived by the devil. Thus the devil, recognizing Adam’s greater insight, misled Eve and over her entrapped Adam, who did not wish to be separated from the only other human being, even in sin. Adam was deceived not about the sin but only about its gravity, considering it venial, since “he had not experienced the divine severity.” The second reason followed shortly thereafter: pride, i.e., “the desire for a perverse superiority,” whereby man makes himself his own source (*principium*) and

rebelliously abandons (*deficit*) the immutable Good.¹⁴ But pride is absolutely irrational. How can anyone intelligently abandon the source of all good, the one in whom all good is grounded? Adam’s sympathetic kinship with Eve gives some reason for his sin, but that reason would not be pure pride. Actually Augustine was wrestling with an insoluble problem. No explanation for sin can be given: insofar as an explanation involves identifying the cause for any action and a cause implies a necessary link between it and its effect, the discovery of a cause would make sin necessary; but that is impossible since by definition sin is freely chosen. Augustine’s break from Manichaeism followed his recognition that evil is a lack, not something positive. But how can anyone intelligently pick what does not exist? Even if evil exists not in itself, but only in a good thing, and an evil choice involves the choice of a lesser good, how stupid must one be, knowingly to choose a lesser good over a higher good?¹⁵

Fr. Ryan’s difficulty is very closely tied to this conundrum. Insofar as evil is a lack (*defectus*), how can God use an evil to achieve some good? The evil is not anything good; in theory it does not even exist. How then can God use something non-existent to achieve a good? Did not Augustine contradict himself in claiming that God can use evil to bring about good?

St. Thomas

In the beginning of the *Summa Theologiae* the first objection to God’s existence appealed to experienced evil; it was countered by an Augustinian quotation that God, supreme goodness, brings good out of evil (2, 3, 1).¹⁶ It is hardly a surprise, therefore, to discover that the Angelic Doctor followed the main lines of Augustine’s theology of Adam and death, citing him repeatedly. But important nuances were added. In the thirteenth century the distinction of natural and supernatural orders was being elaborated in theology. This distinction endowed Thomas with a great flexibility in analyzing the complexity of Adam’s primordial and fallen states. Like Augustine, Thomas took the account of Paradise literally, while allowing for a spiritual reading (102, 1c). According to him Adam was originally perfect,

created in grace, and endowed with other wondrous gifts (90, 4c; 95, 1c).¹⁷ God conferred on him perfect knowledge of all things insofar as he was to be the father and teacher of the human race (94, 3c; 106, 1, 1). This did not mean that he knew everything. He was ignorant of future contingencies, men's inner thoughts, and some singulars (94, 3c), and he lacked the beatific vision (94, 1c). His way of knowing was also less than angelic since his intellect relied on sensible images in the *conversio ad phantasma* (94, 2c). But he had a virtual knowledge of everything contained in the first self-evident principles of natural reason as well as knowledge through infused *species* (94, 3c.1). Perhaps God even spoke to him interiorly since Adam's contemplation of intelligible effects was not disturbed by exterior realities; thus his knowledge was much clearer and firmer than ours (94, 1c; 2c). In his realism Thomas allowed for puerile imperfections in whatever children were to be born to Adam in Paradise. They would not fully control the use of their infantile limbs and would have to learn; instead of "ignorance" Thomas preferred to characterize this state by "nescience," a lack of a knowledge appropriate for their age (99, 1c.2-4; 101, 1c.2).

Adam, though formed from the earth, had great perfections. His reason and will completely dominated the lower parts of his soul, and his body was entirely subject to his soul (94, 1c; 2c; 4c; 95, 1c). That internal subjugation of lower to higher perdured so long as he remained subject to God (95, 1c). Thus grace established his integrity, rectitude, and justice (95, 1c; 101, 1, 2; II-II 164, 1, 4). God also endowed him with incorruptibility and immortality (97, 1c; 2c). These benefits resulted from a supernatural force (*vis*) given by God as an efficient cause to the soul, which communicated it to the body (97, 1c; 3, 1; 98, 1, 1; 102, 2c), somewhat parallel to the soul's communication of *esse* to the body (75, 6c; 76, 4c; 6c; 7c). For Adam was naturally mortal. Thomas recognized that the soul, a form that can perform operations independent of the body (75, 2c; 6c; 76, 1, 1; 2, 2), subsists of itself and is naturally immortal (75, 2c; 98, 1c; II-II 164, 1, 1.2), but the body, as a composite reality, is subject to decay: "Death is natural on account of matter's condition and penal because of the loss of the divine favor (*beneficium*) preventing death" (98, 1c; II-II 164, 1, 1). The supernatural power overcame

that weakness attributable to the soul's juncture with the body.

To explain why Adam was eating from the tree of life, Thomas postulated, according to medieval biology, that the tree countered old age. Insofar as the body has to be replenished for its loss of humidity through the soul's natural action which involves heat, foods from without can be converted into the body's preexistent humidity for replenishment and growth. With age, however, the active power of the *species* for converting food into humidity becomes enfeebled, and the addition of external food would dilute the preexistent humidity and lead to the body's dissolution. Against that defect the tree of life served as a remedy, fortifying the *species's* natural strength (97, 4c; 102, 2c). If Adam ate of its fruit after his sin, he would have prolonged his life despite his loss of immortality, "but it was not to man's advantage to remain longer in this life's misery" (II-II, 162, 2, 6). With grace Adam was ordained to a supernatural end (94, 3c), and if he persisted in obedience to God's will, he would have attained a translation into everlasting life in the empyrean heaven (102, 2, 1; 4c). For that achievement grace was needed (95, 4, 1; III 61, 2, 1).

Immortality came from grace, not nature (76, 5, 1; 102, 4c). Though not exempt from the laws of nature (96, 3c), Adam could not be injured by anything from without (II-II, 164, 2, 8). With his superior knowledge and strength of body he could foresee and avoid danger, and divine providence would prevent any baneful surprises from overtaking him (87, 2, 4). Even if "dissentation" (*discordia*) existed among the animals insofar as carnivorous beasts preyed on others (96, 1, 2), they all were subject to Adam (96, 1c; 2c). He did not need to consume them since he subsisted by eating of the tree of life and other trees (97, 3, 3; 4c). Though the fields produced thorns and thistles before sin, they fed the herbivorous animals and did not prick Adam (II-II, 164, 2, 1). His work in tending the earth would have been a pleasure, not a laborious task (102, 3c). He ate, drank, and slept since such habits are ordered to his nature's good and required for life, growth, and generation (97, 2, 1; 3c). All his passions were subject to reason, consequent upon judgment; only passions ordered to a good, i.e., joy and love, were present (95, 2c). Passions ordered to an evil, as fear and sorrow, did not exist for him;

for he lacked no good, and no threat of evil existed (95, 2c). Eve was subject to Adam not servilely, but for her and their common good (96, 4c). Childbearing and birth would involve no weariness or pain, nor would *coitus* deprive Eve of her integrity (98, 2, 4). The sexual members and their operations would be completely controlled by reason (98, 2c.3). Since he was created in God's grace, Adam enjoyed all virtues, even supernatural faith, hope (for final glory), and charity (95, 2, 3; 3c; II-II, 5, 1c). The virtues were present habitually and actually unless there was no paradisiacal occasion for their actuation: e.g., there was no need of penance and mercy (95, 3c). Adam believed through interior revelation in Christ's incarnation, while remaining ignorant of its cause, his sin (II-II 2, 7c; 5, 1, 3; III, 1, 3, 5).

Given Adam's superior endowments of grace and nature, a fundamental pride, a "seeking of a spiritual good beyond measure," caused disobedience and explained his fall (II-II 105, 2, 3; 163, 1c; III, 5c). Thomas acknowledged that, seen objectively, Eve's sin was greater than Adam's because she believed the devil's lie and, elated, acted out of the desire to be like the gods (94, 4, 1; II-II 163, 1, 4). Adam's sin was attributable in part to the human affinity for members of the same race (II-II, 165, 2c), i.e., his attachment to Eve. But pride supplied the primary motive since he could not be deceived into believing the satanic lie (94, 4c). He considered his sin venial, easily remissible (II-II 163, 4, c), yet his sin was subjectively greater since he was more richly endowed than Eve, who was naturally subject to him as her head. Given the submission of his lower powers to the higher, temptation could only come from without (II-II 165, 2, 2), and Adam could have resisted it without difficulty (II-II 165, 1, 3). Since disorder could only come from his superior faculties, any sin of his had to be mortal (II-II, 89, 3c). There was nothing in him impelling him to sin (95, 4, 3). By his nature alone Adam could have resisted the devil, but he did not: "He was able through free will to resist the tempter; the condition of nature itself was demanding that he be left to his own will" (II-II 165, 1, 2).¹⁸

Once Adam sinned, he was deprived of his original integrity and rectitude (II-II 164, 1, 1). As he was no longer subject to God, his lower faculties were no longer subject to the higher. Hence death, concu-

piscence, and corporeal defects arrived (II-II 164, 1c; 2c). Death was experienced as penal. For man's soul is immortal and, interpreted from its conjunction with the soul, the body too should be immortal (II-II, 164, 1, 1). But death, "an evil of human nature, derives not from God but from a defect consequent upon human guilt." This penal element allowed Thomas to find in it a certain *ratio boni*. Though death is a deprivation of life, involving the penalty of loss (*poena damni*), it can be seen as a just punishment (II-II 164, 1, 5.6). Accepting it, men can employ it for good. Thomas quoted Augustine to the effect that "the just use well not only good things but also bad things." Hence he concluded, "Therefore, insofar as the saints use death well, death becomes meritorious for them" (II-II, 164, 1, 6). He agreed entirely with Augustine that "God is so powerful that he can order any evil whatever toward the good" and "make good from evil" (*ut bene faciat etiam de malo*: 92, 1, 3; 2, 3, 1).

Like Augustine, Thomas faced the problem how God can use a defect, a lack, to bring about good. Two possible answers were given. First, the physical defect is relativized in relation to freedom. The objective natural order is not absolute, for what is a physical lack, indeed a deprivation of life can be seen from a moral perspective as a just punishment and used as such for merit. Thomas had similarly departed from the purely objective order of values in evaluating the gravity of Adam's sin. Although Adam's sin of pride was not the highest imaginable in its specific type—pride could be joined to blasphemy or denial of God—the subjective conditions of Adam's perfect state rendered his sin more grave than anyone else's; for his integrity and rectitude banished all deception and no motion from lower faculties distracted his choice (II-II 163, 3c).

A second, related answer may be found in Thomas' distinction of natural and supernatural orders. In the former death is natural to man and God's omnipotence overcame it to bestow the benefit of immortality on Adam (II-II 164, 1, 1). As natural, death cannot be considered an evil; as something positive, it could be used by God for a greater end. In that case, however, how can death be penal, the punishment of sin? Why did Thomas consider it an evil from which God elicits good? Though nature deprived of grace is a lesser good than nature elevated by grace, death

belongs to nature and cannot be considered nature's punishment. Of course Thomas also recognized the difficulty that death poses to man: because of its juncture with a naturally incorruptible soul the body ought also to participate in its incorruptibility, if at all possible,¹⁹ but such is not the case. Even at the level of nature death revealed a tension in Thomas's thought.

A tension between natural and supernatural orders arose when Thomas held that even by his natural free will Adam could have resisted the devil's temptation, yet he needed grace in order to attain his concrete goal. If nature alone sufficed to resist sin, why was grace necessary for him to persevere in life and virtue? This difficulty cannot be avoided by reference to the supernatural attraction of God as final cause. For Thomas the immortality bestowed upon man was due to a power in the soul given by God as an (external) efficient cause. Finally, one might inquire about the result of Adam's sin upon nature. Thomas wrote: "From this [first sin] the innocence of the first state was broken up; once innocence was removed, the whole human nature was disoriented" (*ex hoc interrupta est innocentia primi status, qua subtracta, deordinata est tota natura humana*: II-II 163, 3, 2). If nature was entirely thrown off balance, how could man's freedom remain intact? The question about the Fall's consequences would bedevil subsequent theological history.

The Augustinian Reaction

Certain tensions remained in the Scholastic postulation of a natural order to which grace was added. Although the natural order seemingly assured man's freedom of choice before God's historical revelation, its abstractness led some thinkers to become dissatisfied with it. *De facto* man was either in grace or in sin, in Paradise, fallen, or redeemed; there was no neutral, middle state. Moreover, the establishment of a separate natural order seemed to give man an autonomy vis-à-vis God on whom his whole salvation depended. In rejecting a corrupt Church which they regarded as an impediment between men and their Creator, the Protestant Reformers also swept away any autonomous natural order which might shield

man from confessing his sin and his absolute need of liberating grace. Luther and Calvin would have recourse to Augustine, considering themselves his authentic disciples,²⁰ but they read Augustine with minds in which the natural-supernatural distinction had been implanted. That would have important repercussions for understanding human morality and concupiscence.

a) Luther

Martin Luther, the German Augustinian, rejected a nature mediating between paradisiacal and fallen states lest man cooperate in any way with his salvation and not appreciate God's utterly gratuitous saving grace.²¹ He admitted that the Fall had rendered men incapable of adequately knowing Adam's original state since they lacked experience of it. To it belonged, however, the highest perfections of spirit and body: clearest intellect with perfect knowledge of all earthly created natures, best memory, most straightforward will, beautiful body with a strength surpassing all the animals. Though Adam ate, drank, and labored, all was supremely pleasant to him; animals and soil obeyed him, producing what he wished. Even subhuman creation existed in a far superior state. Adam would have procreated without passion and Eve would have been much more fertile, giving birth simultaneously to many children without pain. For Adam knew God, believed that He was good, and lived a life wholly good in complete obedience to God; he desired most sincerely to love God and his neighbor.²² He enjoyed "original righteousness" as part of his nature with a tranquil mind, "without fear of death or any other danger." Luther had God address our first parents with these words: "Adam and Eve, now you are living without fear; death you have not experienced, nor have you seen it. This is My image, by which you are living, just as God lives. But if you sin, you will lose this image, and you will die." Adam was to procreate and when the number of the elect was completed, he and they would be translated without pain to an eternal, spiritual existence where, living like the angels, they would enjoy God and His blessings in perfect, perpetual bliss. "Adam, without any intervening death, would have exchanged his mortal life for the immortal one."²³

Though God's image "included eternal life, everlasting freedom from fear, and everything that is good," the image could be lost. Man's will, though upright, was still imperfect. "Perfection was postponed until the spiritual life after the physical one." Likewise man's immortality was not secure. He lived in a "middle condition" between angelic immortality and death. Immortality did not belong to his composite being *per se*. It was procured by his eating from the tree of life. Since procreation, eating, and labor were activities that might be assumed to bring on deterioration or debilitation, "God provided a remedy in the tree of life, so that without any decrease of his powers man could lead a long and healthy life in a state of perpetual youth."²⁴ Hence when Adam and Eve, not believing God's Word, disobeyed, they were prevented from eating of the tree of life; God gave them garments to remind them of their fall, their past and future sins, and "for a sign that they are mortal and... are living in certain death." For "death came through sin." With death came also the consequence of human nature's complete fall, the loss of original righteousness: the intellect's darkening, the will's depravity, guilty consciences, unleashed passions, and sins. "The image of God in man disappeared after sin." Then "because death is unbearable for human nature, it begets despair and blasphemy." With man all creation fell; its glory was diminished and the animals and the soil resisted man's dominion.²⁵

Despite sin's destruction something of nature remained; it was not completely abolished, only "impaired," indeed "depraved," as an "inner revolt" of the members took place. "Is this not a change of nature? The nature indeed remains; but it is corrupted in many respects, inasmuch as confidence toward God has been lost and the heart is full of distrust, fear, and shame." Man's intellect survived, though darkened and fleeing from God. While man lost free will with regard to God and what was superior to him, he retained it with regard to things below him. When God clothed our first parents in skins, He did so to remind them of lost bliss so that they might "sigh for the forgiveness of sins through the promised Seed, ... long for the lost image of God and begin to hate sin as the cause of this great evil." Their very longing for forgiveness implies that human nature is not totally corrupt, not entirely identified with concupiscence

and sin. Hence Luther could also write that God's image "has been almost completely lost." Though condemned to death, man had been created for eternity with God, and the soul still retained immortality.²⁶

Death does not only cause despair and blasphemy, concupiscence and all sin; it is also the proof of sin in Adam's children. "If death comes by sin and if without sin there would be no death, then sin is in all of us." Original sin causes their death. "The likeness of Adam's transgression is in us because we die as if we had sinned in the same way he did."²⁷ Behind sin, of course, stands God who in His inscrutable mystery allowed Adam to sin. Since God is all good, "He cannot do evil." Nonetheless, since God "foresees and purposes and does all things by his immutable, eternal, and infallible will," the question arises why God permitted Adam's fall. Luther appeals to the inscrutable, adorable mystery of the divine will before offering an answer: God uses Adam as an example to show what free will accomplishes without the constant aid of God's Spirit and so to destroy our pride. Yet earlier he retreated from a similar conclusion regarding Satan's fall: rather, as God deserts him, Satan sins; so God only "finds" Satan's will evil before snatching it away and moving it where He wills. Here Paul Althaus recognized a "problem which cannot be solved by theology but must remain a riddle": "Which comes first: God's forsaking a man and leaving him to himself—or man's tuning away from God and sinning? Or are they so closely intertwined that it is not legitimate to ask which comes first?"²⁸ In any case, since God hates sin, His wrath is also the efficient and final cause of death. "The fact that we die is the result of God's indescribable wrath over sin." In commenting on Ps. 90:3, whose composition he attributed to Moses, Luther wrote, "Moses rightly refers death to God Himself. He wants to warn us not to look frantically for help anywhere except to Him who has caused the evil." Then he cited Hos. 6:1 and 1 Sam. 2:6. This affliction involves both physical and spiritual death. For everything that man does according to nature is "an act of concupiscence against God" and as such is "evil and a fornication of the spirit." The will is "innately and inevitably evil and corrupt."²⁹

Luther clearly postulated a vicious cycle of sin

and death. Once sin has loosed death upon the world, the fear of death drives men inevitably to sin, and sin increases men's fear of death. It is "truly a sin to be unwilling to die and to fear death." Fear of death is equivalently sin. For Luther, paradoxically, despite the repugnance which the natural man feels for death—such is the power of sin within him—by faith in Christ who destroyed death man is empowered to desire death as the means to put an end to sin.³⁰ Beneath the paradoxes of Luther's thought lies a double sense of nature. On the one hand, insofar as original righteousness is part of man's nature, its loss would entail the destruction of that nature, its complete corruption or even abolition: what was man is no longer human.³¹ Then Christ's assumption of a sinless human nature would let Him have nothing in common with fallen humanity. On the other hand, something of "nature" remains: however impaired are intellect and will, human nature must remain, if it is to be redeemed by Christ's grace. As we saw earlier, fallen intellect and will function at least in regard to things below man. Moreover, man's soul remains immortal and his present nature longs for forgiveness. Certainly between Luther and Thomas a different emphasis is perceptible. Where a Scholastic understanding of original righteousness or grace as something added to nature accidentally, as it were, underestimates the devastating effects of original sin—without Christ all are lost (Rom. 3:9–12, 20–26; Acts 4:12)—Luther's view of original sin leaves little of human nature to be saved. Nonetheless the German Augustinian's position reveals a kinship to the Italian Dominican's. Both are wrestling with the relation of natural to supernatural orders. Thomas's man was naturally mortal, yet his immortal soul's juncture with the body raised a natural demand for incorruptibility that only grace can bestow. Besides that paradox, the Angelic Doctor's man cannot attain his final end without grace, and his total nature has been disoriented by sin. Luther, for his part, saw mortality as a punishment inflicted upon the human nature created as God's image, yet he recognized the soul's immortality and the longing for forgiveness. Might not such a fallen nature also long for incorruptibility? Though grace is utterly gratuitous, human nature with its freedom is saved. The paradoxical polarity balancing the demands of nature and grace must be maintained,

and there are various ways of doing it. Not surprisingly modern Lutherans also disagree among themselves about the naturalness or unnaturalness of death: the Missouri Synod sees death as "the very negation of what God has given," attributable to man's rebellion, while the American Lutheran Church and the Lutheran Church in America consider death respectively "a natural event in the course of life" and "a natural part of the life cycle."³²

The Council of Trent did not oppose Luther's doctrine of death, doubtless because Catholics similarly understood both physical and spiritual death to have been caused by Adam's sin. Indeed, it seems that Luther would gladly have subscribed to Trent's doctrine on death cited above (DS 1511). The real point of opposition concerned his equation of concupiscence, the "indwelling sin" of Rom. 7, with original sin. Trent insisted that baptism really sanctifies the baptized, purging them of sin's guilt (DS 1514–15). This affirmation presupposed a nature distinguishable from its unruly desires, a nature not utterly corrupted.³³ This laid the foundation for the subsequent affirmation that human freedom was not totally extinguished by original sin but could cooperate with grace and even "merit" grace's increase and salvation (DS 1521, 1525–27, 1529, 1535–39, 1545, 1548, 1554–57, 1576, 1581–82).

The heritage of Augustine, however, should be traced into all its implications for the thought of Calvin and Baius before a solution to the problem of death's mystery be hazarded. ❧

The second part of this article will appear in the fall issue.

Endnotes

- 1 P. Ryan, ZS.J., "Taking Our Bodies Seriously," *FCS Quarterly* 30/2 (2007), 7.
- 2 Cf. S. Lyonnet, S.J., *De Peccato et Redemptione*, 2 (Rome: PIB, 1960), pp. 106–17; J. Fitzmyer, S.J., *Romans* (New York: Doubleday, 1992), pp. 348–50.
- 3 W. Goossens, "L'imortalité corporelle dan les récits de Gen., II, 4b–III," *Ephemerides Theologicae Lovanienses* 12 (1935), 725–33, interprets the "day" of the curse not as a condition but more narrowly as "the day when you eat of it, the death penalty will be decreed against you, you will fall foul of a condemnation to death." He understands death as both natural and the penalty of disobedience (9723–25, 733), as does W. Vollborn, "Das Problem des Todes in Genesis 2 und 3," *Theologische Literaturzeitung* 77

- (1952), 709–14, who emphasizes separation from God more than physical death. N. Lohfink, S.J., “Der theologische Hintergrund der Genesiserzählung vom Sünderfall,” in *Realität und Wirklichkeit des Bösen*, ed. K. Forster (Würzburg: Echter, 1965), 76–81, 87, rightly stresses that evil is not embedded in man’s being, but due to freely chosen human sin in history.
- 4 S. Lyonnet, S.J., “Le sens de *perazein* en Sap. 2, 24 et la doctrine du Pêché Originel,” *Biblica* 39 (1958), 32–35, argues that “death” in Wis. 2:24 as well as Rom. 5:12ff. intends not physical death per se but the physical death which sinners experience and the second death, their definitive separation from God.
 - 5 Marius Mercator, *Commentorium de Coelestio Imperatori oblatum*, 1 (PL 48, 69).
 - 6 Cf. G. Fritz, “Orange (Dieuxième Concile d’),” *Dictionnaire de Théologie Catholique*, ed. A. Vacant, E. Mangenot, E. Amann, 11/1 (Paris: Letouzey, 1931), 1087–1103, esp. 1099, 1102–03; E. Amann, “Semi-Pélagiens,” *ibid.*, 14/2 (1941), 1843–44; A. Vanneste, “Le Décret du Concile de Trente sur le péché originel,” *Nouvelle Revue Théologique* 87 (1965), 698; and A. Schönmetzer, S.J., in the twenty-third edition of DS (1965), p. 131, introducing DS 370–97. Boniface’s letter is found in PL 65, 31–33, partially reproduced in DS 398–400.
 - 7 Cf. R. Hedde and É. Amann, “Pélagianisme,” *Dictionnaire de Théologie Catholique*, 12/1 (1933), 696–702, for the role of Zosimus. Highlighting differences between Carthage and Zosimus are F. Floëri, “Le Pape Zosime et la doctrine augustinienne du péché originel,” in *Augustinus Magister* (Paris: Études Augustiniennes, 1954), 2:755–61; G. de Plinval, in “Discussion autour de la communication de F. Floëri,” in *ibid.*, 3:261–62; Schönmetzer, *ibid.*, p. 82, introducing DS 222–30; and H. Rondet, *Original Sin*, tr. C. Finegan (Staten Island: Alba, 1972), p. 132. In favor of Zosimus’ full approval of Carthage are Hedde-Amann, *ibid.*, 701; B. Piault, “Autour de la controverse Pélagienne: le troisième lieu,” in *Recherches de Science Religieuse* 44 (1956), 505–09; C. Munier, “Zosime,” in *Dictionnaire de Spiritualité*, ed. A. Derville, P. Lamarche, and A. Solignac, 16 (Paris: Beauchesne, 1992), 1654–55, agreeing with O. Wermelinger, *Rom und Pelagius* (Stuttgart: Hiersemann, 1975). The fragmentary remains of Zosimus’s *Tractoria* can be found in PL 20, 693–95.
 - 8 Vanneste, 706–17 (and Adam’s historicity was not decided); Z. Alzephy, S.J., and M. Flick, S.J., “Il Decreto Tridentino sul peccato originale,” *Gregorianum* 52 (1971), 603, 617–23, 632–34.
 - 9 Augustine, *De civitate Dei*, 13:2.4–6.8–9.15.19.23–24; 14:11.
 - 10 *Ibid.*, 13:23–24; 14:10–11.15.26. The distinction *non posse mori* and *posse non mori* is implicitly, not explicitly, given in 13:24: “corpus igitur animale... sic erat factum, non ut mori omnino non posset; sed ut non moreretur, nisi homo peccasset.” It is explicit in 22:30: “Sic enim prima immortalitas fuit, quam peccando Adam perdidit, posse non mori, novissima erit non posse mori.”
 - 11 *Ibid.*, 13:11.20.22.23; 14:10.19.21.23–26.
 - 12 *Ibid.*, 13:7.12.13.17; 14:10–13.15.17.19.21.25. For the transition into incorruption and perfect beatitude *sine mortis supplicio [periculo]* cf. also *De peccatorum meritis et remissione* 1:2; *De correptione et gratia* 28; *De Genesis ad litteram* 6:23, 34; 9:6, 10–11; *Contra Julianum opus imperfectum* 6:12.30.39. Cf. also *De peccatorum meritis* 1:2 for Augustine’s refutation of those maintaining that even in Paradise Adam would have died by “necessity of nature.”
 - 13 *Ibid.*, 13:2.4.7–8.12.17–18.20.23; 14:11.26–27. That God could have created man impeccable cf. also *De continentia* 16. For the whole section on Augustine cf. G. Bonner, “Adam,” in *Augustinus-Lexikon*, ed. C. Majer et alii, 1 (Basel: Schwabe, 1986–94), 64–87.
 - 14 Augustine, *De civitate Dei*, 14:11.13.
 - 15 Augustine, *ibid.*, 14:11, holds that evil exists only in a good thing. We treat this difficulty of sin at greater length in “Metaphysical Conundrums at the Root of Moral Disagreement,” *Gregorianum* 71 (1990), 718–734.
 - 16 Unless otherwise indicated all references are to the *Prima Pars*.
 - 17 It should be noted that, even though Adam was created in grace, Thomas thought that Adam was first created and later placed in Paradise, the place best adapted to his gifts (102, 2c; 4c). R. te Velde, “Evil, Sin, and Death: Thomas Aquinas on Original Sin,” in *The Theology of Thomas Aquinas*, ed. R. van Nieuwenhove and J. Wawrykow (Notre Dame: U. of Notre Dame, 2005), 157–58, attempts to interpret Paradise as “a counterfactual notion, in contrast to which the inherent ‘disorder’ in the present life can be expressed meaningfully.... Paradise does not lie in an historical past but ‘precedes’ the historical existence of humanity.... For Aquinas, the historical existence of humanity began after the Fall.” This interpretation not only contradicts Thomas’s explicit position but also endangers the Christian understanding of freedom and God’s justice. Wherever human freedom is engaged, there is history. Man fell freely from a state of innocence and relative perfection. A disastrous act of freedom occurred in an historical Paradise, even if the details of perfection need not be such as were imagined by Augustine and Aquinas. Cf. this essay’s concluding section.
 - 18 Te Velde, 146, tries to explain the Fall by referring to a hierarchically ordered universe, whose variegated perfection involves free creatures. “Now if the perfection of the universe requires that there should be things which can fail in goodness, it follows that sometimes (*interdum*) they do fail.... Their corruption is not as such intended by God or by nature, but still, it is likely to happen sooner or later.” His argument is defective: from a possibility nothing strictly “follows”; certainly sin should not happen and God’s will is against it. The longer men resist sinning, the stronger their virtue becomes; therefore they will be less likely to sin. Te Velde is closer to the mark when he observes that “there is no cause by which evil can be explained.” Sin is simply a factual truth in history (150). He also exaggerates in writing that, regarding man’s historical moral condition, Christian doctrine implies that “no one, by reason of original sin, is able to refrain from sinning.” If sin is necessary, it is not sin. Inadequate categories are being employed.
 - 19 II-II, 164, 1, 1: *Si esset possibile, cum forma sit incorruptibilis, potius oportet materiam incorruptibilem esse*. Te Velde, 160–63, recognizes in man “a paradoxical unity of corruptibility and incorruptibility,” which “seems to make man in his ‘natural’ existence an impossible being,” incapable of realizing his soul’s natural *telos*. He seeks to overcome that paradox by appeal to God’s concrete plan of man’s supernatural elevation. Yet the recognition of an impossibility, a contradiction, in the natural order tends to overturn the natural-supernatural distinction upon which recent Catholic theology has relied. He employs that distinction himself to explain the peccability of perfect angels by referring it to the “additional perfection with respect to their ultimate end,” the supernatural vision of God (147–48). Yet H. de Lubac, S.J., *Le Supernaturel* (Paris: Aubier, 1946), pp. 231–60, demonstrated that Thomas considered angels naturally peccable—and he was in accord with previous and subsequent tradition until Ba ez (pp. 189–229, 261–69). Necessary as the natural-supernatural distinction at first appears, closer analysis uncovers a mare’s nest.
 - 20 L. Cristiani, “Luther et saint Augustin,” in *Augustinus Magister*, 2:1029–38; J. Cadier, “Calvin et saint Augustin,” *ibid.*, 2:1039–56, esp. 1039–41, 1046–52; for Luther’s early Occamist nominalism and its later juncture with Augustine cf. H. Oberman, *Luther: Man between God and the Devil*, tr. E. Wassiser-Schwarzbart (New Haven: Yale, 1989), pp. 120–21, 161.
 - 21 M. Luther, *Lectures on Genesis: Chapters 1–5*, in *Luther’s Works*, 1, ed. J. Pelikan (St. Louis: Concordia, 1958), pp. 60–61, 164–65, 167.
 - 22 *Ibid.*, pp. 57, 62–65, 91, 104, 114–15, 168, 217.
 - 23 *Ibid.*, pp. 56, 63, 86, 92, 113, 130, 165–67, 226. For the translation to the spiritual life Luther cites Peter Lombard with approval. Luther may have wavered a bit on his terminology, considering the transition a type of death: “Now the present life is separated from the future life by that awful intermediate event, death. In the state of innocence that intermediate event would have been a most delightful one; by it Adam would have been translated to the spiritual life or, as Christ calls it in the Gospel, to the angelic life (Matt. 22:30), in which physical activities come to an end. For in the resurrection of the dead we shall not eat, drink, or marry.” (*Ibid.*, 110–11) But the more generic term might be “intermediate state” whereas “death” is more narrowly defined as due to sin (cf. Rom. 5:12–14).
 - 24 *Ibid.*, pp. 64–65, 111–12, 115.
 - 25 *Ibid.*, pp. 90, 96, 102f., 110, 114, 158, 162, 165, 178, 221–22, 226–27.
 - 26 *Ibid.*, pp. 45–46, 64, 67, 84–86, 167, 221, 223.
 - 27 M. Luther, *Lectures on Romans: Glosses*, in *Luther’s Works*, 25, ed. H. Os-

- wald, tr. W. Tillmans and Jacob Preus (St. Louis: Concordia, 1972), pp. 298, 305; ----, "Psalm 90," tr. P. Bretscher, *Selected Psalms II*, in *Luther's Works*, 13, ed. J. Pelikan, (1956), p. 97.
- 28 M. Luther, "The Bondage of the Will," E. Rupp, P. Watson, A. Marlow, and B. Drewery, *Career of the Reformer III*, ed. P. Watson, in *Luther's Works*, 33, ed. H. Lehmann (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1972), pp. 37, 124, 178-81, 293; P. Althaus, *The Theology of Martin Luther*, tr. R. Schultz (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1966), p. 158 and n. 81.
- 29 M. Luther, "Psalm 90," pp. 77-78, 96-98, 101, 112-13; ----, "Disputation against Scholastic Theology," ed. and tr. H. Grimm, in *Luther's Works*, 31, ed. H. Lehmann (Philadelphia: Muhlenberg, 1957), p. 9, theses 9, 21, 22; ----, "Heidelberg Disputation," in *ibid.*, pp. 48-49, 58-63.
- 30 M. Luther, *Lectures on Hebrews*, tr. W. Hansen, in *Luther's Works*, 29, ed. J. Pelikan (St. Louis: Concordia, 1968), pp. 137-39, 141.
- 31 As the editor of *Genesis 1-5* notes, p. 166, n. 19, after Luther's death a bitter controversy arose among Lutherans whether or not sin had become part of man's nature. Since Luther's Genesis Lectures were published posthumously by disciples, an editorial hand might have touched up Luther's text to make it appear that Luther favored the view supporting sin as a part of fallen nature. If that were the case, then the pre-lapsarian nature would be essentially opposed to the postlapsarian nature. Cf. Pelikan's positive evaluation, pp. x-xii, of the published text's accuracy in providing Luther's thought.
- 32 Cited in D. Lee, "Lutherans," *Encounters with Eternity: Religious Views of Death and Life After-Death*, ed. C. Johnson and M. McGee (New York: Philosophical Library, 1986), p. 236. Through a merger in 1988 the Lutheran Church in America has joined the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.
- 33 Cf. H. Rondet, S.J., *Original Sin: The Patristic and Theological Background*, tr. C. Finegan (Staten Island: Alba, 1972), pp. 169-75. In citing Luther's *Lectures on Romans* to prove the equation of (original) sin and concupiscence, Rondet cites the text correctly. *Romans* often equates the two, e.g., pp. 299, 304, 308-09, 330, 332, 336, 338-39. But it may be still be possible to interpret Luther in a Catholic sense, understanding "sin" analogously along the lines of Rom. 7. So Luther writes, "In itself the concupiscence is guilty, to be sure, but yet it does not render us guilty unless we yield to it and commit sin." God only imputes guilt to the will consenting to the weakness. So concupiscence may be considered "sin," he holds, with regard to its cause and effect, even if not formally (*ibid.*, pp. 340, 342). Yet the later Luther identifies sin and concupiscence without any such distinctions: e.g., *Genesis: Chapters 21-25*, tr. G. Schick, in *Luther's Works*, 4, ed. J. Pelikan and J. Hansen (St. Louis: Concordia, 1964, pp. 233-34, 238-39, 241.

Reply to Fr. John McDermott, S.J.

by Fr. Peter Ryan, S.J.

I am grateful to Fr. John McDermott for his kind comments about my article in his learned "reflections on death in the tradition of Western Christianity." I wish, however, to reply to the objection he registers to the argument I made that elicited those reflections. I argued that death is evil in itself.¹ Fr. McDermott responds: "If Jesus saved us by His death, death cannot be evil in itself." He establishes that Scripture teaches that Jesus did indeed save us by his death, assumes I deny that teaching, and concludes that my position "contradicts Scripture."

In this brief response I explain and affirm the premise. "Jesus saved us by his death." However, I deny that Fr. McDermott's conclusion "death cannot be evil in itself" follows from that premise. I argue that his conclusion is both untenable and at odds with Scripture.

There is no need to belabor the point that Jesus saved us by his death, for Scripture repeatedly affirms that truth, and the Church's sacramental practice confirms it. As Fr. McDermott reminds us, believers "are baptized into Christ's death" and saved through communion with Christ in the Eucharist "by drinking his blood, poured out on the cross."

If we accept the truth that Jesus saved us by his death, are we compelled to conclude that death cannot be evil in itself?

That conclusion would follow only if, as Fr. McDermott seems to assume, death were the object of Jesus' choice—for if Jesus chose what is evil in itself, we must conclude, against faith, that his choice would be morally wrong. But none of the evidence Fr. McDermott presents to establish that Jesus saved us by his death shows that Jesus chose death itself. Rather, it shows that Jesus freely laid down his life, meaning that he chose to remain true to his mission despite knowing it would cost him his life. He went to Jerusalem to preach the gospel and celebrate the Passover—the first Eucharist—with his friends, even though he knew he would be handed over to his enemies and crucified. As I noted in my article, "Jesus does not intend his death; he freely accepts it. The second Eucharistic Prayer makes that clear: 'Before he was given up to death, a death he freely accepted, he took bread and gave you thanks.'" Jesus accepted his death because he knew that in doing so he would make salvation available to us.

The fact that death is evil in itself and therefore cannot be the object of Jesus' choice is evident in a passage Fr. McDermott himself quotes: "God did not

make death nor does He enjoy the destruction of the living. For He created all things for existence” (Wis 1:13-14). Everything God created is good, and nothing is good other than God and his creation. Since God did not make death, it cannot be good—cannot be a positive reality. Death can only be a privation, the absence of bodily life.

Why does Fr. McDermott overlook the significance of the passage from Wisdom? He assumes that what is evil in itself cannot contribute to the realization of good. However, if what is evil in itself could not contribute to the realization of good, then God, who intends and causes only good, would not permit any evil whatsoever. But he does permit evils, and out of them brings goods that otherwise could not have been. So, the good results of Jesus’ death do not show that it was not in itself an evil.

Jesus’ death is good, not in itself, but in the great love with which he freely accepted it and in its salvific effects. His obedient acceptance overcomes Adam’s disobedience; reconciles the human race to the Father; and reveals Jesus’ divine and human love, so that, lifted up on the cross, he draws everyone to himself.

To support his claim that death is not evil in itself, Fr. McDermott recalls that Christian theologians, hypothesizing about Adam’s destiny had he never sinned, “postulated a transition to a better state where in union with God Adam might enjoy secure felicity.” Fr. McDermott suggests that this transition can be “called ‘death,’ understood as a departure from the conditions of this world.” Such a death, he argues, would not be evil, but rather “the final joy of self-sacrifice, a commending of oneself into the paternal hands of God, the thorough penetration of divine love into a human nature.”

Though he says it would involve “a real break, a disruption of continuity,” it is not clear whether or not Fr. McDermott means that such a death necessarily would involve the human rational animal ceasing to function as a complete organism, with the result that the soul no longer informs the body. If he does not understand the death of a hypothetical unfallen Adam in those terms, then his suggestion is

utterly irrelevant, and nothing he says about such a “death” supports his claim that death, in the sense at stake, is not evil in itself.

But even if Fr. McDermott does understand such a death in the relevant sense, his suggestion would not support his claim. For that death would have been good, not in itself, but in the great love with which Adam would have accepted it, and in God’s responding with the gift of union with himself. Death would not have been a transition in itself but only in virtue of God’s response to Adam’s lovingly accepting it.

As I shall now show, however, there is a more basic reason why speculation about an unfallen Adam cannot help Fr. McDermott’s case. Toward the end of his article, he makes the point that the death of human beings is natural, in the sense that bodily creatures are naturally mortal. That point, however, does not argue against the passage from Wisdom quoted above. As Scripture and Church teaching make clear, had Adam not sinned, God would not have permitted human beings to die.² But because human beings sinned, God permits death as a medicinal, educative punishment. Though death is evil in itself, it is good for God to permit it after the fall, because death makes it clear to people that they cannot be fulfilled unless they live and die in friendship with God.

In sum, although death is evil in itself, God permits it for the same reason he permits other evils—because it can and does contribute to the realization of good. The Father permitted Jesus to die so that he could save us, not by choosing death but by freely accepting it. And God permits us to die so that we will recognize the need to hold fast to the salvific graces Jesus offers us through his death. ✠

Endnotes

- 1 To avoid suggesting that death in itself is a moral evil, I said in my article that “death in itself is bad.” In this response, I follow Fr. McDermott in using the word “evil,” but I do not mean to suggest that death in itself is a moral evil. I mean only that death in itself is the privation of bodily life—and therefore that the choice of death would be a moral evil.
- 2 See Rom 5:12 and DS 222/101; 1511/788; 1978/1078. St. Thomas also affirms this truth: See *S.t.*, 1, q. 97, a. 4; 2-2, q. 164, a. 1.

Confessions of a Catholic Ecumenist¹

by Eduardo J. Echeverria, Ph.D.

“Homesickness for the *una sancta [ecclesia]* is genuine and legitimate only insofar as it is a disquietude at the fact that we have lost and forgotten Christ, and with Him have lost the unity of the Church” (Karl Barth, *The Church and Churches*, Edinburgh Conference on Faith and Order, 1937).

“To believe in Christ means to desire unity; to desire unity means to desire the Church; to desire the Church means to desire the communion of grace which corresponds to the Father’s plan from all eternity. Such is the meaning of Christ’s prayer: ‘that they may all be one’” (John Paul II, 1995 Encyclical Letter, *Ut Unum Sint* §9).

I. Visible Christian Unity, Evangelism, and Ecumenism

In the recent past, the Southern Baptist Convention put the brakes on official ecumenical talks with the Catholic Church. Rev. R. Philip Roberts, the current president of Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Kansas City, MO, was quoted as saying, “We’re not ecumenists. We’re evangelicals committed to sharing the Gospel.” The sentiment expressed in this statement is not unique to Southern Baptists like Roberts; one can find it expressed historically and in recent times by all sorts of Christians, Protestant and Catholic alike. Nevertheless, when I read these words I immediately thought that Roberts was making a division where none should exist—between the Gospel of Jesus Christ and authentic ecumenism. “Christ calls all His disciples to unity” (John 17:20-23), the late John Paul II writes in the introduction of his 1995 Encyclical Letter, *Ut Unum Sint*, (hereafter *UUS*).

In the Gospel of John, we read that Jesus Himself prayed to His Father, at the hour of His passion, “that all of them may be one” (17:21). What is the nature of this unity? The Church, which is Christ’s body, is neither a collection of individuals, nor a so-

ciological subject, for example, a voluntary association of like-minded individuals created by human agreement, and hence the unity of Christ’s disciples is not that of a mere gathering of people. Rather, the Church is the reborn (i.e., new) humanity in Christ, who is the New Adam, the religious root of the human race, profoundly described by the Apostle Paul as the “Body of Christ” (in Ephesians and Colossians), with her Head and individual members. The Church is then the religious bond of unity of the reborn human race. As the former Joseph Ratzinger, now Benedict XVI, puts it, “For the believer . . . the Church is . . . a truly new subject called into being by the Word and in the Holy Spirit; and precisely for that reason, the Church herself overcomes the seemingly insurmountable confines of human subjectivity by putting man in contact with the ground of reality which is prior to him.”² The ground of reality that is prior to man is Trinitarian communion, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, and the “faithful are *one* because, in the Spirit, they are in *communion* with the Son and, in him, share in his *communion* with the Father.” In other words, adds John Paul II, “For the Catholic Church, then, the *communion* of Christians is none other than the manifestation in them of the grace by which God makes them sharers in his own *communion*, which is eternal life” (*UUS* §9).

Furthermore, the Church’s unity is not simply a goal or ideal to be sought, or a mere spiritual or invisible unity, contrasted, as Karl Barth put it, with “the multiplicity of the churches as a necessary mark of the visible and empirical.” “This entire distinction,” adds Barth, “is foreign to the New Testament . . . the Church of Jesus Christ is but one.” The Protestant Reformer John Calvin understood this well when he wrote, “there could not be two or three churches without Christ himself being torn apart, and that is impossible.”³ In other words, the Church’s unity is a gift of God—visible, historical, temporal, institutional, in short, bodily—belonging to the Church herself, and “this gift needs to be received and developed ever more profoundly.”⁴ Furthermore, this unity is concretely embodied, and thus, as Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger then put it, “The Church of Christ is not

something intangible, hidden under the variety of human constructions.” Alternatively put, says Barth, the multiplicity of the churches cannot be explained “as an unfolding of the wealth of that grace which is given to mankind in Jesus Christ, divinely purposed and therefore normal . . . as branches of the one and the self-same tree.” Rather, the Church’s unity has a recognizable delineation, truly existing as a bodily Church: “She is one in [the confession of] faith, one in the celebration of the sacraments, one in apostolic succession, and one in ecclesial governance.”⁵ This unity is a present reality bestowed by the Holy Spirit on Christ’s body, and Christ cannot be divided. “There is one body and one Spirit,” St. Paul states in his Letter to the Ephesians, “just as you were called to the one hope of your calling, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all and through all and in all” (Ephesians 4:4-7).

In this connection, Catholic theologian Bruce Marshall remarks, “In baptism the Holy Spirit makes us members of the Church by joining us in love to Christ and, equally, to one another. Paul does not implore the Ephesians to seek by the Spirit’s power a unity they presently lack, but to ‘maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace’ (Ephesians 4:3), the very bond that holds together the one body of Christ.” In short, the Church is one, the one ark, the one temple, the one house of God, the only Bride of Christ, the single Body of Christ.

Moreover, as the Dogmatic Constitution *Lumen Gentium* and the Decree *Unitatis Redintegratio*, as well as the more recent *Ut Unum Sint* (1995) and *Dominus Iesus* (2000), fundamentally affirm, the one Church of Christ subsists in the Catholic Church.⁶ The Second Vatican Ecumenical Council teaches the historical continuity between the Church founded by Christ and the Catholic Church. The Church of Jesus Christ exists bodily. Christ himself has willed the Church’s existence; and the Holy Spirit has continually renewed her since Pentecost, *ecclesia semper reformanda*, preserving her in her essential identity, which belongs to the concreteness of the Incarnation. The Church is one, absolutely singular, subsisting in the Catholic Church, existing as a single subject in the reality of history. This means that the Catholic Church is (to borrow a phrase from Fr. Richard John Neuhaus) the fully and rightly ordered expression of the Body

of Christ in time; in her the fullness of the means of salvation is present. “For it is through Christ’s Catholic Church alone, which is the universal help towards salvation, that the fullness of the means of salvation can be obtained. It was to the apostolic college alone, of which Peter is the head, which we believe that Our Lord entrusted all the blessings of the New Covenant, in order to establish on earth the one Body of Christ into which all those should be fully incorporated who belong in any way to the people of God.”⁷

Admittedly, this teaching is, to quote Paul VI, “the biggest obstacle on the road to ecumenism.”⁸ Nevertheless, in words that Fr. Gustave Weigel wrote almost a half a century ago, “If we are to speak to each other, we should know how each partner of the conversation appears to himself. It is antecedently thinkable that the partner in dialogue is in error in his self-evaluation but it is unthinkable that the intercourse would be fruitful if we did not take such self-evaluation into account.”⁹ Thus, against the background of the Catholic Church’s teaching that she is not merely “one part of a divided whole,” we can easily understand why the Church rejects “ecclesiological relativism,” which is the view that claims that the Church “subsists” intangibly under a variety of human constructions. On this view, according to Benedict XVI, “then no Church could claim to possess definitively binding teaching authority, and in this way institutional relativism will lead to doctrinal relativism.” “If belief in ‘the body’ of the Church is taken away,” he adds, “the Church’s concrete claims regarding the content of faith disappear along with her bodiliness.”¹⁰

Of course we don’t have before us yet the full teaching of the Second Vatican Ecumenical Council. The ecclesiology of this Council is that the “Church [of Jesus Christ], constituted and organized in the world as a society, subsists in the Catholic Church, which is governed by the successor of Peter and by the bishops in union with that successor.”¹¹ The Catholic Church in a singularly unique way is the fully and rightly ordered expression of the Church of Jesus Christ in time and space. Yet, there is more. This Ecumenical Council also teaches that “many elements of sanctification and truth” can be found outside the visible boundaries of the Church.¹² Thus,

this teaching provides a theological foundation for the Catholic Church's commitment to ecumenical dialogue:

The Church recognizes that in many ways she is linked with those who, being baptized, are honored with the name of Christian, though they do not profess the faith in its entirety or do not preserve unity of communion with the successor of Peter. For there are many who honor sacred Scripture, taking it as a norm of belief and of action, and who show a true religious zeal. They lovingly believe in God the Father Almighty and in Christ, Son of God and Savior. They are consecrated by baptism, through which they are united with Christ. They also recognize and receive other sacraments within their own Churches or ecclesial communities. Many of them rejoice in the episcopate, celebrate the Holy Eucharist and cultivate devotion toward the Virgin Mother of God. They also share with us in prayer and other spiritual benefits.¹³

So Vatican II teaches that all Christians, all those who are "in Christ," are truly, genuinely, but imperfectly, in communion with the Catholic Church. "In some real way they are joined with us in the Holy Spirit, for to them also He gives His gifts and graces, and is thereby operative among them with His sanctifying power."¹⁴ Elsewhere we read, "It remains true that all who have been justified by faith in baptism are incorporated into Christ; they therefore have a right to be called Christians, and with good reason are accepted as brothers by the children of the Catholic Church." "Moreover," the Council Fathers add, "some, even very many, of the most significant elements and endowments which together go to build up and give life to the Church herself, can exist outside the visible boundaries of the Catholic Church: the written Word of God; the life of grace; faith, hope and charity, with the other interior gifts of the Holy Spirit, as well as visible elements. All of these, which come from Christ and lead back to him, belong by right to the one Church of Christ."¹⁵ In other words, although these elements do not exist in an "ecclesial vacuum" (*UUS* §13), because there is ecclesial reality outside the visible boundaries of the Church,¹⁶ they are not "static elements passively present in those Churches and Communities," as John Paul notes

(*UUS* §49), or "autonomous and free-floating," in the words of Dominican priest and theologian, Fr. Aidan Nichols. Indeed, "they derive their efficacy from the very fullness of grace and truth entrusted to the Catholic Church."¹⁷ Adds Nichols, "and coming from that source, carry a built-in gravitational pull back—or on!—towards the Church's unity."¹⁸

This teaching was very important to me in my own journey to full communion with the Catholic Church. It helped me to make sense of the "many elements of sanctification and of truth" that I found throughout my Christian experience—from Evangelical to the Reformed and Anglo-Catholic traditions of historic Protestant Christianity. Indeed, I came to know these elements to be gifts and graces that the Spirit of Christ used as instruments to bring me home to the Church. The inner dynamism of these gifts and graces toward Catholic unity, that essential mark of the Church as Christ willed her to be and which He bestowed on His Church from the beginning, was the guiding force that re-established in my own life true and full communion with the Church (cf. *UUS* §49). In this sense, entering into full communion with the Church essentially involved bringing to fulfillment in my own life a unity already given by God as His gift in founding His Church.

In my own Catholic ecumenical experience, I have always had real fellowship with other Christians who honor the canonical authority of the sacred Scriptures, the Word of God, as the standard of faith and morals, who love and openly confess Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, and as the one Mediator between God and man, who are united by baptism with the one God, the Father, in Christ, and through the power of the Holy Spirit, and who hold the Christian faith to be true. This has served as a common starting point for lively and fruitful ecumenical discussions about the full range of Catholic truth claims, especially the claim that the fullness of the means of salvation, of grace and truth, subsists within the Catholic Church, and nowhere else.

In concluding this first point, I look back to Jesus' High Priestly prayer at the hour of His Passion. His prayer makes clear the basis of His disciples' unity, namely, "that all of them may be one, Father, just as you are in me and I am in you." So Christ's disciples are one in the Spirit, because they are in communion

with the Son and, in Him, share in His communion with the Father. Says John the Evangelist, “Our fellowship is with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ” (1 John 1:3). The communion of Christians, then, is nothing less than our sharing, by grace, in God’s own communion, the Holy Trinity, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, which is His eternal life.

Yet, there is more. The Church’s unity is at the very heart of the proclamation of the Gospel, not only in the sense that it belongs to the very essence of Christ’s body, and Christ cannot be divided. But also, and in particular, because disunity is a grave obstacle for proclaiming the Gospel credibly and authentically. The world will not believe that God Himself is an eternal fellowship of love, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, and that He has chosen us to share by grace in that fellowship unless it sees some manifestation in Christians of that fellowship. The world will not believe that God so loved the world that He gave His one and only Son that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have eternal life (John 3:16), unless it sees in Christians some evidence of God’s love rather than division. The world will not believe, as Francis Schaeffer once put it, “that Jesus’ claims are true, that Christianity is true, unless the world see some reality of the oneness of true Christians.”¹⁹

The Church’s full and visible unity, then, is not some appendix to the Gospel, or something we can opt for if we so desire. Again, looking back to Christ at the hour of His passion, He prays to the Father, “May they all also be in us so that the world may believe that you have sent me . . . I in them and you in me. May they be brought to complete unity to let the world know that you sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me” (John 17:21, 23). In short, lack of unity compromises our Christian witness to the world, contradicting the Gospel truth that Christians have the missionary mandate to live, proclaim, and defend. Hence, as John Paul II rightly urges, “ecumenism is not only an internal question of the Christian communities” (*UUS* §99). “At the same time,” John Paul adds, “it is obvious that the lack of unity among Christians contradicts the Truth which Christians have the mission to spread and, consequently, it gravely damages their witness” (*UUS* §98). In the words of Pope Paul VI, “May the Holy Spirit guide us along the way of reconciliation, so that the

unity of our Churches may become an ever more radiant sign of hope and consolation for all mankind” (Letter of January 13, 1970, cited in *UUS*, note 158).

II Ecumenical Dialogue

Undoubtedly, some Christians, Protestant and Catholic alike, have generally opposed the ecumenical movement and inter-confessional dialogue. For example, the June 1996 Southern Baptist Convention Resolution on Baptists and Ecumenism states, “True Biblical unity can only be realized in the bond of truth, and never at the expense of Biblical truth.”²⁰ John Paul II agrees that the “obligation to respect the truth is absolute” (*UUS*, §79), but unlike the SBC who does not see its way clear to adhere consistently to this obligation and engage in such dialogue without compromising the truth, John Paul holds that one can uphold the absolute obligation to respect the truth without compromise and hence without putting the brakes on the ecumenical movement. Indeed, the Roman Catholic Church, in particular, holds that “full [visible] communion of course [would] have to come about through the acceptance of the whole truth into which the Holy Spirit guides Christ’s disciples,” says John Paul (*UUS*, §36). Thus the Church’s vision of visible unity “takes account of all the demands of revealed truth” (*UUS*, §79). Thus, she seeks to avoid all forms of reductionism or facile agreement, false irenicism²¹, and indifference to the Church’s teaching. John Paul II correctly writes, “Love for the truth is the deepest dimension of any authentic quest for full communion between Christians” (*UUS*, §36). In other words, he adds, “The unity willed by God can be attained only by the adherence of all to the content of revealed faith in its entirety. In matters of faith, compromise is in contradiction with God who is Truth. In the Body of Christ, ‘the way, and the truth, and the life’ (John 14:6), who would consider legitimate a reconciliation brought about at the expense of the truth? . . . A ‘being together’ which betrayed the truth would thus be opposed both to the nature of God who offers his communion and to the need for truth found in the depths of every human heart”

(UUS §18). In short, “Authentic ecumenism is a gift at the service of truth” (UUS §38).

Accordingly, the journey, already begun, toward re-establishing full visible unity among all the baptized requires us to continue to deepen the inter-confessional dialogue, whose positive results already makes it possible “to identify the areas in need of fuller study before a true consensus of faith can be achieved” (UUS §79). These five areas are:

1) [T]he relationship between Sacred Scripture, as the highest authority in matters of faith, and Sacred Tradition, as indispensable to the interpretation of the Word of God; 2) the Eucharist, as the Sacrament of the Body and Blood of Christ, an offering of praise to the Father, the sacrificial memorial and Real Presence of Christ and the sanctifying outpouring of the Holy Spirit; 3) Ordination, as a Sacrament, ordaining men to the episcopate, presbyterate and diaconate; 4) the Magisterium of the Church, entrusted to the Pope and the Bishops in communion with him, understood as a responsibility and an authority exercised in the name of Christ for teaching and safeguarding the faith; 5) the Virgin Mary, as Mother of God and Icon of the Church, the spiritual Mother who intercedes for Christ’s disciples and for all humanity (UUS §79).

There remains to say something, albeit briefly, about the nature and purpose of dialogue as expressed in UUS §21–40.²² Most important, an interior conversion of the heart, indeed, repentance, is required as a precondition for engaging in ecumenical dialogue. Why this summons to conversion? “*Christian unity is possible*,” says John Paul, “provided that we are humbly conscious of having sinned against unity and are convinced of our need for conversion” (UUS §34; see also §82). Of course the fault of past divisions belongs *on both sides*, and hence, as Karl Barth explains, “we have to deal with [divisions among Christians] as we deal with sin, our own and others’, to recognize it as a fact, to understand it as the impossible thing which has intruded itself, as guilt which we must take upon ourselves, without the power to liberate ourselves from it. We must not allow ourselves to acquiesce in its reality; rather we must pray that it be forgiven and removed, and be ready to do whatever God’s will and com-

mand may enjoin in respect of it.”²³ In this light, we can understand why an examination of conscience is required for authentic dialogue; confessing our sins, repentance, putting ourselves, by God’s grace, in that “interior space where Christ, the source of the Church’s unity, can effectively act, with all the power of his Spirit, the Paraclete” (UUS §35). The journey of ecumenical dialogue is thus an ongoing “dialogue of conversion,” *on both sides*, trusting in the reconciling power of the truth which is Christ to overcome the obstacles to unity. The ground motive of this dialogue for reconciliation is “*common prayer with our brothers and sisters who seek unity in Christ and in His Church*” (UUS §24). “Prayer is the ‘soul’ of the ecumenical renewal and of the yearning for unity,” adds John Paul II, “it is the basis and support for *everything the [Second Vatican Ecumenical] Council defines as ‘dialogue’*” (UUS §28). In short, prayer is the heart of spiritual ecumenism.

Yet, there is more: following the lead of the recent doctrinal note on some aspects of evangelization from the CDF, I distinguish three dimensions to the work of ecumenism: listening, theological discussion, and witness/proclamation. Listening is an essential prerequisite to ecumenical theological discussion. Listening means letting your interlocutor speak for himself. Let me give an example of listening. In the graduate course that I teach on theological method, I regularly assign a research paper on topics in ecumenical theology, say, the theology of the Eucharist. I urge the students to listen to John Calvin²⁴ and other reformed thinkers such G. C. Berkouwer²⁵ on their understanding of Eucharistic presence and not to bring to their reading of these authors from the outset the dilemma of symbol or reality. If they do, they will neither be in a favorable position to understand and, in turn, to discuss the theological views of Calvin and Berkouwer, nor will they find agreement that at times is hidden under disagreement.²⁶

Furthermore, inseparably united with listening and theological discussion is the necessity of comparing and contrasting different theological viewpoints, critically examining disagreements that are obstacles to full visible unity with the Church, and hence dialogue—with the two dimensions of listening and theological discussion—is a means for resolving doctrinal disagreements and determining

whether the beliefs of our interlocutor are true or false (*UUS* §35). Sometimes dialogue is made more difficult, indeed, impossible, when our words, judgments, and actions manifest a failure to deal with each other with understanding, truthfully and fairly. “When undertaking dialogue, *each side must presuppose in the other a desire for reconciliation, for unity in truth*” (*UUS* §29). For this to happen, we must be not only intellectually responsible, exercising intellectual virtues such as open-mindedness, fairness in evaluating the arguments and positions of others, intellectual humility, insight into persons, problems, doctrinal accounts, and communicative, rather than primarily polemical, knowing your dialogue partner’s confessional background, seeing the positive in his tradition, and the like. In addition, dialogue must be deepened in order to engage the other person in a relationship of mutual trust and acceptance as a fellow Christian, responsive to him in Christian love, recognizing the “other as a *partner*” (*UUS* §41). “You shall love your neighbor as yourself” (Galatians 5:14), and in St. Paul’s words, “especially those who are of the household of faith” (Galatians 6:10). Thus: we must speak the truth in love (Ephesians 4:15). That is, ecumenical dialogue must exhibit both charity toward the other and a thirst for truth in evaluating his beliefs. Charity has to do with how we should approach and relate to other persons when we engage him in dialogue, and the latter should be grounded in fidelity to the truth.

Finally, again following the recent doctrinal note regarding some aspects of evangelization, there is the dimension of witness and proclamation. That is, the Church teaches that “each Catholic has the right and duty to give the witness and full proclamation of his faith.” “With non-Catholic Christians,” the document adds, “Catholics must enter into a respectful dialogue of charity and truth, a dialogue which is not only an exchange of ideas, but also of gifts, in order that the fullness of the means of salvation can be offered to one’s partners in dialogue. In this way, they are led to an ever deeper conversion in Christ.”²⁷

In sum, with the words of Fr. Yves Congar, “*ecumenism works on the scale of history*. Polemics are good enough for opposing argument with argument; it only takes a few hours. For the plenitude that ecumenism requires, however, a maturation is necessary which involves long periods of time.” Congar adds,

enlisting the words of John Henry Newman and Etienne Gilson, respectively expressing what it means to work on a historical scale: “What I aim at is not immediate conversions, but to influence, as far as an old man can, the tone of thought in the place, with a view to a distant time when I shall no longer be here.” “When their conclusions are opposite, adversaries must be given the necessary time to understand one another better, to understand themselves better, and so to meet at a still undetermined point which is certainly situated beyond their present positions.”²⁸ Against the background of Congar’s point about doing ecumenical work in historical perspective, I think we can helpfully distinguish between the Church’s ultimate ecumenical goals of full visible unity and, given what is practically possible now between Christians, her proximate goal of dialogue and reconciliation.

III Confessions of a Catholic Ecumenist

In his 2005 Apostolic Journey to Cologne on the occasion of the 20th World Youth Day, Benedict XVI held an ecumenical meeting in which he, like his predecessor John Paul II, reaffirmed the teaching of Vatican II that the communion of all particular Churches and communities with the Church of Rome, the one and only Church, indeed, with the Bishop of Rome, the Successor of the Apostle Peter, the visible sign and guarantor of unity, is a necessary condition for full visible unity, a unity that Christ bestowed upon his Church from the beginning. Significantly, however, Benedict quickly adds that this “unity does not mean what could be called an ecumenism of return: that is, to deny and to reject one’s own faith history. Absolutely not!”²⁹

What does Benedict XVI mean? If the restoration of unity among all Christians, according to Catholic teaching, is full communion with the visible Church, the one Church, and one Church only, that Christ founded, then reunification with the Church is the ultimate goal of the ecumenical movement. Yes, on the one hand, Benedict wholeheartedly affirms this goal of returning home to the Catholic Church.

But, on the other hand, it is precisely because he also wholeheartedly affirms that “many elements of sanctification and truth” exist outside the Church’s visible boundaries that he stresses a mutual exchange of gifts, dialogue between Catholics, Protestants and Orthodox, which aims at the reconciliation of communities rather than simply returning to the Church, if that means absorption and disowning one’s own Christian heritage. As Benedict put it recently in St. Peter’s Square, “The Week of Prayer for Christian Unity thus reminds us that ecumenism is a profound dialogic experience, a mutual listening and speaking, knowing one another better. It is a task that all can undertake, especially in regard to spiritual ecumenism, based on prayer and on sharing what is possible for the time being among Christians” (Angelus, January 21, 2007).

The Fathers of Vatican II wrote, “Catholics must gladly acknowledge and esteem the truly Christian endowments for our common heritage which are to be found among our separated brethren. It is right and salutary to recognize the riches of Christ and virtuous works in the lives of others who bearing witness to Christ . . . Nor should we forget that anything wrought by the grace of the Holy Spirit in the hearts of our separated brethren can contribute to our own edification. Whatever is truly Christian is never contrary to what genuinely belongs to the faith; indeed, it can always bring a more perfect realization of the very mystery of Christ and the Church.”³⁰ In my own life, as I said earlier, I can personally testify to the gifts and graces of God’s Spirit among the Evangelical, Reformed and Anglo-Catholic traditions that I experienced before coming into full communion with the Catholic Church and still continue to respect and appreciate and, indeed, draw upon in my theological and philosophical teaching and writing.

It is in this sense that I understand the meaning of the phrase, “full unity in legitimate diversity” within the Church (*UUS* §57). “Legitimate diversity,” adds John Paul, “is in no way opposed to the Church’s unity, but rather enhances her splendor and contributes greatly to the fulfillment of her mission” (*UUS* §50).

What then of the validity of the ecumenical formula of “reconciled diversity” in the light of the

notion of legitimate diversity? This question was posed to the then Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger on the occasion of the publication of *Dominus Iesus* in an interview published on September 22 in the *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*.³¹ He replied sharply, “I accept the concept of a ‘reconciled diversity’, if it does not mean equality of content and the elimination of the question of truth so that we could consider ourselves one, even if we believe and teach different things.” Adds Ratzinger, “To my mind this concept is used well, if it says that despite our differences, which do not allow us to regard ourselves as mere fragments of a Church of Jesus Christ that does not exist in reality, we meet in the peace of Christ and are reconciled to one another, that is, we recognize our division as contradicting the Lord’s will and this sorrow spurs us to seek unity and to pray to Him in the knowledge that we all need His love.”

Unitatis Redintegratio and *Ut Unum Sint* emphasize the legitimate diversity between the Eastern Churches and Roman Catholic Church. But what it says in those documents about legitimate diversity in theological expressions of doctrine could also be said about the Reformed, particularly neo-Calvinist, tradition of historic Christianity. “It is hardly surprising if sometimes one tradition has come nearer than the other to an apt appreciation of certain aspects of the revealed mystery or has expressed them in a clearer manner. As a result, these various theological formulations are often to be considered as complementary rather than conflicting’. Communion is made fruitful by the exchange of gifts between the Churches [and ecclesial communities] insofar as they complement each other” (*UUS* §57). Philosophical issues of meaning and truth are at stake in discussing legitimate diversity in complementary theological expressions of doctrine (cf. *UUS* §18-19), but I will conclude my essay this afternoon in a more practical way.

Let me make a helpful practical distinction here between the Spirit’s action in my own life from that of other Christians who haven’t felt the same call to “return” to full communion with the Catholic Church but who nevertheless feel drawn to seek unity and dialogue about the truth and about what the Lord wants for their communities and for his entire people today. As Father Richard John Neuhaus once wrote regarding his own reception into the Church

and departure from the Lutheran tradition, I too experienced with respect to the Evangelical, Reformed and Anglo-Catholic traditions, “Nothing that is good is rejected, all is fulfilled.”³² If you will indulge me, I would like to use my own personal testimony to illustrate the validity of the principle that “Nothing that is good and true is rejected, all is fulfilled” and its corollary of legitimate diversity.

I was raised Catholic, attended Catholic primary and secondary schools, but I did not respond to the Gospel in a Catholic context. It was at L’Abri Fellowship in Huémoz sur Ollon, Switzerland, some thirty-seven years ago in the summer of 1970 that I first committed my life to Christ as Lord and Savior, ‘the Way, the Truth, and the Life’ (John 14:6). L’Abri Fellowship, an evangelical Protestant community where people live, study and work, was founded by Francis A. Schaeffer (1912–1984), along with his wife Edith (1918–), more than a half century ago. It was at L’Abri that I began to understand the Christian faith as a way of life rooted in the truth about reality, about the meaning of life, and communion with God the Father, in Christ, and through the power of the Holy Spirit. It was also at L’Abri that I began to understand that living under the Lordship of Jesus Christ entailed the sanctification of the whole of life, including the life of culture, particularly the intellectual life.³³

Now, to make a long story short, this understanding, which I first learned at L’Abri Fellowship, was deepened in my encounter with the Augustinian and Reformed or neo-Calvinist tradition of historic Christianity. Furthermore, my understanding of the antiquity of the Church, of the Liturgy, of the sacramental life in Christ, especially of the Eucharist, the Church Fathers, and the idea of doctrinal development was deepened in my encounter with the writings of John Henry Newman and Anglo-Catholicism. Thus, if I may single out one very important element in that experience, all that is good in the Reformed tradition of historic Christianity, namely, that version of confessional Protestant Christianity arising from the Calvinist Reformation in 16th century Europe, in particular, Dutch neo-Calvinism, which refers to a movement within the Augustinian and Reformed tradition that stems from the 19th century Dutch educator, theologian, church leader, and politician

Abraham Kuyper (1837–1920). Besides Kuyper, other genial spirits within this intellectual milieu that profoundly influenced my walk with the Lord include Herman Bavinck (1845–1921), Klaas Schilder (1890–1952), Gerritt C. Berkouwer (1904–1996), and Herman Dooyeweerd (1894–1977). All that is good in the neo-Calvinist Reformed tradition—its doctrines of creation, fall into sin, and redemption, its understanding of the relation between nature and grace, the Lordship of Christ over the whole spectrum of life, the idea and practice of Christian scholarship, its cultural, social and political theology and philosophy, and so much more—deepened my understanding of, commitment to, and practice of the Christian faith.

On the one hand, the neo-Calvinist theological formulations of these issues can stand on their own as important and insightful formulations of the truth, complementing Catholic formulations. This claim is consistent with the teachings of Vatican II. “Taking up an idea expressed by Pope John XXIII at the opening of the Council, the Decree on Ecumenism mentions the way of formulating doctrine as one of the elements of a continuing reform. Here it is not a question of altering the deposit of faith, changing the meaning of dogmas, eliminating essential words from them, accommodating truth to the preferences of a particular age, or suppressing certain articles of the *Creed* under the false pretext that they are no longer understood today. The unity willed by God can be attained only by the adherence of all to the content of revealed faith in its entirety. In matters of faith, compromise is in contradiction with God who is Truth” (*UUS*, §18).

On the other hand, in my own experience and understanding, all that is good and true in neo-Calvinism is affirmed in authentic Catholicism—all is fulfilled and perfected. By implication, all that is false is rejected.

The words of John Paul II ring true to my own experience: “Dialogue is not simply an exchange of ideas. In some way it is always an ‘exchange of gifts’” (*UUS*, §29). May God continue to bless us in this ecumenical exchange of gifts, “so that in all things He may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom belong glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen” (1 Peter 4:11). ✠

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17. Reinhard Hütter, *Bound to Be Free: Evangelical Catholic Engagement in Ecclesiology, Ethics, and Ecumenism* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2004).

Endnotes

- 1 This essay was originally presented at an Ecumenical Meeting during the Week of Christian Unity at Sacred Heart Major Seminary, January 24, 2007, which was co-sponsored by the Metropolitan Christian Council of Detroit/Windsor and the Archdiocese of Detroit.
- 2 Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger (Pope Benedict XVI), “*Deus Locutus Est Nobis in Filio: Some Reflections on Subjectivity, Christology and the Church*,” *Proclaiming the Truth of Jesus Christ*, Papers from the Vallombrosa Meeting (Washington, D.C.: USCC, 2000), pp. 13–29, and for this quotation cf. p. 23.
- 3 Book IV, I, §2 of the *Institutes of the Christian Religion*.
- 4 John Paul II, Apostolic Letter, January 2001, *Novo millennio ineunte*, §48.
- 5 The Second Vatican Ecumenical Council, 1965, *Lumen Gentium*, §14, as cited in Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger, “*Deus Locutus Est Nobis in Filio: Some Reflections on Subjectivity, Christology and the Church*,” p. 24.
- 6 This teaching is reasserted most recently by the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, “Responses to Some Questions Regarding Certain Aspects of the Doctrine of the Church,” June 29, 2007.
- 7 *Unitatis Redintegratio*, §3. See also the August 2000 Declaration by the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, *Dominus Iesus*, §16–17, “The Catholic faithful are required to profess that there is an historical continuity—rooted in the apostolic succession—between the Church founded by Christ and the Catholic Church.”
- 8 Paul VI’s 1967 address to the annual assembly of moderators, members, and consultants to the secretariat for Christian Unity, *Acta Apostolicae Sedis* LIX [1967], p. 498.
- 9 Gustave Weigel, S.J., *Catholic Theology in Dialogue* (New York: Harper, 1961), p. 76, as cited in *Creative Fidelity: American Catholic Intellectual Traditions*, editors, R. Scott Appleby, et al. (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2004), p. 280. This point is reiterated by Walter Cardinal Kasper in his reply to Protestant reactions to “Responses to Some Questions Regarding Certain Aspects of the Doctrine of the Church.” He says, “A first and quick reaction among Protestant Christians to the declaration of the Congregation of the Doctrine of Faith ‘Responses to Some Questions Regarding Certain Aspects of the Doctrine on the Church’ has been one of irritation. But a second, quiet reading will show that the document does not say anything new. It explains and, in a brief summary, clarifies positions that the Catholic Church has held for a long time. Therefore, no new situation has developed. Nor is there any objective reason for outrage, or the feeling of being offended. Every dialogue presupposes clarity about the different positions. Our Protestant partners are the ones who have recently spoken about an ecumenism of profiles. If this declaration now explains the Catholic profile and expresses what, in a Catholic view, unfortunately still divides us, this does not hinder dialogue, but promotes it” (<http://www.radiovaticana.org/en1>).
- 10 Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger, “*Deus Locutus Est Nobis in Filio: Some Reflections on Subjectivity, Christology and the Church*,” p. 27.
- 11 *Lumen Gentium*, §8.
- 12 On this, see *Lumen Gentium*, §8.
- 13 *Lumen Gentium*, §15.
- 14 *Lumen Gentium*, §15.
- 15 *Unitatis Redintegratio*, §2.
- 16 On this, see Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger, “*Deus Locutus Est Nobis in Filio: Some Reflections on Subjectivity, Christology and the Church*,” p. 28.
- 17 *Unitatis Redintegratio*, §3.
- 18 Aidan Nichols, O.P., *The Splendor of Doctrine* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1995), p. 122.
- 19 Francis A. Schaeffer, *The Mark of the Christian* (London: InterVarsity Press, 1970), p. 14.
- 20 This resolution is located on line at <http://www.sbc.net/resolutions/am-Resolution.asp?ID=459>.
- 21 “The manner and order in which Catholic belief is expressed should in no way become an obstacle to dialogue with our brothers. It is, of course, essential that doctrine be clearly presented in its entirety. Nothing is as foreign to the spirit of ecumenism as a false conciliatory approach which harms the purity of Catholic doctrine and obscures its assured genuine meaning. At the same time, Catholic belief needs to be

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- explained more profoundly and precisely, in ways and in terminology which our separated brethren too can really understand" (*Unitatis Redintegratio* §11).
- 22 On this, see the "Doctrinal Note on Some Aspects of Evangelization," Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, 3 December 2007, especially section IV on the ecumenical implications of the Church's teaching on evangelization (http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/congregations/cfaith/documents/rc_con_cfaith_doc_20071203_nota-evangelizzazione_en.html).
- 23 See also, *Unitatis Redintegratio*, §3.
- 24 John Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, Book IV, Chapter XVII, nos. 1-50, especially no. 10.
- 25 G. C. Berkouwer, *The Sacraments*, trans. Hugo Bekker (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1969; translated from the original 1954 Dutch edition, *De Sacramenten*), pp. 188-296, particularly Chapter 10 on Eucharistic presence, "Symbol or Reality?"
- 26 On this, see the "Doctrinal Note on Some Aspects of Evangelization," no. 12.
- 27 "Doctrinal Note on Some Aspects of Evangelization," no. 12.
- 28 The citations in this paragraph are from Yves Congar, O.P., *Ecumenism and the Future of the Church* (Chicago, Ill.: The Priory Press, 1967), pp. 31-32.
- 29 Benedict XVI, *God's Revolution, World Youth Day and Other Cologne Talks* (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2006), pp. 81-87, and for this quotation cf., p. 85.
- 30 *Unitatis Redintegratio*, §4.
- 31 On this, see "Cardinal Ratzinger answers the main objections raised against the Declaration *Dominus Iesus*," *L'Osservatore Romano*, 22 November, 29 November, 6 December 2000, respectively.
- 32 "How I Became the Catholic I was," in *First Things*, April 2002, 14-22.
- 33 Eduardo J. Echeverria, "Living Truth for a Post-Christian World: The Message of Francis Schaeffer and Karol Wojtyla," *Religion & Liberty*, November and December, 2002, pp. 8-11. See also, Eduardo J. Echeverria, "The Christian faith as a way of life: In Appreciation of Francis Schaeffer" (on the 50th anniversary of L'Abri Fellowship), *Evangelical Quarterly*, Vol. LXXIX, No. 3, July 2007, pp. 241-252.

BOOK REVIEWS

The Crisis of Modern Times: Perspectives from The Review of Politics, 1939-1962 by A. James McAdams, ed. Notre Dame, Indiana: University of Notre Dame Press, 2007. pp. xiii +444. Cloth, \$75.00; paper, \$35.00. Reviewed by Jude P. Dougherty, *The Catholic University of America*

No short review can do this volume justice. All one can do is to call attention to an exceptional collection of essays from the University of Notre Dame's *Review of Politics*, essays that were published in the journal from 1939 to 1962. Quite apart from the essays themselves the names alone of the authors selected are apt to awe the reader. In his introduction, McAdams complains of the labor involved in culling the magazine for the present volume but promises other collections organized along different themes. Almost any one of the essays selected is worth the price of the volume. Among the authors included are Jacques Maritain, Yves Simon, Hannah Arendt, Leo Strauss, Aron Gurwitsch, Josef Pieper, Denis de Rougemont, Louis de Raeymaeker, Russell Kirk, John U. Nef, and Eric

Voegelin. Maritain is represented by four selections, including his influential essay, "Integral Humanism and the Crisis of Modern Times," Arendt by two, and Nef by three. Readers may be chilled by the contemporary relevance of de Rougemont's essay, "Passion and the Origin of Hitlerism." Few will fail to recognize de Rougemont's description of the political office seeker, who, in addressing a mass audience, plays upon emotion and studiously avoids intellectual argument, preferring instead to present his audience with "an affective *fait accompli*." Speaking of the naiveté of the European leaders of his time, de Rougemont notes that they persist in believing that they can come to terms with those who wish them ill, with those whose fanatical hatred of Western values and commitments is not likely to be altered by compromise.

The Simon selection, "Common Good and Common Action," is ever timely. There is an interesting exchange between Eric Voegelin and Hannah Arendt on her 1951 work, *The Origins of Totalitarianism*. Also included is Carl J. Friedrich's, "The Deification of the State," a learned

essay that includes discussions of Aristotelian, Roman, and Thomistic theories on the nature and function of the state. Friedrich early on saw the danger of National Socialism and, upon emigrating to the United States from Germany, accepted appointment to the faculty of Harvard in 1926. After the war he was actively involved in the German reconstruction effort and contributed to the composition of the new German constitution.

To find these remarkable essays within the pages of a single journal is no doubt due to the vision of its founding editor, Waldemar Gurian, and his steadfast successors, Fred Crosson, Donald Kommers, Walter Nicgorski, and the present editor, Catherine Zuckert. During its early years, under the editorship of Gurian, the *Review* focused on current events, the threat of Hitlerism and Stalinism, and the prospect of a democratic peace in Europe. Gurian consciously set out to make the education of democratic leaders the journal's primary objective.

McAdams is to be lauded not only for the selection of these essays but for his admirable introductory es-

say that for its insight and judgment establishes him as a peer with the authors presented. Reminiscent of de Rougemont's 1941 essay, McAdams poignantly asks, "Are democratic leaders sufficiently committed to defending the ideals and values on which their societies are based? Or in times of uncertainty, is their belief in the rightness of their views so tenuous that they continually fall prey to pragmatic and utilitarian solutions to problems that are deeper than they appear on the surface?" Gurian's founding ambition remains ever relevant.

Democracy without Nations?: The Fate of Self-Government in Europe by Pierre Manent. Trans. Paul Seaton. Wilmington, Delaware. ISI Books, 2007. pp xiv + 109. Cloth, \$20. Reviewed by Jude P. Dougherty, *The Catholic University of America*

This slim volume may be read as an extended meditation on the condition of Europe, that is, on the nature of democracy and the importance of national identity as the old nations of Europe are increasingly absorbed into the amorphous and ever-expanding European Union. Manent asks, can democracy exist apart from a national context. By "nation" he means a political body, not an expression of particularity, i.e., a region, territory, or distinctive culture. The nation, Manent maintains, is the irreplaceable political context for human action, the instrument of self-government, the locus for deliberation and the administration of justice. Democracy requires that the population consent to the political structure proposed to it. "Not too long ago, the democratic idea justified and nourished the love each people had naturally for itself. But now in the name of democracy and openness to the other, that love is criticized and mocked."

Manent fears that Europe is on

the verge of self-destruction. The democratic nation, he believes, has been lost in Europe, the very place where it first appeared. "Europe's political contrivances," he writes, "have become more and more artificial. With each day they recede further from the natural desires and movements of their citizens' souls." The United States, he thinks, remains a genuine nation-state, but European countries are no longer sovereign, nor do they aspire to retain their identity. European nations are caught between their old identity and that of the new European Union. After Maastricht, the EU's bureaucratic contrivance detached itself from the national political bodies that formed the Union. The artifice took on a life of its own. "Europe" crystallized as an *idea* endowed with legitimacy, suppressing all others, and that idea became equipped and fortified with institutional mechanisms capable of reconstructing all aspects of European life. Instead of increasing self-governance, Europe's new instruments of governance shackle it more with each passing day, promising an indefinite extension that no one wills and no one knows how to stop. "Embracing democratic 'values,' we (Europeans) have forgotten the meaning of democracy itself—its political meaning, which is self-government, the self-government of a people." Enlightened despotism has returned in the form of agencies, administrations, courts of justice, and commissions that lay down the law or create rules, ever more meticulously contrived. In creating an uncontrollable bureaucracy, Europe, in effect, has institutionalized the political paralysis of democracy.

Europe, Manent holds, does not understand that if it wants to think and act politically, it must first think and will a definite territorial arrangement, both within and beyond its borders. He writes, "The sovereign state is the necessary condition of the equality of conditions." It brings

equality into being, the equality implied by the human condition. Sovereignty is not only challenged by Brussels, but also threatened by the power of judges to elevate "rights claims" at the expense of legitimate political authority. Aided by a wayward and over-reaching judiciary, a few noisy litigious people have the ability to block government actions that are in the interest of everyone else. Often in the wake of judicial decision, the state is compelled to protect the criminal against the person it could not protect.

In Manent's judgment, Europe's governing classes, without explicitly saying so, aspire to create a homogeneous and limitless human world. In fact, given its intellectual climate, what distinguishes Europeans from one another cannot be evaluated or even publicly named. The effort to outlaw and stamp out any and all discrimination in society, Manent believes, is not only causing Europe to depart from its original liberal impetus but is leading to the destruction of the state itself. The European value that seems to comprehend all others is "openness to the other," a universalism without limits. "We do not possess any particular existence," Manent writes, "we do not want to possess in any shape, manner or form a distinctive existence of our own, one that would necessarily be particular." *Universal humanity*, he finds, "tends to overwhelm differences so much so that it sometimes seems that between the individual and the world. . . nothing intrudes except perhaps a void where various ethnic, religious, and sexual identities flood, each demanding respect" (p. 73).

In passing, Manent offers reflections on the war in the Middle East, on Israel, on Islam, and on the role of Christianity in Europe. Civilizations, he reminds his reader, do not make war; political bodies do. To parry the threat of self-destruction,

Manent is convinced that “nothing is more important than to get a grip on our centuries-old development. And that means first of all we must again become fully aware of the original Christian character of our nations.” He is insistent that this claim is not a call to roll back the secular state. “The neutral state and Christianity go hand in hand.”

While *La raison des nations: réflexions sur la démocratie en Europe* was written with that continent in mind, Manent’s reflections possess trans-Atlantic value as the United States itself seems to be undergoing an identity crisis.

Interior Castle by St. Teresa of Avila. Commentary by Dennis J. Billy, C.Ss.R., Notre Dame, Indiana: Christian Classics, 2007. pp. 315. Paperback \$16.95. Reviewed by D. Q. McInerney
Our Lady of Guadalupe Seminary

The *Interior Castle* of St. Teresa of Jesus was written in 1577, five years before her death in 1582. It was the last of her works to be written, and arguably it is the greatest. Thanks to Christian Classics and Fr. Dennis J. Billy, C.Ss.R., we now have available to us another edition of a work which is very deserving indeed to be designated as a Christian classic. This edition makes use of the very fine translation of the *Interior Castle* which was done by the English scholar, E. Allison Peers. Fr. Billy adds considerably to the basic Teresian text. There is a general introduction, followed by an essay entitled, “How to Read *Interior Castle*.” Introductions precede each of the seven “Mansions” around which the book is structured, and there are as well introductions preceding each of the chapters within each “Mansion.” Following each chapter there is a set of questions designed to guide reader responses to the chapters.

The *Interior Castle* might be described as an illustrated map of the territory to be traversed by someone

who is destined to attain the most perfect union with God which is possible on this earth. The map is my image, not St. Teresa’s. The governing image she employs, embellishing it imaginatively throughout the book, is that of a castle, a castle containing many mansions, or rooms, each room representing a different stage in the soul’s progress toward God. The innermost mansion is the one in which the union between the soul and God, which St. Teresa calls Spiritual Marriage, takes place. The castle represents the soul. Her imagery recalls the notion that “the Kingdom of God is within,” and suggests that the more deeply one enters into oneself, the closer one draws to the very Source of oneself.

It is from Professor Peers’s biography of St. Teresa that we learn that it was Fray Gracian, one of the first and most impressive members of the Carmelite reform founded by St. Teresa, who suggested to her that she write the *Interior Castle*. He recommended that, in the book, she should lay out the basic principles of her spiritual doctrine, relying principally on her own personal experiences, but without revealing that she was doing so. Not that he would have had to say as much, for St. Teresa’s own modesty would have prevented her from writing about her personal experiences in prayer in any explicit fashion. However, it does not require too astute a reader to discern that her various references to an anonymous third person are really references to herself. This, I think, adds a certain endearing quality to the book.

But when it comes to that, St. Teresa’s whole manner of writing is rather endearing. She is one of the most personable of the major spiritual writers, by reason of the warm, homey, straightforward, and totally unpretentious attitude she takes toward her readers. Reading her is not unlike being in a conversation, an impression which is not appreciably disturbed by the fact that she does all the talking. That is precisely how

the reader wants it to be. Formally, she is addressing her daughters, the Discalced Carmelite nuns, but even knowing that we feel ourselves to be very much, and quite comfortably, a part of the audience. Her style is spiced with numerous unselfconscious asides, including remarkably candid comments on the writing task she is involved in, as when, describing her mode of composition, she tells us that, “I write as mechanically as birds taught to speak.” After a long digression, she frankly admits that she forgot what she was saying. At one point she boldly asserts: “I do not mind if I write any amount of nonsense provided that just once in a while I can write sense.” She had no cause for concern. She writes no nonsense, and an abundance of sense. What with the extremely challenging subject she is writing on, she informs us that she is “straining every nerve” to be as clear as possible. St. Teresa writes about the most serious subject in the world, the individual’s relation to God. The fact that she can do so with so lightsome a tone does not detract from the seriousness of her subject; if anything, it adds to it. The smile she can provoke is an outward sign of sharply focused attention.

Again, St. Teresa’s image for the soul is a castle with many mansions, or chambers. The first three mansions which she treats of together represent the preparatory stages the soul must go through before attaining the higher forms of prayer. This is the realm of discursive prayer or meditation, where most of the work is done by the soul itself, always aided and enabled in its efforts, it is understood, by divine grace. It is with the fourth mansion that we enter the realm of the higher forms of prayer, which we may collectively describe as contemplative prayer. Here God takes over, so to speak, and acts directly upon the soul.

St. Teresa begins her disquisition by stressing the importance of self-knowledge, by which a soul strives, as it were, to become acquainted with itself no mean endeavor. The purpose

of self-knowledge, the specific end toward which it is ordered, is humility. A person possessed of genuine self-knowledge is freed from all illusions about himself, and thus in a very real sense he cannot help but be humble. Let us remind ourselves that the essence of humility is truth. But the search for self-knowledge cannot be separated from the search for God, and “we shall never succeed in knowing ourselves unless we seek to know God.” Through self-knowledge we “rise above the slough of our own miseries,” and thereby overcome, she interestingly argues, the kind of timidity and fear that hampers one’s advancement in the spiritual life. Really to want to become a saint requires a peculiar type of boldness. It is self-knowledge, and its resultant humility, which are the necessary conditions for getting us on our way. The soul enters itself, so to speak, and thus makes a most significant move, “since within each soul there is a mansion for God.”

Along with the effort exerted by the soul at the very beginning of its journey, to achieve self-knowledge and humility, concerted effort must also be given to fostering and maintaining a fruitful *contemptus mundi*, a contempt for that negative “world” which we find referred to everywhere in the Gospels. St. Teresa advocates an active disdain for worldly concerns. This is not an option, and those who think they can seriously pursue perfection and simultaneously strike a cozy accommodation with a world that is the enemy of Christ are only deluding themselves. The soul must adopt nothing less than a “supreme contempt for earthly things,” which attitude is all to its advantage, for what else is the soul attempting to do but become united with God, and God is Truth, while the world “is all lying and falsehood.”

In these first stages of the journey, the soul will focus its energies on discursive or meditative prayer. This type of prayer requires much concentrated effort, consistently applied. Regular

meditation can sometimes grow quite wearying, and there is the problem of aridity to be contended with, periods in which prayer brings with it no consolation, and in fact seems to be a useless exercise, a waste of time. There can be nagging temptations to abandon prayer altogether. St. Teresa gives the strongest kind of emphasis to the importance of perseverance in prayer. She insists that no constraints must be put on its practice. In the face of discouragement, a person should have “a fixed determination not to allow himself to be beaten.” The practice of prayer must never be given up, no matter the difficulties with which one is faced, for the critical thing being gained, by perseverance in prayer, is the conforming of the soul’s will with the will of God. As for aridity, St. Teresa cautions that making too much of it may signal a lack of humility on our part.

No one takes a significant step toward union with God all alone. Sanctity is not some kind of do-it-yourself project carried off in splendid isolation. Coupled with, and inseparable from, its individual dimension is its communal dimension. St. Teresa constantly reminds us that it is impossible to divorce the love of God from love of neighbor. Personal sanctification involves the practice of the virtues, especially charity. The sure sign that we are making genuine progress in the spiritual life is our good works. As if consciously countering the incipient Lutheran doctrine that faith alone suffices, St. Teresa asserts that “what the Lord wants is works.” The underlying reality of a sincere and effectual love of neighbor is “the firmness of our determination to try to please God in everything,” thus conforming our wills to His.

The fourth mansion marks the transition from meditative prayer to contemplative prayer. At this stage the soul must of course continue to cooperate unreservedly with grace, but now the divine initiatives take precedence. And the extraordinary experiences begin. These can be as

disconcerting and disorienting as they are wondrous and transforming. Trials and sufferings intensify, and take on an entirely new complexion. And yet, paradoxically, they are intermixed with joy; she speaks of “this delectable pain, which is not really pain.” The salient point is that the suffering the soul undergoes in these stages is decidedly perfective in its effects. Thus, St. Teresa can exclaim, “how great are the trials which the soul will suffer,” and then unhesitatingly add, “but I should always choose the way of suffering.” The aridity the soul now experiences can assume extreme forms. “The soul feels as if it has never known God and never will know Him.” And: “In this spiritual tempest no consolation is possible.” When things get this bad, she suggests that the best thing to do is “to occupy oneself with external affairs and works of charity.”

Contemplative prayer governs the soul’s activities as it progresses from the fourth mansion to the seventh. In these stages meditative prayer is of no avail. The soul is simply incapable of continuing that type of prayer, and to try to force the issue would be counter-productive. St. Teresa precisely describes meditative prayer as “prolonged reasoning with understanding.” It is specifically that “prolonged reasoning” which the soul is incapable of. St. Teresa advises that the soul should now put a stop to discursive thought, “yet not suspend the understanding.” The soul no longer attempts to draw nearer to God through its own efforts, but allows itself to be drawn toward God by God Himself.

Does this mean that meditative prayer is now put aside once and for all, never to be returned to? Not according to St. Teresa. In contrast to what other spiritual writers might say about the matter, she believes that, however high a state of contemplative prayer a soul might attain, there will always be times when it is needful to return to meditation, for it is of the very nature of those lofty states

that a soul remains in them for only short periods. Even the greatest of saints spend more time in the valleys than on the mountain. It is said that St. Teresa herself never went to the chapel to observe the periods of silent prayer (for Discalced Carmelites, one hour in the morning, one hour in the evening) without a book in her hand.

If the higher forms of prayer are marked by extraordinary sufferings, they are also marked by extraordinary spiritual favors and consolations, and these, if authentic, can only have their source in God. Welcome though such experiences may be, however, St. Teresa takes a rather stern attitude toward them, and she tells us that we must no more rest in them than we rest in purely earthly pleasures. Moreover, we are neither actively to seek them nor the states that produce them. In the spiritual life we must be entirely led by God, to where He wants us to be, not to where we want to be. In this attitude she accentuates a central tenet of Carmelite spirituality, one to which St. John of the Cross gives much emphasis. St. Teresa spells out five reasons why we should not seek spiritual favors and consolations: (1) to do so shows that we fail to love God disinterestedly; (2) doing so bespeaks a lack of humility; (3) it shows a disinclination to imitate Our Lord in His sufferings; (4) these gifts are not owing to us; (5) in any event, all our attempts to gain these gifts is fruitless, for they are gratuitous.

Among the extraordinary experiences a person may have in the higher reaches of prayer is the hearing of locutions. A locution may be described as a direct communication from God to the soul, taking the form of an intellectual illumination the "hearing" in these instances is not physical by which the soul is given knowledge of divine things that could never be gained through its natural powers alone. St. Teresa is convinced that such communications can be authentic a conviction doubtless confirmed by her own personal

experiences but she sounds a strong cautionary note concerning them. Locutions are a privilege, but they could be dangerous because they may not in fact be authentic, "for they may equally well come from the devil or from our own imagination." When they come from our own imagination, she notes, we simply tell ourselves what we want to hear. But what if the locutions are authentic, does that mean the recipient of them is a saint? St. Teresa's answer is pointed and arresting. "But of one thing I will warn you: do not think that, even if your locutions come from God, you will for that reason be any the better. After all, He talked a great deal with the Pharisees; any good you may gain will depend upon how you profit from what you hear."

The innermost mansion of the interior castle is where the Spiritual Marriage takes place. Here the soul finds permanency and peace. "The soul, as I said, neither moves from that center [i.e., union with God] nor loses its peace." And that peace remains undisturbed despite whatever external trials the soul may still have to endure. All internal strife is gone: "The soul is almost always in tranquility."

So many of the experiences which St. Teresa attempts to describe in this work fall into the category of the ineffable, in that they do not easily lend themselves to description, if at all. But she incessantly tries her best to give the reader a reliable account of them, even when speaking of "visions of so sublime a kind that it is not fitting for those who live on earth to understand them in such a way that they can describe them." However, she is always keenly aware of the limited success of her efforts, and at one point she admits that, "in reality I am beginning to see, as I go on, that all I say falls short of the truth, which is indescribable." On several occasions throughout the book it almost amounts to a refrain--St. Teresa makes the observation that unless the reader has had spiritual ex-

periences comparable to the ones she is attempting to describe, he simply will not understand what she is talking about. In that respect, this reader had to be satisfied with remaining in the dark.

The final pages of this altogether remarkable book would seem to be addressed, or so it seems to me, to the average rank and file slogger who is quite innocent of the kinds of rarified experiences to which the book, necessarily, gives so much attention. St. Teresa speaks here to the ordinary Christian, providing him with advice which is both most sound and most practical, and applicable to all. She reminds us of the critical importance of humility, without which no progress in the spiritual life is possible. This is where we must start, for humility, she tells us, is the foundation of the whole edifice. Forget about security, forget about honors, and relish the thought of being thought very little of. In the spiritual life we should try to foster something like a holy lack of ambition, not that we lapse into lethargy and not try to make progress "as you know, anyone who fails to go forward begins to go back" but in the sense that we realize that everything is in the hands of God. A particular form that our humility should take is realizing that all cannot be accomplished at once, and that we should be content with progressing little by little. "Fix your eyes on the Crucified and nothing else will be of much importance to you." And as for prayer in particular, "we should desire to engage in prayer, not for our own enjoyment, but for the sake of acquiring strength that fits us for service." We must always keep in mind that genuine spiritual advancement can never be an exclusively individual matter, and "unless you strive after the virtues and practice them, you will never grow to be more than dwarves."

St. Teresa makes it quite clear that the extraordinary experiences she describes in her book characterize the lives of only a very few.

The reader gravely nods his head in agreement with that sober judgment. He admires, indeed stands in awe of, that select and privileged minority, while at the same time acknowledging, perhaps with more than a hint of complacent relief, that, for his part, he is clearly to be counted among the majority. And then, with a twinge of discomfiture, he recalls something he had read in the book. St. Teresa, after acknowledging that the attainment of elevated states of perfection and their associated experiences are indeed given by God only to a few, then disarmingly adds: "He would give them to us all if we loved Him as He loves us."

Transforming Catholicism: Liturgical Change in the Vatican II Church by

David R. Maines and Michael J. McCallion. Lexington Books, 2007, xii + 152 pages, \$26.95.

Reviewed by Leonard Kennedy, C.S.B., Toronto

This book is a study of important liturgical changes that took place after Vatican II, which ended in 1965. It is a study primarily of the opposing sides involved in each change or attempted change, the arguments which they followed, and the outcome of these attempts. Though the reasons alleged for the arguments are given, the authors do not take sides but give accounts of the "liturgical warfare" that took place in the diocese of Detroit, which was no doubt typical of the country as a whole.

We shall give an account of the battle over the situation of a church's tabernacle. In many churches, a group took the offensive in explaining why the tabernacle should be in a special chapel or in a place not in the view of the congregation, or in a special part of the church which can be seen by some but not all of the congregation. Their argument was that the sight of the tabernacle would be a distraction from the Mass;

it would reduce concentration on the other presence of Jesus, that is, his presence in the faithful of the congregation.

Just after Vatican II there arose a new group of "specialists" in many of the larger United States parishes, for example, a Worship Committee or a Liturgical Consultant. They became involved in what would have previously involved only the congregation and the clergy of a Detroit parish. The two authors of this book chose one Detroit parish for their study on the location of the tabernacle. They first made a study of where tabernacles were located throughout the diocese, and then contacted the pastor, the assistant priests, the different parish committees, and the parishioners (who were contacted by parish site visits and phone interviews). The researchers then measured carefully the influence of each participant in the argument.

There was a general conclusion reached by the two authors of this book: "In sum, when parishes go through the process of removing their tabernacles, they tend to have major problems, strong opposition, and strong liturgical influence. When parishes leave their tabernacles in their original location, they tend to have minor or no problems at all...When parishes have moved their tabernacle two or more times, levels of difficulty, strong opposition, and strong liturgical influence tend to be higher."

There was, however, another more general conclusion dealt with constantly in this book: that the opinions and actions of liturgical "experts" do not proceed unopposed, and their way of proceeding raises the difficulty of arriving at a peaceful resolution of a problem. The authors give their explanations as to why this is the case. They look upon their work as making empirical studies of liturgical changes, and from these studies drawing sociological explanations.

Besides the change of the location of the tabernacle, the book gives at-

tention to a few other proposed liturgical changes, after stating a general principle: "In the reform and promotion of the liturgy, full and active participation by all the people is the aim to be considered before all else."

At the time of Vatican II there were different liturgical practices in different churches for the reception of First Holy Communion. One concerned the reception of Communion by children. Did the communicants sit with one another or with their parents? Were the girls in white and the boys in blue suits; that is, were the communicants similarly dressed? Should pictures be allowed to be taken in church at this time? Should all communicants sitting with their parents leave their parents to go to the sanctuary at Communion time? What hymn should be sung?

Another set of problems faces the persons in charge of coordinating the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults (RCIA). There is a problem about whether the program is going to be completed on time, and also the problem of some members getting to know the others (which is desired) and some, because of scheduling, having to attend as individuals. Another problem is that some people know a lot more about Catholicism than others already.

This book is a must for liturgists and for sociologists of change, or for anyone attempting to change any aspect of the liturgy, or to oppose such an attempt.

Jesus, the Apostles and the Early Church, Pope Benedict XVI. San

Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2007. 163pp
Reviewed by John Adam Moreau, Ph.D., Mobile AL

This handsomely bound and attractively printed book contains a series of talks by the Holy Father before General Audiences on Wednesdays from March 15, 2006 to Feb. 14, 2007.

From the pontiff's pen in 31

chapters come the men---beginning with the first 12 Apostles---and the other men and women who carried out “the duty entrusted to them.” An apostle is “one who is sent,” and so, writes Pope Benedict, their “action creates the church and makes the Church---as Saint Cyprian said in the third century---‘people brought into unity from the unity of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.’”

Fairly dry stuff? Not in the least.

Think of a favorite priest/scholar who is an engaging preacher man and who wears his impressive learning lightly and you have just the right feeling of this keeper-of-a-book.

I began the book doubting the author can carry the day without padding and puffery. But the pages zip by, a mélange of doctrine, history, surmise, conjecture, reflection, and explanations of Greek, Hebrew and Aramaic words.

He states the obvious but in his rendering it is not tiresome to hear it again---that the Church was built on the foundation laid by the Apostles.

“Through the Apostles,” writes the Holy Father, “we come to Jesus himself. The Church begins to establish herself when some fishermen of Galilee meet Jesus, allowing themselves to be won over by his gaze, his voice, his warm and strong invitation: ‘Follow me, and I will make you become fishers of men.’”

I think that even a learned person will like this book, and surely an unlearned person, such as myself, will be grateful for the how-about-that! nuggets one pans from this stream.

Examples:

—Since the early Church suffered divisions one should not be surprised there are divisions today.

The most important act of James was his role in relations between Christians of Jewish origin and those of pagan origin in “integrating the original Jewish dimension of Christianity with the need not to impose on converted pagans the obligation to submit to all the norms of the Law of

Moses.”

—The act of laying of hands was developed as a sacramental sign.

—The disputes, disagreements and controversies among the Apostles are “very comforting” because the Apostles “are people like us, who also have complicated lives.”

The pontiff wears his bookishness easily and he is eager for us to see what he sees. So one arrives at the last page still interested in and *liking* the actors on his stage. Think of the enormity of the travels and works of these people. Multiply by three the enormity of what Cabeza de Vaca or Captain Cook accomplished and you have a sense of what these early Church people did.

From the outset on down to the last page one revels in the riverlets of the names of people and places the Holy Father scatters for us---Silvanus, Apollos, Priscilla, Aquila, Gaius, Laodicea, Apphia; Tryphaena; Tryphosa, and Persis and on and on.

Such names are like the softest of notes but of course we know nothing or almost nothing about them. Yet by the finish of *Jesus, the Apostles, and the Early Church* we have been told exactly the right amount of what we need to know.

What Is The Bible? by Henri Daniel-Rops, Manchester, NH. Sophia Institute Press, 2006. 150pp.

Reviewed by John Adam Moreau, Ph.D, Mobile AL

The Bible, says the French author of this jewel of a book, is the Word of God addressed in writing to men, to you and me. When you accept what it is, then you accept that the Bible is what God let it be and let it become.

We don't know why God has the sky look blue, has most of the earth covered with water, why He programmed geese to fly in a V formation or why He decided on so many types of plants. He just did.

Neither can we know why the Bible is both as accessible as the *Reader's Digest* and as daunting and puzzling as the question why when you look into the starlit sky you are looking, well, you are looking into the Forever.

If I were going to create a seminar on the Bible, and what life was like when Jesus walked around Palestine, and what He himself was like I would of course use the Bible. But no matter how learned and sophisticated my students I would also have them read Frank Sheed's *To Know Christ Jesus* and Daniel-Rops's *Daily Life in the Time of Jesus*. And for sure I would add the book I am reviewing, a handsome re-issue of this eloquent Daniel-Rops classic, published in 1958.

The brilliant Daniel-Rops (1901-1965) turned from adult agnosticism to the Catholicism of his peasant class youth. He taught, he lectured, he was head of the French publishing house Fayard, he was editor-in-chief of the 150 volume *Twentieth-Century Encyclopedia of Catholicism* and he wrote something like 70 books---novels, historical studies, poetry and children's stories.

It is fitting then to learn that in 1955 he was elected the youngest member of the French Academy and that Pius XII awarded him the Cross of the Order of St Gregory the Great.

I just called this book exciting. It is indeed that in the same way that a crisp, clear and memorable kind of book---Chesterton's *ORTHODOXY* comes to mind---imprints itself on the memory.

A lot of people are like me. I have read parts of the Bible and some of the parts I have read well more than once. I am constantly baffled, constantly going to the footnotes and if it weren't for Sheed's book and books like those of Daniel-Rops my grasp of the Bible would be more pathetic than it is.

I remarked at the outset about the Bible being what it is and what it became. I know of no author--

—in the avalanche of works on the Bible—who does such a masterful job of making sense of the seemingly endless hurdles in the Bible for the reader to clear.

Sure, on the one hand there is the literary beauty of the psalms and they can be seen as the model of how one talks to God. But at the other extreme, says Daniel-Rops, boring is the best word for Leviticus, “totally devoid of talent” best characterizes the author of Chronicles and the author of Revelation makes many mistakes in Greek. The Bible, he says, sometimes sparkles with genius but some of its parts “are undeniably platitudinous and dull.”

Can this be so of a divinely inspired book? (One chuckles at the idea of some of us numbskulls thinking, “Whew! Turns out I wasn’t the only one struggling along.”) As convincingly defined by Daniel-Rops, the answer of course is yes. The key is what does divinely inspired mean?

“Nothing,” says Daniel-Rops, “could be more mistaken than to imagine the Bible as a miraculous work originating somewhere or other in some mysterious fashion and suddenly appearing among men.”

For good measure he quotes Aquinas on the idea that it is a divine book but it did not fall from Heaven ready-made. “The Holy Spirit is the principal author of the Scriptures,” says St Thomas. “Men were His instruments.”

Then Daniel-Rops almost sows up his argument by quoting Leo XIII’s encyclical *Providentissimus Deus*: “Inspiration is a supernatural impulse by means of which the Holy Spirit excited and moved the sacred writers to write and helped them while they wrote in such a way that they could conceive exactly, wished to report faithfully, and expressed with infallible accuracy all that God commanded them to write and nothing else.”

So, the author writes with whimsy, God did not dictate to a gaggle of mediums who were in trances, and, despite lovely paintings with such a

theme, angels were not whispering into the ears of the Evangelists as they scribbled.

No, what happened is that “in order to bring the Bible into existence, the Holy Spirit used men as his instruments and each of them retained his personality, his distinctive characteristics, his talent or genius, his habits of thought, and his stylistic ability. He did not destroy or infringe on the faculties of those whose function it was to put his message into words.”

So what Daniel-Rops sees is that not only did God create man in his image but he let, where the writing of the Bible is concerned, men be men.

Here then is the greatest hurdle for us to clear: That in the events of history man is not the plaything of blind fate. Rather he is in the hands of a Power, a Principle, a “personal God on whom all depends and who wishes to lead him to his true goal.” This, says Daniel-Rops, is the lesson repeatedly found in the Bible. He adds:

“An indissoluble union of human realities—some of them painful, even a lamentable sight—and transcendent and divine realities, that is the very substance of the Bible; that is what constitutes its greatness but also its difficulty.”

Or in other words, as Daniel-Rops says elsewhere in the book, the Christian experiences a disappointment when he opens the Bible. It is not all Hallmark cards, and it is far from being entirely uplifting and heart-warming in places. There also is an arklod of dry lists of rituals, the fierce imprecations of prophets, enigmatic sentences, the matrimonial adventures of kings and similar off-putting material. The Bible, notes Daniel-Rops dryly, in no way resembles a manual of devotion and the reader nourished on the *Imitation* or *The Spiritual Exercises* will be discouraged if he sets his plumb line by such writings. But in fact, Daniel-Rops notes, the *Imitation* says, “If you want to profit from Scripture, read it with humility, simplicity and faith.”

So, the author says, to the beauty and clarity and the vaguenesses and confounded difficulties of the Bible, we readers, dumb oxen and insightful scholars alike, are to bring faith and loyalty, intelligence and good-will, preferably on our knees. Thus, he goes on, it is a divinely inspired book which also is authentically human. It is, he says, a book about which we have a simple choice: Accept or reject. If we do not declare that God’s will is at work, then of course we reject the Gospel.

Oxen and scholars alike, what we hold in our hands is a book at once compact but complex, a thing which has a supernatural purpose but is often not at all or barely understandable.

Daniel-Rops writes with economy on such important and familiar matters as the “objectivity” of the writers of the Bible; the Church as guarantor of the Bible’s truth; why the Bible is free of error, and about the “higher criticism,” archeology and historiography not being an end to themselves. I am not going into those matters but I want the reader to know the author addresses them. I feel certain they pave a road well known to readers of the *Quarterly* and with which no serious quarrel would arise.

Now I’ve gotten you through most of the deep stuff in *What is the Bible?* Will you feel you’ve been on one of those mind-taxing and patience-killing slogs that are the experience with so many books? Not at all. The prose of Daniel-Rops, in this happy translation, dances along. And what is so rewarding is that the pages are seeded with the most intriguing facts and assertions. For some of us such items are old hat but for some they are surely what I call Gosh! items. You would gladly swallow them up and so would a beginner.

Examples:

- But for the Bible, “the sculptors of Chartres, the mosaic-workers of Ravenna, Michelangelo, Rembrandt, and El Greco would not be the artists

we admire.”

- The word Bible goes back beyond its Greek etymology (*biblos* or *biblion* (“book”)) to the second millennium before Christ when the Phoenicians of Byblos made their port the greatest papyrus market of the time and put the name of the town on the product. In the 4th century St Jerome gave currency to the expression “the Holy Books” or simply “The Books.” In time the name went from Greek into a feminine Latin name and became a singular noun, thus implying an underlying unity and a supernatural harmony.
- The Bible was spoken before it was ever written. At first it was learned by heart and transmitted orally. (And as for Paul, by the way, he did not write the letters. He dictated them.)
- Matthew was the first to put down in Hebrew the sayings of the Lord and the Hebrew of the time was Aramaic. Mark wrote in popular Greek and was addressing Christian lower classes.
- The Greek of the time was more or less as we know it today but the old copyists did not separate letters or use any punctuation. Over-all the scripts which were used varied enormously over the centuries. Early Hebrew was actually more like the Phoenician alphabet in its archaic letters, which are unlike what Hebrew became.
- We moderns have only copies of the Bible. We no more have original manuscripts than there are original manuscripts of Homer or Pindar. There are great and notorious problems with the manuscripts which exist.

“So,” regarding textural criticism, Daniel-Rops writes, “for each text an attempt must be made to reconstruct the history of its transmission. This is not always possible. In that case, we must turn to internal criticism, which tracks down obvious errors by making use of the context.

“It tries to detect whether such-and-such a reading interrupts the train of ideas, has been influenced by another text (this is quite frequent in the Gospels), or conflicts with the author’s genius and modes of thought and writing. It can easily be imagined that the whole science is an extremely delicate one and that its results are often only conjectural. Thanks to its patient efforts, we can rely on having as faithful a text as possible.

“But it should be emphasized that, on the whole, these variants affect only very small points, tiny details even, and that it is rare for discussion of them to call into question important truths. Taken as a whole, the text of Holy Scripture as we possess it today is quite sufficiently sound and well guaranteed to form a basis of faith.”

- There are 100,000-some readings of the Gospels.

Chapters in the Bible date only from the 13th century. Verses date from the 16th century and “the method governing the division defies rational analysis.”

- The ancients had no sense of literary ownership.
- “Nothing could be more futile, or in a sense more absurd, than arguments turning on the actual words of Scripture in English or some other modern language, when the basis of the discussion is a translation, and often a translation of other translations.”
- Throughout the Bible the heart is regarded not as the seat of the emotions but of the intellect.
- You will strive in unending futility to identify or to sort out the various men named James.
- The authors wrote to bring home to men the action of God in the world in a dimension of time. Those who reproach the authors for lacking the modern so-called objectivity are

by definition ridiculous.

- We know not when the psalms were written. The issue is irrelevant. What is important is that the spirit of Christ was nourished on them, their verses were on His lips and the psalms are the link of the Old to the New Covenant.
- One of the certainties of the Bible is that it is rich in questions which “perpetually torment us”--- e.g. “Why do the wicked Live? Why do they grow old, and why are they powerful?”
- Why isn’t there just one Gospel? Why did not the Church unite the four gospels in one narrative? After all, there really is only one Gospel. Attempts were made to do so but the church never approved them. One would like to think the Church, in her profound respect for tradition, saw that the differences in the texts did not prejudice the story’s credibility but strengthen it.

And speaking of differences (and thus differences in the Gospels which convince one of their authenticity), Daniel-Rops says that John wrote in his old age when the three synoptic Gospels already were widely read. John assumes the information Matthew, Mark and Luke impart but he adds material *forgotten* by them. Examples: the length of Jesus’ public life, the date of His death, and circumstances of the Passion.

I have given you some of the rich cream but when you read *What is the Bible?* you will be pleased to see there is so much more packed into 150 pages to be skimmed than I have told you.

Some of the skimming is in the shape of ponderings which can never be exhausted but ever delight. Think back to how the Jews expected a majestic messiah who would take names and kick tail. Daniel-Rops asks but does not know any more than you or I do why the great irony of God’s choosing Abraham as the messenger

of His Word, why in the world a small Bedouin clan, led by its chief, opt for the truth. Why, asks Daniel-Rops, does God select a backward people to, as it were, begin, the Bible? It is insoluble. The Jews were without arts, philosophy or any distinctive natural endowments. People infinitely more advanced intellectually have given us books full of gross moral and religious errors. Yet from the Jews we get this masterpiece, the Bible.

We just do not know or understand, the author tells us, why this tiny people, reduced at one point to fewer than 100,000 exiles, was able to exercise such widespread influence.

As he puts it: "Persecuted, tortured...how was it able to survive right up to the present day, while the mighty empires all around it have left us only ruins, inscriptions, and mummies? And why did the long trial that was its destiny lead it step by step, from suffering to suffering, ever upward toward the revelation?"

What we can know with certainty, this a valuable book tells us, is that each testament is incomprehensible without the other. How fitting that in a window at Chartres four Old Testament prophets (Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel and one representing the 12 minor prophets) are carrying the four Evangelists.

There is in the Bible, Daniel-Rops tells us, "a divine plan, a progressive revelation, a slow but sure ascent of Israel's soul toward the Light."

Soldier Boy: The War between

Michael and Lucifer by Raymond Dennehy, (Victoria, B. C., Canada: Trafford Publishing, 2007), 124 pp., paperback.

Reviewed by Peter A. Redpath, Professor of Philosophy, St. John's University, Staten Island, NY, USA

While Raymond Dennehy's "Foreword" to *Soldier Boy: The War between Michael and Lucifer* describes his book "as fiction, fantasy, frolic, all in one"

(p. 7), this little monograph is much more: an excellent example of how to philosophize within Faith about some of the most crucial issues of the contemporary age. A quick glance at this book might suggest it is little more than dialogical, poetic musings involving amateur angelology about what caused Lucifer's rebellion against God. Instead, this book is a devastating analysis and critique of the fundamentally incoherent moral and metaphysical principles and psychological states that underlie contemporary social, cultural, and political thought and behavior. More, it presents the most profound theological explanation I have ever encountered of the chief motivation behind Lucifer's initial, and continued, rebellion against God.

Dennehy divides *Soldier Boy* into a Foreword and 10 chapters: (1) Revelation; (2) Atonement; (3) Backslide; (4) Shoving Match; (5) Relativity; (6) Metamorphosis; (7) Home, Sweet Home; (8) Parry and Thrust; (9) Fiends & Friends; and (10) Eye of the Storm.

Chapter 1 involves a discussion between Michael and Uriel regarding Michael's lack of confidence about facing Lucifer in the upcoming battle to expel Lucifer from Heaven. Michael is especially torn by Lucifer's betrayal of their friendship because he mistakenly attributes his military confidence to Lucifer's, not God's, encouragement. Lucifer had repeatedly told Michael he was eminently qualified to be Supreme Commander of Heaven's Legions. Michael cannot shake off the insecurity he feels at the betrayed friendship and has fallen into self-pity, which Uriel warns him "springs from pride" (p. 11).

Uriel explains to Michael that Lucifer feigned friendship with Michael to get Michael to doubt God, to think that Michael's self-confidence depended upon his friendship with Lucifer, not God. He warns Michael that a Seraph underestimates Lucifer "at his peril" (p. 18).

Chapter 2 presents Michael meet-

ing Lucifer to tell Lucifer that God had sent Michael to banish him. When Lucifer feigns friendship with Michael, the Archangel reacts by telling Lucifer that he had (1) used Michael to facilitate his schemes against God and (2) pretended to be Michael's friend to get Michael and Michael's commanders to trust him, so with the aim of undermining Michael's confidence by manipulating his insecurity in order to render him incapable of leading his legions against Lucifer.

Lucifer continues to attempt to manipulate Michael by distracting him into a discussion about Lucifer's chief motive for rebelling against God: Lucifer wanted to be completely free and God was standing in his way because freedom and truth are essentially opposed. "Truth is freedom's enemy" (p. 26). If God wanted Lucifer to submit to his divine plan, He should have made Lucifer a robot. Open-ended freedom was essential to his nature as a person.

Lucifer's claim about the essential opposition between freedom and truth causes Michael to mount dialectical arguments about the essential connection of truth and freedom. At this point Lucifer attempts to distract Michael by undermining Michael's confidence. Lucifer tells Michael that Michael is not intellectually qualified to beat him, that he had only told Michael that he was qualified to be Supreme Commander to bolster the Archangel's confidence in the hope that Michael might some day acquire the intellectual skills he needed.

When Michael retorts that God has made him eminently qualified for the job of Commander-in-Chief, Lucifer attempts to undermine Michael's trust in God by asking him why, if God is omnipotent and omniscient, does He need Michael to do His work? Perhaps God is not really omnipotent, is unsure of His powers?

As Lucifer continues to undermine Michael's confidence in God and himself, Michael becomes increasingly immobilized. Hence

Uriel enters to remind Michael of his assignment, to explain to Michael that Lucifer is attempting to use endless debate to undermine Michael's confidence and distract him from doing his job. He accuses Michael of being addicted to Lucifer's company, to his banal discussion, which Lucifer is using to prevent Michael from acting.

When Lucifer claims that he is the source of Michael's self-confidence, this is the final straw. Michael declares that his confidence comes from God, not Lucifer; and finally he acts. The legions clash and Lucifer and his followers are expelled from Heaven.

Chapter 3 starts with Uriel wondering about why, after defeating Lucifer, Michael is sad, instead of happy. Michael replies that God, not himself, defeated Lucifer.

In an evident reference to the moral and psychological problems that ensue from a denial of the importance of secondary causes, Uriel accuses Michael of allowing Lucifer to beat him "from the inside out" (p. 35). To defeat Michael and retain his own confidence, Lucifer needs to maintain the illusion that no mere Archangel could have beaten the superior Seraph. Lucifer's game-plan was to convince Michael that God chose Michael as Commander-in-Chief of his legions because (1) God lacked confidence in His ability to defend Heaven or (2) Michael's power was only an illusion, an instrumental manifestation of God's infinite power. Either way Lucifer robs Michael of his self-confidence and deludes himself into believing that Lucifer has greater self-worth than he does.

At this point, Uriel explains to Michael that, while God could have created without including angels in creation, God created angels to allow them to participate in his providence as intermediary causes. And Michael reacts by reporting on a visit he made to Lucifer just after the Seraph had been banished to Hell.

During this visit Lucifer (1) reveals

to Michael his plan to return to his rightful place in Heaven through a series of strategic moves; (2) blames his defeat on his commander Nebiros losing his nerve; (3) claims to be able to hurt God by depriving God of the ability to share eternal happiness with others.

Michael claims that Lucifer's plan was and remains amateurish. While Lucifer might be the greatest angel, he is not as great as, and cannot hurt, God. And Lucifer's resolve, and that of his troops, cannot be as great as Michael's and his troops because they have truth on their side. Lucifer, of course, thinks Michael is deluded.

Uriel praises Michael for confronting Lucifer, because, in so doing, he charged the narcissist angel with military incompetence and cowardice, and no narcissist can stand criticism. Simultaneously, Uriel cautions Michael not to be flattered by Lucifer's repeated attempts to engage him in philosophical discussion because (1) desire for flattery is a form of pride and (2) the only reason Lucifer seeks to engage Michael in discussion is to confuse him and weaken his allegiance to God.

Chapter 4 starts with Michael displaying surprise over Lucifer's triumphant, buoyant attitude, despite his being in Hell. Lucifer explains that the reason he beams is that the twentieth century, which displayed some of his "finest work," has just closed (p. 47). He's fomented two world wars, costing millions of lives. And, using some of his best tricks since those he played on Adam and Eve, he has persuaded liberal democracies to use their freedom to enslave themselves by subordinating the primary right to life to the secondary right to privacy.

In Chapter 5 Lucifer continues his triumphant attitude by telling Michael not to gloat over his recent little victory of the death-bed conversion of Dr. Zermalmen, the inventor of partial-birth abortion. True, Lucifer considered the eleventh-hour loss of a soul as evil as Zermalmen's, "a *defeat* of galactic proportions."

Nonetheless, Lucifer claims he has beaten Michael many times since his expulsion from Heaven, and says he could have gotten Zermalmen had he wanted to.

Michael disagrees, saying that, at times, to achieve a higher good, God allows Lucifer to win at times. Despite Lucifer thinking that he is superior to Michael, Michael claims that the Archangel's purpose (to serve God) is more noble.

This claim sparks a lengthy debate between Lucifer and Michael about the relationship between freedom and truth, which they had first discussed in Chapter 2. Michael claims that Lucifer (1) has deluded himself into believing he is truth's standard; (2) has not really been able to separate truth and freedom through his arguments for unlimited freedom and against truth. Lucifer pretends to claim that freedom is real and truth is not. Michael claims that either truth is real or Lucifer contradicts himself in believing himself to be truth's standard.

Sophist that he is, Lucifer responds that we have to avoid semantic entrapments. He admits that a truth of fact exists, about the objective existence of things. He simply denies we can derive an "is" from an "ought," that statements claiming objective truth about moral matters have any meaning. In that sense, yes, he separates truth from reality, from freedom.

He especially savors the twofold victory he has won through abortion legalization: (1) baby killing and (2) using adversarial feminism to confuse the identity between men and women and create increasing enmity between the sexes. First he introduced "equality" feminism to create animosity between men and women. Then he introduced "gender" feminism to blur the distinction between them. While genetic distinctions naturally distinguish the sexes biologically, Lucifer started to blur linguistic references to men and women by conflating the biological category of sex and the grammatical category

of gender. This way, instead of having 2 sexes (male and female), we now have 5 genders (male and female, and 3 in-between).

Lucifer's disordered way of talking leads Michael to the conclusion that separating freedom and truth justifies all acts by "separating self-awareness from the world," by causing our reason to lose touch with reality.

While Lucifer attempts to justify this separation by distinguishing the criterion of truth for the intellect and that of freedom for the will, Michael accuses Lucifer of "just being perverse," narcissistic, a "comic figure" (p. 61). Unable to create anything, he attempts to fashion illusions, distort people's perception of things, tempt them to lie.

Michael admits that Lucifer has changed history, had millions of people murdered, has persuaded women to kill their children and democratic nations to self-destruct. He has done so, as Lucifer admits, by maintaining nature to be morally neutral, that no moral difference exists "between a woman bearing her child or killing it. Between loving and nurturing it and tormenting it and starving it" (p. 62).

The conflict between Lucifer and God is an irreconcilable conflict of wills. No moral, or other, reason exists for Lucifer to submit his will to God's.

If such be the case, Michael criticizes Lucifer for claiming that he had a right to rebel against God, for behaving irrationally. Lucifer retorts by maintaining that complete freedom entails being able to behave irrationally, that no moral difference exists "between killing a non-threatening human being and smashing a rock." Lucifer regards his successes as so many works of art, things of metaphysical beauty and interactive art (interaction between observer and the observed), if not aesthetic beauty.

Consider, for example, how effectively Lucifer guided the pro-abortion publicity campaign. He: (1) spread confusion about when human life starts; (2) promoted a contracep-

tive society to encourage developing the psychological attitude that sex exists chiefly for pleasure, not procreation; (3) established that any answer given had to be religious or personal, not scientific; (4) fed the media massively exaggerated statistics about the number of annual illegal abortions and related maternal deaths; (5) misled the public into believing that large numbers of women were subjecting themselves to a health procedure that was only dangerous because it was illegal.

First Lucifer persuaded physicians, intellectuals, college professors, and politicians that abortion was a legitimate medical procedure. Once he achieved this he could persuade them that, like other surgeries, abortion possessed "aesthetic possibilities." Michael retorts, "If instigating and promoting abortions is art, then there is no art" (p. 76).

Chapter 6 starts with Michael telling Uriel he is becoming more confident about his debating abilities. Uriel explains to Michael that God is helping Michael and has disabused him of his "apparent assumption that waging war and debating have nothing in common" (p. 78). While he tells Michael that dialectic's aim is to use true statements and draw valid conclusions from them, Lucifer is a pathological liar. And engaging in dialectic with liars is an act of war. Beyond intelligence, waging war demands "courage, discipline, strength of will, and belief in your cause" (p. 79).

Uriel tells Michael that all the angels have noticed a diminution of Lucifer's overall magnificence. His deterioration has started. He is losing confidence because Michael's challenge to him is decreasing his once vast ability to intimidate other angels.

Chapter 7 describes Lucifer at home in Hell discussing with his secretary, Baalberith, his desire for revenge for losing the soul of Dr. Zermalmen. Lucifer orders Baalberith to find a prominent pro-life woman, a paragon of virtue, that he can talk

into having an abortion.

Chapter 8 returns to a lengthy discussion of the chief reason for Lucifer's rebellion against God. Lucifer initially claims that his chief reason for rebellion was to liberate himself and his followers from God's tyranny. When Michael challenges this claim by indicating that, subsequent to the angelic rebellion, Lucifer has become a tyrant, bullying angels he supposedly liberated, Lucifer replies with a distinction between choice and consequences of a choice, original intention and unexpected consequences demanding organization and discipline.

Lucifer argues that democracy and organization are incompatible. True freedom results from a social contract. God never offered him a contract to choose God as his leader. But Lucifer offered his followers one. His angels have proven to be untrustworthy because they rebelled against God. And the need for organization and discipline demands their subservience to him.

While Michael considers Lucifer and his devils to be a traitors, dissemblers, and liars, Lucifer says he will take his motley crew over the company of Michael's God-fawning sheep anytime. At least Hell challenges his wits, and his refusal to serve God has enlarged his choices.

Michael disagrees, arguing that, instead of expanding his choices, enabling Lucifer to be able to do whatever he wants, Lucifer's freedom has been diminished, has become limited to doing only evil, things contrary to God's will. Moreover, Michael argues that Lucifer never really believed that freedom opposed truth, that total freedom is real and truth is not. Lucifer has an unbendable rule he follows: to disobey God, undermine God's providence. While he might claim to exercise his freedom with no guidance from truth, he has not succeeded. Truth is real and total human freedom is not. In the process of failure to achieve total freedom, Lucifer has reunited truth and free-

dom.

Michael argues further that the essential irrationality of Lucifer's behavior proves its diminished freedom. When Lucifer disagrees, claiming that his behavior is logically coherent, not contradictory. Michael retorts that, while the behavior is logically coherent, it is irrational because it is out of touch with reality, which only allows us to choose what we can, not anything and everything we wish.

Lucifer's behavior shows that he cannot choose anything and everything he wishes. He can only choose evil, what opposes God's will. Hence, he has become enslaved by the project of thwarting God's will. Lucifer is only free to do evil. He is incapable of doing good. While Lucifer claims to act according to no objective principle, to follow his own standard, his behavior shows he consistently acts according to the presumptive principle that freedom and truth are separate, opposites. Hence, Michael concludes that something other than desire for expanded freedom motivated Lucifer's rebellion.

Before precisely explaining precisely what that motive was, Lucifer sidetracks Michael into a discussion of the origin of Michael's motivational theory. At this point, the two characters start to discuss the beauty of the created order because Michael says that contemplation of this beauty caused him to realize precisely how pride, not desire for increased freedom, caused Lucifer's rebellion.

Contemplating the multitude of unequal goods in the created order caused Michael to realize that pride, delusion about his self-worth, would not allow Satan to share God's love with anyone or anything else, especially with lowly material creation and human beings. He chose ejection from Heaven over sharing God's love because he wanted that love all for himself.

Like a jilted lover refusing to allow others to have a share in a love he thinks is only entitled to be his, Lucifer must now disrupt all God's

relationships, his order of providence, and make everyone else as miserable as he is. He hates God and everything else and is driven crazy with rage that, despite his behavior, God continues to love him and others.

Unable to accept Michael's profound psychoanalysis, Lucifer returns in Chapter 9 to his fiendish plan to destroy a pro-life woman of virtue, Mabel Crawford, the president of Voices for the Voiceless International, by first tempting her to have an affair with a man who, driven by guilt, will subsequently commit suicide, and then tempting her to have an abortion rather than admit her capability to sin.

Chapter 10 ends with (1) Lucifer and Michael still fighting for Mabel's soul, (2) Lucifer recalling when they were friends, and (3) Michael questioning Lucifer's recollection and remembering when he was Lucifer's friend.

My Grandfather's Son:

A Memoir by Clarence Thomas, New York: HarperCollins, 2007, xii + 289 pp.; HB; \$26.95.

Reviewed by Kenneth D. Whitehead

As one of the four sitting Catholic justices of the U.S. Supreme Court supposedly committed to the overthrowing of the infamous *Roe v. Wade* court decision, which back in 1973 had the effect of legalizing abortion in the United States, Clarence Thomas has been at the center of sometimes intense controversy from the time that he first burst upon the national consciousness with his appointment to the high court in 1991, and, especially, on account of the sensational televised Senate hearings on his confirmation which electrified most of the country at that time. Readers who recall the dramatic clashes and confrontations which took place during those hearings will find Thomas's sober account of them in this book as interesting as they were

riveting for television viewers back then. Readers who did not follow those hearings will be brought up to speed by Thomas's recollection here concerning one of the more important and telling incidents of our still on-going culture wars.

Thomas, a black man born in Pinpoint, Georgia, near Savannah, in the old racially segregated South of that day, by dint of exceptional effort and merited achievements at Holy Cross College, Yale Law School, and in several increasingly important positions, eventually came to be appointed by President Ronald Reagan to head the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC). Subsequently, he was named to the federal bench, and, shortly after that, to the Supreme Court itself.

But as a Republican nominee to the court, Thomas was opposed by some of the same liberal and leftist forces that had earlier successfully opposed Judge Robert Bork's nomination to the high court in yet another set of Senate hearings as memorable as those of Thomas. But partly because of what had been painfully learned as a result of the "borking" of nominees who were considered unacceptable—but also, especially, because of the courage and of the almost unbelievable "stick-to-itiveness" of Clarence Thomas himself—both he and President George H.W. Bush's men proved willing to fight in the case of his nomination.

Thomas was accused by Anita Hill, a black woman associate whom he had hired and otherwise helped in her career. She accused him of sexual harassment and of taking various indecent liberties; it was a blatant attempt at character assassination which would undoubtedly have finished off almost any other candidate but the indomitable Thomas. With the help of credible friendly witnesses, however, and, especially, with his own dramatic and forceful defense of himself before the TV cameras, including his unforgettable characterization of the whole affair as a "high-

tech lynching,” Clarence Thomas probably succeeded in making it impossible for the Senate *not* to confirm him—although all of the “usual suspects” that had also opposed Judge Bork were bitterly unhappy at his accession to the Supreme Court, and few of them have been prepared to cut him much if any slack since.

In his time on the court, and fortunately for the cause of sound jurisprudence, Clarence Thomas has proved himself to be an intelligent and consistent conservative justice not too different from what his enemies had feared he would be. This book ends with his successful confirmation, though, and thus does not cover anything about his time on the court.

Rather, the book deals mainly with his life before he rose to his current eminent height, as its characterization in his title as a “memoir” suggests. His life began in the old Jim Crow South, about which he paints a vivid and mostly harrowing picture. Following the divorce of his parents, Clarence and his brother were taken in and raised by their grandparents. His grandfather was a hard-working, severe, and unbending man of principle, who operated a small oil delivery business which, however, seems never to have moved the family much beyond the poverty level. The entire life of Clarence Thomas, including his diligent and almost obsessive perseverance, seems to have been formed and molded by this grandfather. Thomas describes himself in his title as nothing less than his grandfather’s *son*, and he illustrates how and why this was so in the course of his narrative. Although Clarence clashed with and in many ways resisted his grandfather’s stern tutelage, he seems in the end to have taken from him the basic principles and integrity that have marked his professional and judicial career.

Thomas was a cradle Catholic, and he mentions more than once how he was taught the equality of all men “by the nuns,” a conviction which

never left him, in spite of all the rebuffs and evidence to the contrary that he experienced at the hands of white society throughout much of his life. This intensely personal account of some of his first-hand experiences of racial discrimination is at times painful to read, but it is also very moving. Few accounts of the effects of discrimination on blacks can be as vivid and immediate as the one Thomas provides here. Even his successful acquisition of a law degree from Yale was often, more or less tacitly, taken by many whites to be nothing else but a product of affirmative action. In recounting all this, Thomas comes across as an acutely sensitive man, and one marvels at his life achievements considering that fact.

He also appears to be a deeply religious man, unself-conscious about declaring his faith in and dependence on God. He early decided that he had a vocation to the priesthood, in fact, and he eventually entered the seminary. Some of his experiences there, however—appalling and embarrassing for any Catholic to read about today—included encounters with two fellow seminarians, one of whom wished Martin Luther King dead before the fact, and the other of whom exulted when the civil rights leader was in fact assassinated. These kinds of experiences caused Thomas to leave first the seminary and then the Church.

He then became another “angry black,” and for awhile during the civil rights era he considered himself to be an extreme radical and took part in demonstrations against “the system.” All the while, though, he continued to be a high achiever academically. Also, his efforts to overcome and master his anger were indicators of the kind of man he was becoming. Moreover, he never seems to have abandoned his faith in God, and he seems to have resorted to prayer periodically. Nevertheless, he was away from the Church and from active Catholic practice for

some years, and he both attended and was married in—his second marriage—non-Catholic churches. He does not explain in this book what since seems to have been a full return to the Catholic faith and practice of his childhood.

What come through strongly in the pages of this book is the odyssey, intellectual and spiritual, of an intense, serious, and very honest man who as a justice of the Supreme Court is today one of the most important men in America—and is likely to figure in history as one of the more important men of our era. Perhaps surprisingly, however, there is not in this book a great deal about legal cases or court decisions or the state of the law or jurisprudence in America. It is instead a very personal memoir which is well worth reading—indeed, fascinating—in order to understand better both the man and our own confused times.

Ironically, according to the testimony of this book, Clarence Thomas, at the time of his appointment to the high court, was evidently *not* the stalwart foe of legalized abortion and the *Roe v. Wade* decision that his enemies so obsessively feared. Although he mentions in a rather cryptic note that he now believes *Roe v. Wade* was “wrongly decided and should be overruled,” at the time, he seems to have been quite permissive about abortion. The following passage from the book is quite revealing in this regard:

Many people were skeptical when I...claimed that I’d never discussed *Roe v. Wade*. The fact was that I’d never been especially interested in the subject of abortion, and hadn’t even read the decision until it turned up in one of [the briefing] binders. In law school I’d been a self-styled “lazy libertarian” who saw abortion as a purely personal matter. Like most Americans I had mixed emotions about it, and I wasn’t comfortable telling others what to do in difficult circumstances. The closest that I ever came to talk-

ing about abortion at Yale was the course work I did on substantive due-process cases and the right to privacy, but *Roe* was handed down after I studied constitutional law, so it wasn't part of the curriculum. Of course I knew and understood the personal pain of those who had to choose between having a child or an abortion, but at the time I took the easy way out by remaining agnostic on the matter. The only time I can remember discussing abortion rights with anyone prior to my Supreme Court confirmation hearings was when [then Missouri] Attorney General Danforth was preparing to argue an abortion case in the Supreme Court, *Planned Parenthood of Central Missouri v. Danforth*. He stood in the doorway of my office and tried out one of his arguments on me, explaining that the federal government had no business telling the state of Missouri how to regulate abortion. I replied that the state had no business telling women what to do with their bodies...

This is surely a surprising and rather unexpected, passage, couched in language virtually identical to that typically employed by today's pro-choicers (Thomas speaks here, for example, of having to "choose," of so-called "abortion rights," and "women's bodies" rather than of any living child). Yet this passage comes from the pen of none other than one of the Supreme Court justices to whom pro-lifers today look for possible liberation from the evil and oppression that was fastened upon our country with the legalization of abortion. Perhaps only a man of the unremitting honesty of Mr. Justice Clarence Thomas could even allow such a passage to continue to stand in view of all that has happened since he was named to the high court and took his seat. Yet it is only one of a number of the interesting revelations that are to be encountered in this book. As already noted above, it is a book in which one gets to know and

understand the man, and not necessarily the justice and the opinions he has produced in his time on the Supreme Court.

The Faithful Departed: The Collapse of Boston's Catholic Culture, by Philip F. Lawler. New York: Encounter Books, 2008. 272 pages; HB. \$25.95.

Reviewed by Kenneth D. Whitehead

Here it is: the book that has been needed for a very long time, namely, a book providing an intelligible explanation of what it is that has happened to the Catholic Church in America over the past generation and more. Subtitled the "collapse" of what is described as Boston's "Catholic culture," the book meets expectations in that regard because, among other things, it does in fact explain, briefly but quite persuasively, how a majority-Catholic state like Massachusetts can nevertheless today exhibit the most pronounced forms of some of the worst pathologies of our immoral post-modern society—such as, for example, so-called same-sex "marriage." Observers rightly marvel today that the Bay state's (mostly Catholic) politicians and public figures are almost monolithically pro-abortion, at the same time that the state's (again mostly Catholic) voters automatically and routinely return those same pro-abortion politicians to office.

Philip Lawler shows how all this became almost inevitable, given the way in which the region's formerly strong and vibrant Catholic culture unfortunately became *corrupt*.

"Corruption" is the exact concept and term employed by the author to describe how Catholics and their leaders, the Catholic bishops, have fallen into modes of behavior from which they quite literally no longer seem able to extricate themselves on their own—the implication being that effective reform can come only from without. The author docu-

ments how the archbishops of Boston hastened to accommodate the secular powers that be, long before accommodations had begun to be demanded on such issues as abortion and same-sex unions, but meanwhile patterns of accommodation were established that became the norm for Catholics all down the line.

A considerable part of the book is taken up with the description and analysis of the Catholic Church's clerical sex-abuse crisis, which first burst forth into the consciousness of Catholics in early 2002, when the *Boston Globe* began publishing its exposés stressing among other things the mishandling and serial re-assignment by the Church's bishops of various priest-predators. Among other things, this book is just about the best available overall survey of how the Church became mired down in the clerical sex abuse crisis generally. The sad fact remains, as also becomes clear in these pages, that the Church is still quite far from having extricated herself from that crisis in spite of all the attention that has been given to it since 2002.

As the author points out, the principal focus of corrective action has been on the status of priests—now stigmatized and rendered suspect generally by the actions of a very small percentage of misbehaving priests among them—and on what the Catholic bishops, bowing to the understanding of the secular press and media, have stressed is mainly the protection of children. While children do have to be protected, of course, these same bishops at the same time have yet to face up either to the fact of the entrenched homosexuality that apparently still obtains in the priesthood today, or to the fact that probably a majority of the bishops themselves have been involved in dishonest and even shameful cover-ups of both clerical misdeeds and of some of their own episcopal misdeeds. These latter misdeeds have mostly never been acknowledged at all, much less corrected or atoned for.

It becomes clear in this account that virtually every public acknowledgement of wrong-doing by Church officials has only come about because of the pressures stemming from exposés by the secular press and media—and not, for example, because some of the activities involved happened to be evils strongly condemned by the moral teachings of the Catholic Church. Loyal and believing Catholics today have never been provided with any explanation of why their bishops were so typically not shocked—or, as often as not, apparently not even unduly bothered—by the sometimes grossly immoral behavior of some of the priest-predators under their authority.

Philip Lawler himself, a native Bostonian and former editor of the diocesan newspaper, the *Pilot*, is well-positioned to have become the chronicler of the whole clerical sex-abuse crisis in Boston, as well as of the once solid Catholic culture of Boston out of which the crisis developed. For one thing, he was personally acquainted with some of the principal actors in the drama, beginning with Cardinal Bernard Law himself. And as a former editor of the *Catholic World Report*, he was equally well-positioned to be able to apply some of the lessons of Boston to the Church in the United States as a whole. He does this quite admirably and concisely, in fact. One of the great virtues of this book is the way in which the author extends his coverage of the Boston situation to that of the rest of the country, showing, for example, how the crisis in, e.g., Los Angeles, bids fair to surpass the situation in Boston itself.

In short, this book is one of the most important—and one of the most honest—books published about the Catholic Church in our day. It not only describes and makes more understandable the crisis that obtains in the Church today; it also shows how the historical roots of that crisis go back to attitudes and practices that became common early in the 20th

century. Up to now, the leaders of the Church, the bishops, have been quite reluctant either to recognize the nature of this crisis or to face up effectively to their own responsibility to do something about it, even in the face of the overwhelming evidence that is out there for everybody to see.

With regard to all of this, however, the author, Philip Lawler, though unsparing in his analysis, does not come across as an angry or a bitter man. The book is written very much more in sorrow than in anger. If anything, the author's case is even understated. He obviously loves the Church as the teacher of truth and the fount of grace, and in no way does he aim to second-guess the Church's authentic magisterium in the manner of the misnamed Voice of the Faithful (VOTF), which so pretentiously seized upon the clerical sex-abuse crisis as a way to try to promote an alternative dissenting Catholic viewpoint. Lawler is a faithful Catholic, although from his particular vantage point at the center of the storm in Boston, he obviously felt obliged to write about what he has witnessed, however painful it turned out to be. This is a book that every member of the Fellowship of Catholic Scholars should obtain and read. And then when you have read it, be sure to send your copy of it along to your bishop with your strong recommendation that *he* should read it too!

Catholic Higher Education: A Culture in Crisis, Melanie M. Morey and John J. Piderit, S.J., Oxford University Press: New York (2006), hard cover, xiv+450 pages, index, bibliography. \$35.00 ISBN 0-19-530551-5
Reviewed by John M. McDermott, S.J., Professor of Theology, Sacred Heart Major Seminary, Detroit, and Member of the International Theological Commission. He taught for twelve years at the Gregorian University in Rome.

This excellence study is based on in-depth interviews with at least five senior administrative officials at each of 33 institutions of Catholic higher learning as well as on the authors' long personal experience and wide reading in the field of Catholic higher education. It comes at an opportune time, as the religious who founded the institutions die out or withdraw from the field. Although the usual ideological explanation for the demise of religious highlights the age of the laity and their capacity to step into the shoes of religious in maintaining the Catholic identity, the interviews reveal the illusion. The lay administrators bemoan the loss of the irreplaceable contribution of religious, and the course of the interviews reveals concretely that the religious have not properly prepared their lay successors. They presupposed that Catholic culture and faith would just continue, forgetting how much must be invested into the formation of their own members for a consistent Catholic worldview. It takes years of common prayer, study, and life to produce a relatively cohesive group of religious conversant with Catholicism and competent in various academic disciplines. There must be a common basis not only for interdisciplinary dialogue but also for the transmission of the Catholic faith to a new generation of believers engaged with the world and all its problems, especially a secular world increasingly hostile to religion. Though all administrators enthusiastically support Catholic education, uphold its superiority, and desire its continuance, their answers often become vague when they define more exactly what "Catholic education" means. Usually they see its preeminence in its ability to transform the whole person, providing an integrative view of reality in which faith and reason cooperate. When pressed, they usually identify as the distinctively Catholic the concern for social justice and a more caring, accepting atmosphere than is present in secular

institutions. The authors notice the “tepid use” of Catholic vocabulary. “Administrators frequently used the term ‘Catholic’ and the name of the sponsoring religious congregation. They also comfortably referred to God’s presence among us or in all things, as well as to the ‘Mass’ or ‘Eucharist.’ Only a few administrators talked about the ‘gospel,’ and almost all completely avoided the words ‘Christ,’ ‘Jesus Christ,’ ‘Lord,’ ‘sacrament,’ ‘sanctity,’ ‘virtue,’ ‘holiness,’ or ‘sin. No one spoke of the Holy Spirit, the Trinity, or the Blessed Virgin.” (220) [In personal experience I recall a Jesuit president’s initial address to the faculty on the meaning of Jesuit education in which he avoided any reference to Jesus Christ, the Church, the pope, and Catholic dogma but lauded the complete education of the human person; correspondingly the questions period began with complaints about inadequate salary. The allergy to Catholic doctrine did not begin with the laity; it was infectious.] Nowhere is any mention made of evangelization, as if the Catholic faith were not a matter of life and death and we were not concerned with spreading Christ’s salvation to all.

Given that the *raison d’être* of Catholic institutions is to promote the Catholic faith and the faith seeks the sanctity of its adherents, the crisis is clear. The authors are sympathetic to the difficulties of the administrators who usually have inherited their situation, do not have a wide experience of Catholic education beyond their own institutions, and have to balance “distinguishability,” i.e., the specifically Catholic mark defining their institution and its role vis-à-vis secular institutions, and “inheritability,” i.e., the ability to attract enough qualified students and faculty to ensure the institution’s continued existence. They also differentiate various types of Catholic higher education institutions with their corresponding goal, strengths, and weaknesses: “immersion”: strong

Catholic culture, student body, and faculty, aiming at dedication to the Church and her teachings; “persuasion”: majority Catholic student body, significant Catholic presence in faculty and administration, intending to give all students a knowledge and appreciation of the Catholic tradition; “diaspora”: minority presence of Catholics among students and faculty, some specifically Catholic courses, but aiming to generate religiously sensitive graduates with an openness to Catholic faith; “cohort”: aiming to attract academically talented students, whatever their religious background, who will promote Catholic viewpoints in society at large and simultaneously to prepare a small group of well trained and committed Catholics. (Approximately half of current Catholic institutions are classified in the “persuasion” variety; immersion institutions provide the only growth area.)

The principal problem areas concern faculty, the role of philosophy and theology, and residence halls behavior. Faculty often lack significant awareness of Catholic doctrine, morality, and practice; many are opposed to a further Catholicizing, some obstreperously so, yet the effect of the overall education depends upon the faculty. Theology and philosophy courses have been greatly diminished in core curriculums; theology often is not concerned with Catholic teaching (even when the professor is not protesting against the magisterium); philosophy’s relevance to the Catholic worldview is often not presented by the teachers nor appreciated by administrators. Moreover, sexual license and alcoholic abuse in residence halls is often not controlled, much less sanctioned, thus undermining whatever Catholic morality might be taught since students see that administrators do not take it seriously; this sins against charity and justice to the students involved.

Though administrators tout the advantages of Catholic education, they admit that the results fall far

short of their intentions, not only in residence halls, where they hesitate to intervene, but also in Mass attendance during and after college. Furthermore their graduates generally manifest an ignorance of the tradition which the institution was founded to propagate. There is a reluctance to develop any standard to measure the religious knowledge, practice, and commitment of their students before, during, or after their college education. Almost no data has been collected in this area, even though minimum standards are recognized and applied in other fields like writing, mathematics, and modern language. Certainly much of this is due to disagreement among Catholics, theologians and others. But, the authors insist, something should be done, and now is the moment to do it. Not only is Catholic culture watered down from one generation to the next because ignorance of it grows—young professors with a knowledge of Catholic tradition from their own undergraduate education become rarer—but also there is a real interest among administrators and students alike to emphasize the Catholic element in Catholic education. Fortunately the authors offer many concrete proposals for the various problems in the various types of institutions. While not all might be practicable in all circumstances, they at least provide a solid point of departure for consideration and discussion.

By giving an overview of Catholic higher education, this book is a godsend to Catholic administrators concerned with serving the Church and enhancing their institution. Not only can they enter into discussion more readily with administrators at other institutions but also, on the basis of wide data, they can also initiate dialogue with faculty about the goals, means, and efficacy of their own institution. Furthermore, since with the separate incorporation of colleges and universities, religious superiors have abdicated responsi-

bility for the governance of higher educational institutions, boards of trustees, until now often ignorant of what is actually occurring, should insist upon Catholic accountability. This book clarifies the issues substantially. It would make a great gift for your favorite member of the board of trustees and your diocesan bishop.

Special praise is due to the analysis of the cultural collapse among women religious; this ninth chapter alone is worth the price of the book. Though sympathetically narrated, the chapter exemplifies extraordinarily well B. Lonergan's notion of bias: how one false judgment, consistently applied, results in a whole series of misjudgments justifying the first error. By choosing to insist upon women's ordination and defy publicly the magisterium, while secularizing their life style, women religious undermined the value of their own profession, hardened internal ideological conformity, cut themselves off from the laity, found themselves incapable of recruiting and retaining members, and were institutionally and ideologically incapable of recognizing, much less responding to the factors of their demise. Thus one of the most highly educated, institutionally powerful, and organized groups of women in the United States rendered itself, within little more than a generation, institutionally irrelevant.

While this author recommends the book most highly, some reservations should be noted. In discussing invited outside speakers and university awards (174-76), the authors opine that the pattern counts more than individual instances: e.g., a person espousing a pro-choice position might be invited by a student group to give a talk, provided that the Catholic position were clearly expressed and other speakers supporting the Church's position were received

with at least as much attention as the pro-choice speaker. Similarly a person honored need not agree with all Church positions, provided the university makes clear its own opposition to that person on those points. But can a Catholic institution honor a pro-choice advocate or politician on such an important, socially prominent issue without manipulation by the media or scandalizing ordinary Catholics? Further distinctions have to be drawn regarding the centrality of the issue and its public resonance. Similarly, despite *Ex corde ecclesiae*, the authors propose that sometimes a "functional" majority of the faculty need reach only 25% at persuasion universities and 10% at diaspora and cohort universities to determine Catholic culture "if so empowered by other faculty members" (225-30, 235-36). Although the authors seek to deal realistically with the current state of education, might not that lower percentage too readily serve as a cover for inactivity by administrators? Given the difficulty of finding committed Catholic professors, might it not be more prudent to insist on 50% Catholic presence, in the hope of finding the smaller coherent group among the larger? Is it not naïve in present conditions to think that permission given for homosexual groups' mutual support is really aimed just at emotional stability (178)? Seductions take place there. Should Catholics be identifying themselves primarily and publicly by their sexual attractions? Should they encourage others to do so? Finally, it seems an historical mistake to attribute the muting of Catholic identity in the late 60s to the need of survival (219). The promoters of the Land O' Lakes statement were not leaders of financially strapped institutions. In the heady years following Vatican II they adopted as theological slogan

"the autonomy of earthly affairs" (GS 36) to justify their desire to govern education without interference from higher superiors. Though willing to employ Catholic identity to promote themselves and their institutions, they failed to ask how their institutions might best serve the wider Church. Too often the problems and hopes of their own institutions occupied their entire attention. This narrowed vision, however understandable under mounting pressures, gives the impression that Catholicism is being exploited. The resultant apparent hypocrisy entails falsehood in advertising, and the public is not infinitely gullible. With the failure and closure of Catholic colleges the institutions are paying for the desire to use the Church without responsibility to her. Alas, so are the generations of students who went to "Catholic" institutions without receiving a Catholic education. Often they rejected the mental and moral mush presented to them as Catholicism without knowing the challenging and enlivening reality of the faith.

At this time for reckoning, may administrators rediscover their Catholic identity. If that identity depends upon the recruitment of dedicated Catholic faculty, why should a convinced Catholic apply to a tepidly Catholic university, where his witness to the truth is undercut by administrative and faculty policies, when he might support an immersion institution or give clearer witness in the hostile environment of a secular university? It is time for Catholic educational institutions to choose their destiny. Although administrators have not been prepared by their predecessors, they may have the intelligence to see that petrification in the Land O' Lakes ideology spells demise. This book can help breathe life into Catholic education.

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If there are books you know of that should be reviewed, let Dr. Brian Benestad know at benestadj1@scranton.edu.

Christian Humanism: Creation, Redemption, and Reintegration, John P. Bequette, University Press of America: Lanham, MD, (2007) Paper, 178 pp.

The Holiness-Pentecostal Movement, Charles Edwin Jones, The Scarecrow Press: Lanham, MD, (2008), Hardcover, 500 pp.

The Blood-Red Crescent: A Novel, Henry Garnett, Sophia Institute Press: Manchester, NH, (2007), Paper, 170 pp.

Before I Go: Letters to Our Children about What Really Matters, Peter Kreeft, Rowman and Littlefield Publishing: Lanham MD, (2007), Hardcover, 255 pp.

Exploring Personhood: An Introduction to the Philosophy of Human Nature, Joseph Torchia, O.P., Rowman & Littlefield Publishing Group, Inc., Lanham, MD, (2007), Paper, 293 pp.

Basile Moreau and the Congregation of Holy Cross, James T. Connelly, C.S.C., University of Portland, Garaventa Center for Catholic Intellectual Life and American Culture: Portland, OR, (2007) Paper, 83pp.

The Tripods Attack!, John McNichol, The Young Chesterton Chronicles, Book I, Imagio Catholic Fiction, The Sophia Institute Press: Manchester, NH (2008), Paper, 365pp.

Danny Gospel: A Novel, David Athey, Minneapolis: Bethany House, (2008), Paper, 269 pp.

A Mended and Broken Heart: The Life and Love of Francis of Assisi- Advance uncorrected proof, Wendy Murray, Basic Books: New York (2008), Paper, 237

Origen and the History of Justification: The Legacy of Origen's Commentary on Romans, Thomas P. Scheck, University of Notre Press: Notre Dame, IN (2008), Hardcover, 297pp.

Answering the New Atheism: Dismantling Dawkins' Case Against God, Scott Hahn & Benjamin Wiker, Emmaus Road Publishing: Steubenville, OH (2008), Paper, 160 pp.

DVD

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Reflections on Catholic Higher Education after Pope Benedict's Visit

In a recent forum on academic freedom at my university several faculty (mostly non-Catholic) argued for the right to place abortion links on Scranton's official web site because they were appropriate, educational for students, etc. They also wanted the university's administration to reverse its decision not to recognize a student group describing itself as a gay-straight alliance. The University's Vice President for Student Affairs had said that the constitution of the student organization "does not sufficiently or clearly articulate how the group would accomplish its goals, objectives, and programming in a way that is consistent with our Catholic and Jesuit identity." Such faculty arguments and use of students for their own agenda have, of course, become commonplace at a number of Catholic universities.

In response to my faculty colleagues I suggested that a number of them seemed to be implying that they would be quite pleased if Scranton divested itself of its Catholic identity. "Oh no," was the reply. "We embrace the Catholic identity, but want to be respected by our colleagues at secular institutions." It is apparently much easier and more politic to redefine the word "Catholic" than to call for its removal.

Pope Benedict's recent address to Catholic educators in Washington focused attention on what should be joyful priorities of faculty at Catholic universities. "Teachers and administrators, whether in universities or schools, have the duty and privilege to ensure that students receive instruction in Catholic doctrine and practice. This requires that public witness to the way of Christ, as found in the Gospel

and upheld by the Church's Magisterium, shapes all aspects of an institution's life, both inside and outside the classroom." The pope described leading students to the truth as "intellectual charity," an act of love. This intellectual charity "guides the young toward the deep satisfaction of exercising freedom in relation to truth, and it strives to articulate the relationship between faith and all aspects of family and civic life." This remark surely implies that Catholic universities are right to focus their students' attention on justice, heroic service and the common good—but without neglecting the input of faith. Pope Benedict further celebrated the embrace of both faith and reason at Catholic universities as the soundest way to reach the truths accessible to inquiry. He continued his stress on the importance of purifying reason in the light of divine wisdom.

Pope Benedict expressed his regard for academic freedom as an indispensable institution facilitating the pursuit of truth. But then he added, "Yet it is also the case that any appeal to the principle of academic freedom in order to justify positions that contradict the faith and the teaching of the Church would obstruct or even betray the university's identity and mission." This is, unfortunately, the kind of disordered academic freedom emphasized by not a few Catholic and non-Catholic faculty in many of the nation's Catholic universities, instead of the freedom required to help students make all aspects of the grand Catholic intellectual tradition understandable, persuasive, and "performative" in their lives. ✠

J. Brian Benestad

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