

PHILOSOPHICAL ANTHROPOLOGY

Part II

Course Notes
2019



PHILOSOPHICAL ANTHROPOLOGY II

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INTRODUCTION¹

Man has always been in search of an adequate answer to the question, who are we? We play like actors on a stage, but once we stop playing with our masks we find that it is not easy to discover oneself, so why is it so hard to “know thyself”? Obviously we find it easy to answer that we are human beings, but *what is that?*

‘Know Thyself’

Despite the fact that more than half of all the books on all the sciences that are sold in bookstores today are written about some aspect of psychology, there is no science with less agreement, less certainty, and less confidence that we now *know* what we used to not-know. We seem to know ourselves *less* well as a result of all this modern self-scrutiny than we did before. The more we look, the less we see. It is just the opposite with the external world. We can now understand the mysteries of the origin of the universe, 13.7 billion years ago, or the forces that keep the galaxies spinning trillions of light-years away, better than we can understand ourselves. "Know thyself," said Socrates, at the dawn of philosophy. But "know thyself" seems to be an unsolvable puzzle, a *koan*.² We *cannot* know ourselves, yet we *must* know ourselves

The motto "Know Thyself" which was placed over the door of Plato's Academy marked an important change of emphasis in Greek philosophy. The first philosophers had been interested in the mysteries of the world in which man finds himself. They asked questions about the sun and the moon and the stars and about the stuff out of which everything is made. But with Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle, the nature of man himself, rather than the physical universe, became the most important mystery for the study of the philosopher.

The philosophers of the Middle Ages, while not ignoring the world around them, also stressed the study of man above the problems of the physical world. And although there are sharp differences in the outlook of the ancient world and the world of the Middle Ages, there was substantial agreement on the all-important point, which the Greeks had been the first to justify on grounds of reason, that man is different from the rest of the animals in that he possesses the distinctive powers of reason and free will.

Through all the diversity and historical accidents of the past twenty-five hundred years, this concept of man as responsible and rational has exerted a continuing and profound influence on the political and social thinking and institutions of the West. Yet, in our own times, probably no element in our cultural inheritance has been more called in question. And since the answer to this question affects us so profoundly even in practical, everyday affairs, we will engage on a systematic study of philosophy with the problem of man himself and his destiny. In the latter part of our systematic study we shall consider the world in which man finds himself.

¹ Sources: Kreeft, P., *The Philosophy of Jesus*, St Augustine's Press, South Bend Indiana, 2007; Sullivan, D. J., *An Introduction to Philosophy*, TAN, Rochford, Illinois, 1992; Sullivan, S., *Classical Man & the Traditional Ethic: A Contemporary Defense*, at www.scottmsullivan.com.

² *Koan*. A paradoxical anecdote or a riddle that has no solution; used in Zen Buddhism to show the inadequacy of logical reasoning.

The view of man changes

Probably the most widely held view of man today in opposition to the older, traditional view is that man is simply one more of the brute animals - a superior animal, to be sure, but still just an animal, with the same questionable and transitory value of any other animal. And just as animals in general are creatures of instinct, with no real control over their instinctive drives or over the pull on their senses from the outside, so too man is impelled purely by the attraction of sense goods and by the blind drive of instinct.

A still grosser view of man sees him as a kind of machine, a bundle of conditioned reflexes which respond as necessarily to the impersonal laws of mechanics and physics as the leaf falling from the tree. Manipulate the physical stimuli which act on man and you can control both the individual and society as surely as you can control machinery: given the proper stimulus, the reflex will be mechanic, automatic, and foreseeable.

Common to both these doctrines is the view that man is a freakish and haphazard, appearance in an ever-evolving universe, a chance collection of atoms, an insignificant dot destined to last but the flash of an instant in the vast perspective of time unending: a being without meaning, without destiny, without hope.

Ideas have consequences

Many philosophers and psychologists over the past two hundred years and more have taught this and similar doctrines about the nature of man. For a long time the consequences of this teaching were not too apparent, for the leavening process of ideas is a slow one. We have reached the point in our own day, however, when large parts of the world are controlled by men who apply literally the teachings that yesterday belonged to the lecture hall. As a result we see today the manipulation of whole populations as though they were herds of cattle; we have seen people used in slave labour camps and their worth calculated at what it costs to feed them; we see the human personality assaulted and shattered by the identical techniques used by the Russian scientist Pavlov in his experiments on the conditioned reflexes of brute animals. And no one can be sure that in some "Brave New World" of tomorrow he will not be the victim of inhuman state technicians.³ There are few questions, then, whose right answer is so important to us as this question, what is the nature of man?

Man is different

Philosophers and scientists are right when they insist on the strength and importance of man's instincts and sense appetites, and when they assert that he is deeply immersed within the impersonal forces of the physical universe. For man is, of course, an animal, and as such a part of the physical universe. As a material being, he is obedient to the laws of physical nature. If he puts his hand in fire his hand will burn. If he goes out in the rain he will get wet. If he doesn't breathe or eat he will die.

But to make this side of man the whole man is as erroneous as to say that a Rembrandt portrait is a mixture of colours on two square feet of canvas, or that a sonnet of Shakespeare consists of some splashes of ink on a small strip of paper.

³ The article was written in 1957. These words had a prophetic tone. This is an example of how philosophy can give deep answers to problems that go beyond the domain of certain sciences.

For just as something shines out of the picture or the sonnet which is more than a mere arrangement of physical elements, so too something shines out of man which is more than the sum total of any possible arrangement of the physical elements which go into the make-up of his body.

Besides being an animal, man has a power - the power of reason - which in itself makes him different in kind from the rest of the animals. Man can see the sameness in difference which runs through things, the oneness in many, the enduring reality behind outward change. He knows meaning and law and purpose and, through his power of free choice, he can choose between the various alternatives which are presented to him by his intellect. In short, man is a being altogether unique as compared with the rest of the physical universe, because in knowing and judging he rises above the inexorable law and rigidity of the realm of matter.

Many philosophers have been tempted to deny reason to man, thinking thereby to make it easier to explain him. Our university libraries are full of books which compare the activities of man with those of other animals such as guinea pigs and monkeys. The usual implication is that there is no real difference beyond a rising scale of complexity.

Since man is an animal with a body, sense powers, feelings, and emotions just as are the other animals, it would be very surprising if there were not many and deep correspondences between animal and human behaviour. But the really important fact, which many psychologists ignore, is that man has a whole range of activities for which there is no parallel in the rest of the animal kingdom - activities which are explainable as the product of reason and unexplainable otherwise. Not until the ape and the guinea pig also start performing these activities can the student of animal psychology legitimately assert that there is no difference between man and the rest of the animal kingdom.

Philosophical Anthropology I Recap

In Philosophical Anthropology I we introduced the study of human nature and examined it from various angles. Human beings have a spiritual soul, and, because of this, they are beings whose lives transcend matter. Human beings are persons, beings who possess radical and intrinsic dignity, and who, as we know by faith, have been called to communion with God. The human being is not only a rational animal but also made in the image and likeness of God. A deep understanding of human nature and vocation is important for orienting us towards what will really fulfil us, and for avoiding errors about the human person present in today's culture.

Body and Soul

Human beings are not souls trapped in bodies; we are neither just the same as other animals, nor are we purely spiritual beings like angels. The body is not just a container operated by spiritual beings. The human being is a corporeo-spiritual being, a substantial *unity* of body and soul. This is reflected in the mind-body interaction and in a profound psychosomatic unity. The body and the soul *together* constitute the human person. The spiritual soul possesses capacities or faculties that are both sensitive (shared with other animals) and spiritual. All of them play a role in helping us to flourish as human beings and reach our end and perfection. A true understanding of virtue, of freedom, relationships, bioethics, the interior struggle, and of what is truly good for us, depends upon a good understanding of this relationship. The great philosopher and theologian St Thomas Aquinas constantly emphasised this point in response to

dualistic heresies that unhelpfully and incorrectly denied the positive role of the body in human nature and in God's plan for human beings.

The good of anything depends on the condition of its nature. Now there is no sensitive appetite in God and the angels, as there is in man. Consequently good operation in God and the angels is altogether without passion, as it is without a body: whereas *the good operation of man is with passion, even as it is produced with the body's help.*

ST I-II, q56, a3 ad3.

As a first step in studying how our corporeo-spiritual nature works, we looked at the human being from both a phenomenological and metaphysical perspective. From the phenomenological perspective, various aspects of human activity (love, language, work, art, morality, religion, etc) reveal the spiritual dynamism that characterises human beings, along with their physicality. The metaphysical study focused on the cognitive capacities of human beings and their tendential dynamism that play a role in human acts. The following diagram presents an overview of these faculties or capacities.⁴

Rational Powers			Intellect
			Will
Animal Powers	Knowing	Internal	Unifying sense
			Estimation
			Memory
			Imagination
		External	Sight
			Hearing
			Smell
			Taste
	Appetitive	Irascible	Touch
			Hope
			Courage
			Fear
		Concupiscible	Despair
			Anger
			Love
			Desire
			Joy
			Hate
			Aversion
			Sorrow
Vegetative Powers			Reproduction
			Growth
			Nutrition

⁴ Reproduced from Sullivan, *Introduction to Philosophy*, p. 112.

Knowledge

The human being has sense knowledge, as do non-human animals, and also the spiritual faculty, the intellect, by which human beings, while using sense knowledge, also essentially transcend it, allowing them to penetrate into the being and meaning of reality.

The Tential Dynamism

Where there is knowledge there is appetite, and we looked at the affective or tential dynamism: the appetite and its movements (passions, emotions, affects, sentiments). We examined the passions, which non-rational animals also possess, and how, thanks to the rational appetite (the will), human beings are free and able to educate the passions, integrating them into a virtuous life.

Freedom

Because they possess intellect and free will, human beings are able to know and love the good, and, as master of their own acts, direct themselves and their actions in a way that is essentially superior to that of animals. This is the basis of human freedom.

Supplementary Reading

- Second Vatican Council, *Pastoral Constitution, 'Gaudium et Spes': On the Church in the Modern World*, 7.12.1965, nn. 12-22.

The Second Vatican Council was a pastoral council that aimed to respond to the questions of people today. In the document *Gaudium et Spes*, nn. 12-22, the Church's Magisterium presents an overview of the 'whole truth about man',⁵ from the point of view of philosophical and theological anthropology, providing a background to this course. Some study questions are provided to assist you to work through the reading.

⁵ John Paul II, *Redemptor Hominis*, 12.

PHILOSOPHICAL ANTHROPOLOGY II
STUDY GUIDE: *GAUDIUM ET SPES* nn. 12-22

1. What does Sacred Scripture teach about the human person?
2. What attitude should human beings have towards their bodies?
3. Do human beings also transcend the material universe?
4. How does wisdom perfect the intellect?
5. What is conscience? How does it relate to truth and goodness?
6. What is freedom? Does it have a purpose?
7. What is the relationship between freedom and dignity?
8. What is the basis of human dignity?
9. How is freedom understood within an atheistic framework? Does acknowledging God diminish human freedom & dignity?
10. How does the mystery of the Incarnate Word shed light on the mystery of man?

GAUDIUM ET SPES
PASTORAL CONSTITUTION ON THE CHURCH IN THE MODERN WORLD,
DECEMBER 7, 1965⁶

CHAPTER I: THE DIGNITY OF THE HUMAN PERSON

12. According to the almost unanimous opinion of believers and unbelievers alike, all things on earth should be related to man as their centre and crown.

But what is man? About himself he has expressed, and continues to express, many divergent and even contradictory opinions. In these he often exalts himself as the absolute measure of all things or debases himself to the point of despair. The result is doubt and anxiety. The Church certainly understands these problems. Endowed with light from God, she can offer solutions to them, so that man's true situation can be portrayed and his defects explained, while at the same time his dignity and destiny are justly acknowledged.

For Sacred Scripture teaches that man was created "to the image of God," is capable of knowing and loving his Creator, and was appointed by Him as master of all earthly creatures⁽¹⁾ that he might subdue them and use them to God's glory.⁽²⁾ "What is man that you should care for him? You have made him little less than the angels, and crowned him with glory and honour. You have given him rule over the works of your hands, putting all things under his feet" (*Ps.* 8:5-7).

But God did not create man as a solitary, for from the beginning "male and female he created them" (*Gen.* 1:27). Their companionship produces the primary form of interpersonal communion. For by his innermost nature man is a social being, and unless he relates himself to others he can neither live nor develop his potential.

Therefore, as we read elsewhere in Holy Scripture God saw "all that he had made, and it was very good" (*Gen.* 1:31).

13. Although he was made by God in a state of holiness, from the very onset of his history man abused his liberty, at the urging of the Evil One. Man set himself against God and sought to attain his goal apart from God. Although they knew God, they did not glorify Him as God, but their senseless minds were darkened and they served the creature rather than the Creator. ⁽³⁾ What divine revelation makes known to us agrees with experience. Examining his heart, man finds that he has inclinations toward evil too, and is engulfed by manifold ills which cannot come from his good Creator. Often refusing to acknowledge God as his beginning, man has disrupted also his proper relationship to his own ultimate goal as well as his whole relationship toward himself and others and all created things.

Therefore man is split within himself. As a result, all of human life, whether individual or collective, shows itself to be a dramatic struggle between good and evil, between light and darkness. Indeed, man finds that by himself he is incapable of battling the assaults of evil successfully, so that everyone feels as though he is bound by chains. But the Lord Himself came to free and strengthen man, renewing him inwardly and

⁶ http://www.vatican.va/archive/hist_councils/ii_vatican_council/documents/vat-ii_cons_19651207_gaudium-et-spes_en.html

casting out that "prince of this world" (John 12:31) who held him in the bondage of sin.(4) For sin has diminished man, blocking his path to fulfillment.

The call to grandeur and the depths of misery, both of which are a part of human experience, find their ultimate and simultaneous explanation in the light of this revelation.

14. Though made of body and soul, man is one. Through his bodily composition he gathers to himself the elements of the material world; thus they reach their crown through him, and through him raise their voice in free praise of the Creator. (6) For this reason man is not allowed to despise his bodily life, rather he is obliged to regard his body as good and honourable since God has created it and will raise it up on the last day. Nevertheless, wounded by sin, man experiences rebellious stirrings in his body. But the very dignity of man postulates that man glorify God in his body and forbid it to serve the evil inclinations of his heart.

Now, man is not wrong when he regards himself as superior to bodily concerns, and as more than a speck of nature or a nameless constituent of the city of man. For by his interior qualities he outstrips the whole sum of mere things. He plunges into the depths of reality whenever he enters into his own heart; God, Who probes the heart, (7) awaits him there; there he discerns his proper destiny beneath the eyes of God. Thus, when he recognizes in himself a spiritual and immortal soul, he is not being mocked by a fantasy born only of physical or social influences, but is rather laying hold of the proper truth of the matter.

15. Man judges rightly that by his intellect he surpasses the material universe, for he shares in the light of the divine mind. By relentlessly employing his talents through the ages he has indeed made progress in the practical sciences and in technology and the liberal arts. In our times he has won superlative victories, especially in his probing of the material world and in subjecting it to himself. Still he has always searched for more penetrating truths, and finds them. For his intelligence is not confined to observable data alone, but can with genuine certitude attain to reality itself as knowable, though in consequence of sin that certitude is partly obscured and weakened.

The intellectual nature of the human person is perfected by wisdom and needs to be, for wisdom gently attracts the mind of man to a quest and a love for what is true and good. Steeped in wisdom man passes through visible realities to those which are unseen.

Our era needs such wisdom more than bygone ages if the discoveries made by man are to be further humanized. For the future of the world stands in peril unless wiser men are forthcoming. It should also be pointed out that many nations, poorer in economic goods, are quite rich in wisdom and can offer noteworthy advantages to others.

It is, finally, through the gift of the Holy Spirit that man comes by faith to the contemplation and appreciation of the divine plan.(8)

16. In the depths of his conscience, man detects a law which he does not impose upon himself, but which holds him to obedience. Always summoning him to love good and avoid evil, the voice of conscience when necessary speaks to his heart: do this, shun that. For man has in his heart a law written by God; to obey it is the very dignity of man; according to it he will be judged.(9) Conscience is the most secret core and sanctuary of a man. There he is alone with God, Whose voice echoes in his depths.(10) In a

wonderful manner conscience reveals that law which is fulfilled by love of God and neighbour.(11) In fidelity to conscience, Christians are joined with the rest of men in the search for truth, and for the genuine solution to the numerous problems which arise in the life of individuals from social relationships. Hence the more right conscience holds sway, the more persons and groups turn aside from blind choice and strive to be guided by the objective norms of morality. Conscience frequently errs from invincible ignorance without losing its dignity. The same cannot be said for a man who cares but little for truth and goodness, or for a conscience which by degrees grows practically sightless as a result of habitual sin.

17. Only in freedom can man direct himself toward goodness. Our contemporaries make much of this freedom and pursue it eagerly; and rightly to be sure. Often however they foster it perversely as a license for doing whatever pleases them, even if it is evil. For its part, authentic freedom is an exceptional sign of the divine image within man. For God has willed that man remain "under the control of his own decisions,"(12) so that he can seek his Creator spontaneously, and come freely to utter and blissful perfection through loyalty to Him. Hence man's dignity demands that he act according to a knowing and free choice that is personally motivated and prompted from within, not under blind internal impulse nor by mere external pressure. Man achieves such dignity when, emancipating himself from all captivity to passion, he pursues his goal in a spontaneous choice of what is good, and procures for himself through effective and skilful action, apt helps to that end. Since man's freedom has been damaged by sin, only by the aid of God's grace can he bring such a relationship with God into full flower. Before the judgement seat of God each man must render an account of his own life, whether he has done good or evil. (13)

18. It is in the face of death that the riddle a human existence grows most acute. Not only is man tormented by pain and by the advancing deterioration of his body, but even more so by a dread of perpetual extinction. He rightly follows the intuition of his heart when he abhors and repudiates the utter ruin and total disappearance of his own person. He rebels against death because he bears in himself an eternal seed which cannot be reduced to sheer matter. All the endeavours of technology, though useful in the extreme, cannot calm his anxiety; for prolongation of biological life is unable to satisfy that desire for higher life which is inescapably lodged in his breast.

Although the mystery of death utterly beggars the imagination, the Church has been taught by divine revelation and firmly teaches that man has been created by God for a blissful purpose beyond the reach of earthly misery. In addition, that bodily death from which man would have been immune had he not sinned (14) will be vanquished, according to the Christian faith, when man who was ruined by his own doing is restored to wholeness by an almighty and merciful Saviour. For God has called man and still calls him so that with his entire being he might be joined to Him in an endless sharing of a divine life beyond all corruption. Christ won this victory when He rose to life, for by His death He freed man from death. Hence to every thoughtful man a solidly established faith provides the answer to his anxiety about what the future holds for him. At the same time faith gives him the power to be united in Christ with his loved ones who have already been snatched away by death; faith arouses the hope that they have found true life with God.

19. The root reason for human dignity lies in man's call to communion with God. From the very circumstance of his origin man is already invited to converse with God. For man would not exist were he not created by God's love and constantly preserved by it; and he cannot live fully according to truth unless he freely acknowledges that love and devotes himself to His Creator. Still, many of our contemporaries have never

recognized this intimate and vital link with God, or have explicitly rejected it. Thus atheism must be accounted among the most serious problems of this age, and is deserving of closer examination.

The word atheism is applied to phenomena which are quite distinct from one another. For while God is expressly denied by some, others believe that man can assert absolutely nothing about Him. Still others use such a method to scrutinize the question of God as to make it seem devoid of meaning. Many, unduly transgressing the limits of the positive sciences, contend that everything can be explained by this kind of scientific reasoning alone, or by contrast, they altogether disallow that there is any absolute truth. Some laud man so extravagantly that their faith in God lapses into a kind of anaemia, though they seem more inclined to affirm man than to deny God. Again some form for themselves such a fallacious idea of God that when they repudiate this figment they are by no means rejecting the God of the Gospel. Some never get to the point of raising questions about God, since they seem to experience no religious stirrings nor do they see why they should trouble themselves about religion. Moreover, atheism results not rarely from a violent protest against the evil in this world, or from the absolute character with which certain human values are unduly invested, and which thereby already accords them the stature of God. Modern civilization itself often complicates the approach to God not for any essential reason but because it is so heavily engrossed in earthly affairs.

Undeniably, those who wilfully shut out God from their hearts and try to dodge religious questions are not following the dictates of their consciences, and hence are not free of blame; yet believers themselves frequently bear some responsibility for this situation. For, taken as a whole, atheism is not a spontaneous development but stems from a variety of causes, including a critical reaction against religious beliefs, and in some places against the Christian religion in particular. Hence believers can have more than a little to do with the birth of atheism. To the extent that they neglect their own training in the faith, or teach erroneous doctrine, or are deficient in their religious, moral or social life, they must be said to conceal rather than reveal the authentic face of God and religion.

20. Modern atheism often takes on a systematic expression which, in addition to other causes, stretches the desires for human independence to such a point that it poses difficulties against any kind of dependence on God. Those who profess atheism of this sort maintain that it gives man freedom to be an end unto himself, the sole artisan and creator of his own history. They claim that this freedom cannot be reconciled with the affirmation of a Lord Who is author and purpose of all things, or at least that this freedom makes such an affirmation altogether superfluous. Favouring this doctrine can be the sense of power which modern technical progress generates in man.

Not to be overlooked among the forms of modern atheism is that which anticipates the liberation of man especially through his economic and social emancipation. This form argues that by its nature religion thwarts this liberation by arousing man's hope for a deceptive future life, thereby diverting him from the constructing of the earthly city. Consequently when the proponents of this doctrine gain governmental power they vigorously fight against religion, and promote atheism by using, especially in the education of youth, those means of pressure which public power has at its disposal.

21. In her loyal devotion to God and men, the Church has already repudiated (16) and cannot cease repudiating, sorrowfully but as firmly as possible, those poisonous doctrines and actions which contradict reason and the common experience of humanity, and dethrone man from his native excellence.

Still, she strives to detect in the atheistic mind the hidden causes for the denial of God; conscious of how weighty are the questions which atheism raises, and motivated by love for all men, she believes these questions ought to be examined seriously and more profoundly.

The Church holds that the recognition of God is in no way hostile to man's dignity, since this dignity is rooted and perfected in God. For man was made an intelligent and free member of society by God Who created him, but even more important, he is called as a son to commune with God and share in His happiness. She further teaches that a hope related to the end of time does not diminish the importance of intervening duties but rather undergirds the acquittal of them with fresh incentives. By contrast, when a divine instruction and the hope of life eternal are wanting, man's dignity is most grievously lacerated, as current events often attest; riddles of life and death, of guilt and of grief go unsolved with the frequent result that men succumb to despair.

Meanwhile every man remains to himself an unsolved puzzle, however obscurely he may perceive it. For on certain occasions no one can entirely escape the kind of self-questioning mentioned earlier, especially when life's major events take place. To this questioning only God fully and most certainly provides an answer as He summons man to higher knowledge and humbler probing.

The remedy which must be applied to atheism, however, is to be sought in a proper presentation of the Church's teaching as well as in the integral life of the Church and her members. For it is the function of the Church, led by the Holy Spirit Who renews and purifies her ceaselessly,(17) to make God the Father and His Incarnate Son present and in a sense visible. This result is achieved chiefly by the witness of a living and mature faith, namely, one trained to see difficulties clearly and to master them. Many martyrs have given luminous witness to this faith and continue to do so. This faith needs to prove its fruitfulness by penetrating the believer's entire life, including its worldly dimensions, and by activating him toward justice and love, especially regarding the needy. What does the most reveal God's presence, however, is the brotherly charity of the faithful who are united in spirit as they work together for the faith of the Gospel (18) and who prove themselves a sign of unity.

While rejecting atheism, root and branch, the Church sincerely professes that all men, believers and unbelievers alike, ought to work for the rightful betterment of this world in which all alike live; such an ideal cannot be realized, however, apart from sincere and prudent dialogue. Hence the Church protests against the distinction which some state authorities make between believers and unbelievers, with prejudice to the fundamental rights of the human person. The Church calls for the active liberty of believers to build up in this world God's temple too. She courteously invites atheists to examine the Gospel of Christ with an open mind.

Above all the Church knows that her message is in harmony with the most secret desires of the human heart when she champions the dignity of the human vocation, restoring hope to those who have already despaired of anything higher than their present lot. Far from diminishing man, her message brings to his development light, life and freedom. Apart from this message nothing will avail to fill up the heart of man: "Thou hast made us for Thyself," O Lord, "and our hearts are restless till they rest in Thee."(19)

22. The truth is that only in the mystery of the incarnate Word does the mystery of man take on light. For Adam, the first man, was a figure of Him Who was to come,(20) namely Christ the Lord. Christ, the final Adam, by the revelation of the mystery of the

Father and His love, fully reveals man to man himself and makes his supreme calling clear. It is not surprising, then, that in Him all the aforementioned truths find their root and attain their crown.

He Who is "the image of the invisible God" (Col. 1:15),(21) is Himself the perfect man. To the sons of Adam He restores the divine likeness which had been disfigured from the first sin onward. Since human nature as He assumed it was not annulled,(22) by that very fact it has been raised up to a divine dignity in our respect too. For by His incarnation the Son of God has united Himself in some fashion with every man. He worked with human hands, He thought with a human mind, acted by human choice(23) and loved with a human heart. Born of the Virgin Mary, He has truly been made one of us, like us in all things except sin.(24)

As an innocent lamb He merited for us life by the free shedding of His own blood. In Him God reconciled us(25) to Himself and among ourselves; from bondage to the devil and sin He delivered us, so that each one of us can say with the Apostle: The Son of God "loved me and gave Himself up for me" (Gal. 2:20). By suffering for us He not only provided us with an example for our imitation,(26) He blazed a trail, and if we follow it, life and death are made holy and take on a new meaning.

The Christian man, conformed to the likeness of that Son Who is the firstborn of many brothers,(27) received "the first-fruits of the Spirit" (Rom. 8:23) by which he becomes capable of discharging the new law of love.(28) Through this Spirit, who is "the pledge of our inheritance" (Eph. 1:14), the whole man is renewed from within, even to the achievement of "the redemption of the body" (Rom. 8:23): "If the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the death dwells in you, then he who raised Jesus Christ from the dead will also bring to life your mortal bodies because of his Spirit who dwells in you" (Rom. 8:11).(29) Pressing upon the Christian to be sure, are the need and the duty to battle against evil through manifold tribulations and even to suffer death. But, linked with the paschal mystery and patterned on the dying Christ, he will hasten forward to resurrection in the strength which comes from hope.(30)

All this holds true not only for Christians, but for all men of good will in whose hearts grace works in an unseen way.(31) For, since Christ died for all men,(32) and since the ultimate vocation of man is in fact one, and divine, we ought to believe that the Holy Spirit in a manner known only to God offers to every man the possibility of being associated with this paschal mystery.

Such is the mystery of man, and it is a great one, as seen by believers in the light of Christian revelation. Through Christ and in Christ, the riddles of sorrow and death grow meaningful. Apart from His Gospel, they overwhelm us. Christ has risen, destroying death by His death; He has lavished life upon us(33) so that, as sons in the Son, we can cry out in the Spirit; Abba, Father(34).

1. Cf. *Gen.* 1:26, *Wis.* 2:23.
2. Cf. *Sir.* 17:3-10.
3. Cf. *Rom.* 1:21-25.
4. Cf. *John* 8:34.
5. Cf. *Dan.* 3:57-90.
6. Cf. *1 Cor.* 6:13-20.
7. Cf. *1 Kings* 16:7; *Jer.* 17:10.
8. Cf. *Sir.* 17:7-8.
9. Cf. *Rom.* 2:15-16.

10. Cf. Pius XII, *Radio address on the correct formation of a Christian conscience in the young*, March 23, 1952: AAS (1952), p. 271.
11. Cf. *Matt.* 22:37-40; *Gal.* 5:14.
12. Cf. *Sir.* 15:14.
13. Cf. *2 Cor.* 5:10.
14. Cf. *Wis.* 1:13; 2:23-24; *Rom.* 5:21; 6:23; *Jas.* 1:15.
15. Cf. *1 Cor.* 15:56-57.
16. Cf. Pius XI, encyclical letter *Divini Redemptoris*, March 19, 1937: AAS 29 (1937), pp. 65-106; Pius XII, encyclical letter *Ad Apostolorum Principis*, June 29, 1958: AAS 50 (1958) pp. 601-614; John XXIII, encyclical letter *Mater et Magistra* May 15, 1961: AAS 53 (1961), pp. 451-453; Paul VI, *Ecclesiam Suam*, Aug. 6, 1964: AAS 56 (1964), pp. 651-653.
17. Cf. Second Vatican Council, *Dogmatic Constitution on the Church*, Chapter I, n. 8: AAS 57 (1965), p. 12.
18. Cf. *Phil.* 1:27.
19. St. Augustine, *Confessions* I, 1: PL 32, 661.
20. Cf. *Rom.* 5: 14. Cf. Tertullian, *De carnis resurrectione* 6: "The shape that the slime of the earth was given was intended with a view to Christ, the future man.": P. 2, 282; CSEL 47, p. 33, 1. 12-13.
21. Cf. *2 Cor.* 4:4.
22. Cf. *Second Council of Constantinople*, canon 7: "The divine Word was not changed into a human nature, nor was a human nature absorbed by the Word." Denzinger 219 (428); Cf. also Third Council of Constantinople: "For just as His most holy and immaculate human nature, though deified, was not destroyed (theotheisa ouk anerethe), but rather remained in its proper state and mode of being": Denzinger 291 (556); Cf. Council of Chalcedon: "to be acknowledged in two natures, without confusion change, division, or separation." Denzinger 148 (302).
23. Cf. Third Council of Constantinople: "and so His human will, though deified, is not destroyed": Denzinger 291 (556).
24. Cf. *Heb.* 4:15.
25. Cf. *2 Cor.* 5:18-19; *Col.* 1:20-22.
26. Cf. *1 Pet.* 2:21; *Matt.* 16:24; *Luke* 14:27.
27. Cf. *Rom.* 8:29; *Col.* 3:10-14.
28. Cf. *Rom.* 8:1-11.
29. Cf. *2 Cor.* 4:14.
30. Cf. *Phil.* 3:19; *Rom.* 8:17.
31. Cf. Second Vatican Council, *Dogmatic Constitution on the Church*, Chapter 2, n. 16: AAS 57 (1965), p. 20.
32. Cf. *Rom.* 8:32.
33. Cf. *The Byzantine Easter Liturgy*.
34. Cf. *Rom.* 8:15 and *Gal.* 4:6; cf. also *John* 1:22 and *John* 3:1-2.

CHAPTER 1. PERSONHOOD

1. PERSONHOOD

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1.1 Introduction

Before we get into the thick of this chapter it will help to have a look at what people think about the concept of **Person**. Some definitions that have been proposed in response to the question 'What is a person?' are below:

- 'A human being regarded as an individual' (*OED*)
- 'A being that has certain capacities or attributes such as reason, morality, consciousness or self-consciousness, and being a part of a culturally established form of social relations such as kinship, ownership of property, or legal responsibility' (*Wikipedia*)
- 'An individual substance of a rational nature' (Boethius)⁷
- 'A being "capable of desiring to continue as a subject of experience and other mental states"' (Michael Tooley)⁸
'A being of autonomous intellect. It is conceivable that a machine one day might be constructed having that characteristic.' (Robert Kolker)⁹

The above answers give some insights but also show that without a deep study it is difficult to provide an accurate answer.

The word 'person' comes from the ancient Greek word *prosopon* (*πρόσωπον*), meaning the mask worn by an actor to represent a character in a play, *persona* in Latin. A brief background to the development of the concept of 'person'. From *Wikipedia*:¹⁰

The concept of person was ... developed during the Trinitarian and Christological debates of the 4th and 5th centuries in contrast to the word nature. During the theological debates, some philosophical tools (concepts) were needed so that the debates could be held on common basis to all theological schools.

The purpose of the debate was to establish the relation, similarities and differences between the [Word] and God. The philosophical concept of person arose, taking

⁷ The definition is given in Boethius's *Liber de Persona et Duabus Naturis*, ch. 3.

⁸ *Bioethics: An Anthology*, by Helga Kuhse, Peter Singer

⁹ <https://www.quora.com/What-is-the-difference-between-a-person-and-a-human>

¹⁰ <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Person>

the word "prosopon" (πρόσωπον) from the Greek theatre. Therefore, [Christ (the Word)] and God were defined as different "persons". This concept was applied later to the Holy Ghost, the angels and to all human beings.

Since then, a number of important changes to the word's meaning and use have taken place, and attempts have been made to redefine the word with varying degrees of adoption and influence. ...

Personhood is the status of being a person. Defining personhood is a controversial topic in philosophy and law, and is closely tied to legal and political concepts of citizenship, equality, and liberty. According to common worldwide general legal practice, only a natural person or legal personality has rights, protections, privileges, responsibilities, and legal liability. Personhood continues to be a topic of international debate, and has been questioned during the abolition of slavery and the fight for women's rights, in debates about abortion, fetal rights, and in animal rights advocacy.

Various debates have focused on questions about the personhood of different classes of entities. Historically, the personhood of animals, women, and slaves has been a catalyst of social upheaval. In most societies today, living adult humans are usually considered persons, but depending on the context, theory or definition, the category of "person" may be taken to include or not children or such non-human entities as animals, artificial intelligences, or extraterrestrial life, as well as legal entities such as corporations, sovereign states and other polities, or estates in probate.

Wikipedia offers more information:

In addition to the question of personhood, of what makes a being count as a person to begin with, there are further questions about personal identity and self: both about what makes any particular person that particular person instead of another, and about what makes a person at one time the same person as they were or will be at another time despite any intervening changes.

The common plural of "person", "people", is often used to refer to an entire nation or ethnic group (as in "a people"). The plural "persons" is often used in philosophical and legal writing. ...

Closely related to the debate on the definition of personhood is the relationship between persons', individual rights, and ethical responsibility. Many philosophers would agree that all and only people are expected to be ethically responsible, and that all people deserve a varying degree of individual rights. There is less consensus on whether only people deserve individual rights and whether people deserve greater individual rights than non-people. The rights of animals are an example of contention on this issue.

And to the direct question 'who is a person?' the same online Encyclopedia answers:

1. **Human beings** - In contemporary global thought, once human beings are born, personhood is considered automatic.

o Exceptions: - Exceptions to this are often emotive and controversial. Some people have given opinions that foetuses, the disabled, the profoundly and long-term brain damaged, those in coma or other persistent vegetative states, may be dubious as regards personhood. Such views are strongly debated from both sides.

Historically, personhood has been denied to women, perceived other races, the mentally disabled, and in many tribal societies, all people not from the tribe.

2. **Animals** - Some philosophers and those involved in animal welfare, ethology, animal rights and related subjects, consider that certain animals should also be granted personhood. Commonly named species in this context include the Great Apes and possibly cetaceans or elephants, due to the acknowledged intelligence and intricate societies of such species. In animistic religion, animals, plants, and other entities may be persons or deities.

3. **Certain societal constructs** - certain social entities, are considered legally as persons, for example some corporations and other legal entities. This is known as legal, or corporate, personhood.

In addition, speculatively, there are ... other likely categories of beings where personhood might be at issue:

- **Unknown intelligent life-forms** - for example, should alien life be found to exist, under what circumstances would they be counted as 'persons'?
- **Artificial life** - at what point might human-created life be considered to have achieved personhood?
- **Artificial intelligence** - assuming the eventual creation of an intelligent and self-aware system of hardware and software, what criteria would be used to confer or withhold the status of person?
- **Modified living beings, cyborgs** - for example, how much of a human being can be replaced by artificial parts before personhood is lost?
 - Further, if the brain is the reason people are considered persons, then if the human brain and all its thought patterns, memories and other attributes could also in future be transposed faithfully into some form of artificial device (for example to avoid illness such as brain cancer) would the patient still be considered a 'person' after the operation?
 - If the person (or "individual") could go back in time and relate to his/her earlier self. Would it then be two persons yet the same being? Or one person in two bodies?
 - Are the surgical separations of Siamese twins cases more complicated, challenging and controversial than abortion?

Do we have to consider whatever "willing and communicative (capable to register its own will) autonomous body" in the universe, no matter about races, an individual (a person)? Do they deserve equal rights with the human race?

Such questions are used by philosophers to clarify thinking concerning what it means to be human, or living, or a person, or an individual.

There is no doubt that the work put into "finding" an adequate definition of "person" originally came from theological controversies, however here we are after those basic aspects that help us to identify the presence of a human person in all courses of life.

1.2 "Who am I?"

Philosophical anthropology's main concern is the human being and one of its central themes is *personhood*, the ultimate source of human dignity and the reason for man's inviolability. It is, in fact, the most specific core of the human being. Without any

need to go into the evolution of the concept of person or exhaust all the issues about personhood that can be philosophically considered, this chapter limits its focus to the basic features of the person.

The question "What am I?" is a question about essence, about a categorization that explains why I have the form and existence that I have. I possess a specific nature that accounts for this form and mode of existence. The answer to "What am I?" is "I am a human being." To say "human being" is to locate my identity within a biological category, the human species, and to identify my nature with the generic "human" nature. In short, because I belong to this species, I am a human being and consequently possess a human nature. "Human being" is a collective criterion of identity because all those belonging to the same species share it. I am not unique as a human being and by having a human nature. In contrast, I am unique as a person. That is why philosophical anthropology cannot limit itself to clarifying what human being means by simply contrasting humans from sub-human modes of living (animal) from sub-human modes of non-living (machines), or from supra-human modes of existence (angelic or divine). It must try to understand human beings from what is peculiar about being a person. In other words, human being is clarified best, albeit not exclusively, by making reference to personhood and its features that are actually drawn from human nature.

In the past there has been no lack of various reductionist conceptions of the human person, many of which are still dramatically present on the stage of modern history. These are ideological in character or are simply the result of widespread forms of custom or thought concerning mankind, human life and human destiny. The common denominator among these is the attempt to make the image of man unclear by emphasizing only one of his characteristics at the expense of all the others.¹¹

It is important to have a clear understanding of the human person in order to understand ourselves and others, respect human dignity, and work towards the common good, which aims to create the conditions that allow human beings to flourish and attain their perfection as individuals and in society, in all the dimensions of their humanity.

The Church, in the Vatican II document *Gaudium et Spes*, nn.12-22 (see Supplementary Readings), describes the human person and identifies some key topics we will examine in this course. It provides a Christian framework for coming to a full understanding of the human person. A summary can be found in the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* (see Supplementary Readings).

1.3 Some Basic Features of the Person

The following features may be referred to as *phenomenological* aspects of the human person. They offer us the opportunity to understand what a human person is through thinking about our *experiences* of ourselves and of other persons.

¹¹ *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church*, n. 124.

Intimacy: A person is a self, an 'I' who possesses an intimacy or inner world.

Intimacy signifies inner life, what belongs to oneself, what is "personal". What a person thinks and wills is *immanent* (ie, it *remains within* the person, as part of his or her inner life). In fact, intimacy is the greatest manifestation of immanence. No one else can know what a person thinks or desires unless that person decides to reveal it. Our personal intimacy makes us vulnerable, and we can experience shame when it is exposed to others without our wishing it (e.g., we don't want others looking over our shoulders at what we're writing). From this comes the concept of privacy, a refuge not open to strangers (e.g., no one just enters one's house).

Intimacy is not static, but creative. Thus, intimacy among persons is not the same. One's inner life gives rise to something incommunicable, individual and unique. A person responds to the question '*who* are you?', not '*what* are you?'

Personal intimacy makes us all unique and unrepeatable.

For this reason, a person is a 'someone', a 'who', not 'something' or a 'what'. The question 'who am I?' indicates personhood. Person has to do with the 'I', my unrepeatable absolute core. The person that 'I' am is 'I'. 'I' am 'I' and no one else. 'Who' implies unique intimacy, unrepeatable, interior 'I', consciousness of one's self. The answer to this question is to offer my name. My identity is specific, unique to me. It has to do with myself, with my intimacy, which I exclusively possess. The name allows a person to be recognized by, and to be a protagonist in, society. To be a person means being recognized as an actor by society, i.e., as someone who has roles to play, tasks to do, and capacities exercise. To be a person is to be recognized socially as a 'specific' person.

The *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church* explains it this way:

Man exists as a unique and unrepeatable being ... as an "I" capable of self-understanding, self-possession and self-determination. The human person is an intelligent and conscious being, capable of reflecting on himself and therefore of being aware of himself and his actions. However, it is not intellect, consciousness and freedom that define the person, rather it is the person who is the basis of the acts of intellect, consciousness and freedom. These acts can even be absent, for even without them man does not cease to be a person. The human person, must always be understood in his unrepeatable and inviolable uniqueness.¹²

Intimacy and the body

While intimacy is not the body, nonetheless, the body forms part of intimacy insofar as it is a body that belongs to and is possessed by a self. My body is *my* body. I can never know what it is to be someone else's body. My body belongs to myself; whatever I do with it involves my intimacy. What I am, what I want to be, is expressed through my body.

It is natural to respect and protect one's intimacy as a sanctuary that is exclusively one's own. Since the body is part of intimacy, clothing is a way of maintaining control of one's intimacy. To be naked is to expose one's intimacy, that selfhood to which no

¹² *CSD*, n. 131.

one can have access unless the self allows others to look into it. Covering or uncovering the body is not something arbitrary; nor can it be reduced to a matter of fashion. It always has an anthropological relevance because it has to do with how persons view themselves and others, either as things or as persons. Covering the body is not only about preserving it from the elements, but also to protect the body - and ultimately the inner self, from becoming a 'thing'. To cover the body is to protect one's valuable inner world from exposure to strangers. In contrast, to uncover the body is not simply to expose a physical organic matter, but to expose one's intimacy.¹³

To some extent, this is captured by the expression 'you are what you wear'. Clothes are an expression of self-identity. Before they reflect our preferred styles, they identify us first as persons in the strong sense of the word. In short, to dress and to choose the way we dress (style) is to disclose our inner world, to make a stand about who we are, about our self-worth, and about the respect we would like others to give us.

Persons tend to, and actually manifest, their intimacy.

The sense of privacy (the right to one's intimacy) and of 'shame' protects the sanctuary of one's inner world. Expressing one's intimacy requires a context of trust/confidence, because it means that a person is willing to share his or her inner world with some other. A person shows his or her inner world through a variety of ways: action, speech, and bodily gestures. A person inserts himself/herself in the world through action, which is inclusive of speech.

Speaking manifests intimacy. Our thoughts are made public for the purpose of being understood by others. Persons speak because they are social, i.e., open to others. Humans invented language to be shared with others. Words can express more than gestures because they can be written, engraved, digitalized to endure over time and individual or collective existences. By manifesting intimacy in society through action and speech, persons make themselves culture-creating beings. This manifestation is called *culture*.

A person is free to manifest his or her intimacy.

We have freedom because we are able to decide what to manifest of ourselves and to whom.

A person has the capacity to give not just things, but to give self.

This capacity is implied in the act of showing oneself, in taking something from one's inner life one considers valuable, and offering it to another. This is exhibited especially in the act of loving. In fact, love is not so much in giving things, but in giving of oneself

¹³ Fashion indicates the degree with which people live a sense of 'shame', a sense that protects intimacy. When a high degree of sense of shame and self-worth exists, sexuality is lived within the context of intimate marital, family relationships and genuine love. Nudity and sexual permissiveness are consequently not exhibited. The immodest display of parts of one's body to justify an expression of love is fallacious because authentic love implies the gift of oneself. Authentic love is humanizing and is not confused with or reduced to erotic love. The giving of the body in nudity and sex without a giving or receiving of self in a context of serious marital commitment is de-personalizing because it attempts to dissociate what in truth is not dissociated, i.e., to dissociate self from the body. When an individual takes his sexuality arbitrarily and offers it as a commodity in exchange for another individual's body that is also dissociated from the self, shame becomes meaningless, sex becomes shameless and marriage a joke. Self-willed nakedness, pornography and prostitution are all different ways of making the body a "thing", usable and disposable. They are antithetical to personhood.

to the beloved. That is why love is the most sublime activity of beings capable of thinking and willing. Giving of self fulfils the self.

Now, to give one's intimacy there needs to be a receiver of intimacy, i.e., an 'other' who likewise has intimacy. It also implies vulnerability, as the offering of oneself brings with it the possibility of rejection, of not being valued, or by being reduced to the status of an object to be used or enjoyed by others instead of being recognised as unique and of incommensurable value. This is what moves us to protect our intimacy, deciding to whom, and in what circumstances, it is appropriate to reveal and share our innermost selves.

A person has the *capacity to receive the gift of intimacy*

A person has the *capacity to receive* the gift of intimacy *of* or the *gift of self* of another. To be a recipient of intimacy is to accept and admit a given intimacy (gift) into one's own intimacy. That is, the receiver receives the gift as his or her own. This is also part of the act of love. Without the other, the gift of intimacy becomes senseless or frustrating. In other words, the self-giving of the giver must be reciprocated and corresponded to. If the gift of intimacy is not received by another, then it is not so much given, as left.

A person has the *capacity to dialogue with another intimacy, someone.*

Because self-giving entails another self-receiving intimacy, dialogue becomes not just an exchange of ideas or words but an exchange of intimacies. Dialogue is a reciprocal exchange of the selves' inner worlds, of what each self is. To say that the person is 'dialogical' means that sharing of intimacies is social and communitarian. Each person in dialogue shares his or her own intimacy and learns from the intimacy of the other, thereby enriching the inner worlds of both. This growth cannot take place if the person speaks to himself/herself alone, or with something. Experience shows that cases where children who have been orphaned and left to fend off animals show animal-like behaviour and when rescued and taught by humans, show delays in learning.

The awareness of one's self, one's 'I' is recognizable because of the presence of a 'you'. Human personhood, human personality, and the education of humans are forged not by the accumulation of information, but through dialogue with others. This is the reason why it is most enriching to be with a person who has so many things to teach us and to tell us. All these things are drawn from the person's rich inner world. The university teacher - student relationship is oriented towards dialogue. To reduce it to a transmission of technical knowledge impoverish university life which should foster a community of dialogue.

Dialogue is mediated by language. There is no need for language if we are not open to others. In fact, many human conflicts arise due to lack of communication. Communication is not simply a gathering of people to talk. It has to do with dialogue, i.e., an exchange of interiority, therefore with a readiness to listen and to grow in the language of the others. This entails that the speakers are open to the truth of the other. There can be no true dialogue if speakers have no interest in truth because it is, in fact, that truth which is shared.

Supplementary Reading: de la Vega, J., Educating in Modesty.

1.4 Personal Dignity: All persons have equal dignity

In the Christian conception of dignity, human beings have dignity because they are made in the image and likeness of God and they have a supernatural vocation which is the gift of God. Thus all human beings have inherent dignity (worth or value). All human beings are equal in dignity. This is a dignity that can neither be acquired nor lost. It is inherent and inalienable. All human beings have this inherent dignity, which, along with our common human nature, is the foundation for being able to talk about human equality and universal human rights.

The root reason for human dignity lies in man's call to communion with God. From the very circumstance of his origin man is already invited to converse with God. For man would not exist were he not created by God's love and constantly preserved by it; and he cannot live fully according to truth unless he freely acknowledges that love and devotes himself to His Creator.¹⁴

The dignity of every person before God is the basis of the dignity of man before other men. Moreover, this is the ultimate foundation of the radical equality and brotherhood among all people, regardless of their race, nation, sex, origin, culture, or class.¹⁵

In contemporary culture it is also common to speak about dignity in another sense: as the worth or value of a person as they are perceived, either by themselves (dignity as a sense of self-worth), or as what others perceive and judge a person to be worth. If dignity is understood only in this way, it can be acquired and can be lost. A person's value is the value they subjectively place on their own lives. The word 'dignity' is understood in this way, for instance, in the 'dying with dignity' approach to euthanasia.

Both understandings of dignity are important if we are to truly flourish. Inherent dignity is fundamental and is the basis for being able to talk about dignity at all, but we also need to be able to appreciate our own dignity and worth. A true appreciation of one's inherent dignity helps us to have appreciate our worth. At the same time, if others fail to recognise our inherent dignity and to not treat us with the respect due to all human beings, we can lose sight of our sense of self-worth. Discrimination, violence, bullying, constant criticism, neglect and abuse, especially in children, and conduct that demeans a person or violates their rights can lead a person to form a distorted view of their own dignity and worth. On the positive side, this can also work the other way. The way we treat people can help them appreciate their own worth or dignity and can even help people discover, or rediscover, their dignity. Occasionally a person can lose their sense of self-worth as a result of their actions or behaviour. In these cases, encountering others who value them and recognise their dignity can be critical in helping them to rediscover it for themselves, with a result that they find the hope and impetus to change their lives.

Supplementary Reading:

Catechism of the Catholic Church, nn. 1700-1706;

Gaudium et Spes, nn.12-22.

¹⁴ *Gaudium et Spes*, 19.

¹⁵ *CSD*, n. 144.

1.5 Valuable for their own sake

Persons have an inherent value and are never to be reduced to or used as, an object or means.

Man in his interiority transcends the universe and is the only creature willed by God for its own sake.¹⁶ 'For this reason neither his life nor the development of his thought, nor his good, nor those who are part of his personal and social activities can be subjected to unjust restrictions in the exercise of their rights and freedom'. '*In no case ... is the human person to be manipulated for ends that are foreign to his own development, which can find complete fulfilment only in God and his plan of salvation*'.¹⁷

It is necessary to consider every neighbour without exception as another self, taking into account first of all his life and the means necessary for living it with dignity. Every political, economic, social, scientific and cultural programme must be inspired by the awareness of the primacy of each human being over society.¹⁸

A just society can become a reality only when it is based on the respect of the transcendent dignity of the human person. The person represents the ultimate end of society, by which it is ordered to the person: Hence, the social order and its development must invariably work to the benefit of the human person, since the order of things is to be subordinate to the order of persons, and not the other way around.¹⁹

The person cannot be a *means* for carrying out economic, social or political projects imposed by some authority, even in the name of an alleged progress of the civil community as a whole or of other persons, either in the present or the future. It is therefore necessary that public authorities keep careful watch so that restrictions placed on freedom or any onus placed on personal activity will never become harmful to personal dignity, thus guaranteeing the effective practicability of human rights. All this, once more, is based on the vision of man as a *person*, that is to say, as an *active* and *responsible* subject of his own growth process, together with the community to which he belongs.²⁰

The human person can be said to be absolute in the sense that a person is an end in himself or herself, as the philosopher Immanuel Kant put it, valuable in him or herself, and not to be reduced to an instrument to be used by another. However human beings are also *relative* in the sense that we receive this absolute character from another source – we do not confer it on ourselves. This in fact allows one to be respectful of the absoluteness of other persons. In short, there is a higher instance that tells me I should respect others and they should respect me. The dignity of the human person does not come from a human person. This is the point where God and revelation become relevant.

Being an end in oneself is something received: dignity is a gift. As an end in oneself, the person cannot be conditioned by anything such as the non-development or underdevelopment of capacities, illness, unconsciousness, etc. A fertilised human egg

¹⁶ *CSD*, 133

¹⁷ *CSD*, 133.

¹⁸ *CSD*, 132.

¹⁹ *CSD*, 132.

²⁰ *CSD*, 133.

is to be treated as a person, just as a comatose adult is a person.²¹ To respect this absoluteness, in fact, is the most dignified attitude of a person, because by respecting it, one respects oneself. When one does not respect it, one degrades one's very self.

To say that the person is an end in him or herself is to say that her or she can never be a means to an end. S/He is therefore not an object to be used for something else. To use persons is to transform them into objects; it is to treat them as non-selves. To use them for the personal interests of others is to manipulate them, which is ethically wrong. To recognise other people's personhood and dignity is a practical behaviour (*praxis*) before it is a theoretical juridical abstract declaration. Not to recognise this personhood is a form of oppression. It is tantamount to emptying an individual of what precisely makes him or her a "self" and different from others. In short, not to recognise personhood leads one to do anything one likes arbitrarily.

1.6 Person and self-transcendence

We have said that a person's identity is achieved in an existential manner. One obtains self-realization by reaching new heights. Thus, it is fitting to say that human nature is *self-transcendence*, that is, *openness, activity, and possession* of those ends proper to the person. A person reaches his or her identity by becoming what he or she still is not. The way we look at a person should include the perspective of what they can become.²²

Sociability

Humans are social by nature

Human beings are social by nature. As the philosopher Aristotle put it,

Man is by nature a social animal. An individual who is unsocial naturally and not accidentally is either beneath our notice or more than human. Society is something that precedes the individual. Anyone who either cannot lead the common life or is so self-sufficient as not to need to, and therefore does not partake of society, is either a beast or a god.²³

We will examine this dimension of the human person in Chapter 3.

²¹ Cf *Dignitas Personae*

²² The concept of *transcendence* can have a *theoretical* or *practical* meaning. The *theoretical* understanding of transcendence can be either *subjective* or *objective*. In its subjective sense, it means going beyond the known object, therefore, referring to the knowing subject. This is the sense that Kant and K. Wojtyła use in their works. In its theoretical and objective sense, transcendence means that which remains throughout change, what is above time, what is stable, in contrast to what is changing and ephemeral. This is being.

The *practical* concept of transcendence is what is used to refer to man's existential self-realization. Transcendence is what goes beyond the immediate present, but which can be reached in the future. It has a sense of mystery in it. Thus, when man transcends himself, he opens himself up to new possibilities, he is undetermined. Through his decisions, he forges his own life and becomes what he ought to be.

²³ Aristotle, *Politics*, (1.2.1253a28-30).

1.7 The classical definition of 'person'

Metaphysically the concept of person as 'an individual suppositum of a rational nature'²⁴ used by the philosopher Boethius, and St Thomas Aquinas, highlights the following:

Individual

Individuality means oneness or undividedness, unrepeatableness, uniqueness, singularity. An *individual* is undivided in itself and separate from the rest who are also individuals but not necessarily persons. The meaning of *individual* is more complex when applied to persons. A person is always an individual and he or she is so, not simply because of his or her undividedness but because of his or her autonomy, self-centeredness, and non-transferableness of his or her being to others. Persons are individuals because of their bodylines; autonomous because they can transcend whatever is received from the outside world.

'Suppositum'

Suppositum means that a human being is the existing *substance* in which all his qualities inhere (body structure, complexion, height, IQ, EQ, temperament, profession, civil status, or religious affiliation).

Rational

Rationality refers to the thinking and willing capacities of a human being. Fourth, *nature* means essence, as the principle of activity or operation. It accounts for our capacity to think, will, laugh, and speak. Human nature is common to all humans.²⁵

1.8 Inadequacy of reducing the human person to his acts or conscious life

After all that has been said regarding the person, would we be able to say that a person is still a person even when he or she is not thinking, willing, or performing any of those acts proper to him as a person? Even if the individual exists, but does so in a quasi-vegetative state or has suffered a serious mental disorder, could he or she still be called a person? Is the embryo a person?

While there is much discussion regarding this issue, it is necessary to affirm that a person cannot be reduced to his or her acts or conscious life. True, a person has to realize his or her full potential as one through the decisions that make up his or her life project. However, he or she is not less of a person if he or she does not do so. Perhaps the best way of putting it would be to say that 'if someone is not a person, he or she could never act as one, and if someone could, in the future, act as one, he or she has

²⁴ *Persona est rationalis naturae individua substantia*. The definition appears in Boethius's *Liber de Persona et Duabus Naturis*, ch. 3.

²⁵ Human nature is something not static, something merely present at the origin of human existence. Its function is not simply to make one human from the start, and not a dog. It is also the source of the dynamism that enables man to be more, *self*, *person*, and *subject*. This dynamism arises from human nature's given *telos* (Gr. for "end as goal"), which is infinite truth and infinite good. Human nature's end implies two things: an openness to growth and the orientation of that growth towards truth and good. An individual possessing human nature is a being with an already a prescribed given end, which he does not invent or create but simply discovers. Human nature is the source and condition that enables the individual to direct himself towards the perfection his nature demands.

that capacity to do so because he or she is already a person'. Thus, we can say that what determines the nature of a person are not his or her secondary acts, i.e., conscious life, but his or her primary *act of being*, (i.e., ontological constitution as an individual subsisting substance of a rational nature).

The very fact of doubting whether or not someone in the above-mentioned situations is a person or not, provides sufficient basis to affirm that there is something that indicates he or she *could* be a person. One never doubts that a dog is not a person. The fact that a person could be a person is enough to show respect for their personal dignity.

Supplementary Reading: May, William. "What is A Human Person and who Counts as a Human Person? A Crucial Question for Bioethics" (2014).

1.9 The personal identity of the embryo

Nonetheless, questions have arisen depending upon how one defines personhood. Let us take a look at the more common questions raised regarding the personal identity of the human embryo:

1) 'Human life does not begin at conception because the embryo requires additional information from the mother for its normal development.'

This objection does not seem to take into account that an embryo can develop *in vitro*, at least in its early stages, independent of the mother. Nor does it consider that a baby as well as a little child still depend on external nourishment and environmental information for their development until reaching adulthood.

2) Another objection questions as to when it is proper to say that human life begins in a process of biological and cosmic evolution. Before the zygote, the sperm and ovum were already alive, and so were their progenitors before them.

We are not questioning the beginning of all life or of the cosmos. We are interested in the beginning of a specific organism. Ovum and sperm are two living entities, but they are not complete organisms and they will not develop by themselves into complete organisms. When they unite to form a zygote a new, unique human organism capable of self-development and reproduction begins to exist. These are not merely cells of the mother's body. The zygote has a unique genome distinct from the mother's.

A corollary to this would be to clarify the statement that a person cannot merely be defined as a substance, but must include its process and developmental aspects. This is correct and our study of the person has taken this into account. However, this should not be understood as a continuous developing process in which the existence of different individuals cannot be determined. A person develops from the embryonic stage to old age, but he is still one and the same person with a clear beginning and an end. "A process is not always a mere reshuffling of what was already there, but the emergence of new realities radically distinct from those that previously existed."

3) Following upon the developmental, processive character of human life, some claim that the identity of a human being is not established at conception by its unique genome, but is gradually established through a series of stages. Others have expressed this idea by saying that the embryo and foetus are only "potential" human beings or are "in the process of becoming human but are not yet human."

A correct understanding of potentiality is needed here. An embryo is not potentially a human person but an actual human person. This is what William May argues in the supplementary reading. It has an active power to develop **as** a person but not a power to develop **into** a person. If a zygote is “potentially” a human person, it is because it already possesses in itself an active potentiality for self-development and self-reproduction. It does not merely contain a miniature model, a mock-up or a blueprint of an adult, but an inherent power to develop as one (and a specific one at that) and not into anything else.

The zygote already possesses the act of being and essence (human nature). It already contains its own principle of operation that will eventually determine it to be this particular person with certain characteristics. Thus, it is not pure potentiality. The zygote cannot become anything else but a human person.

4) Others maintain a pre-embryonic stage, that is, the two weeks between fertilization and implantation, when twinning is still possible. If twins can be produced, then it means the existence of the original zygote was not individual.

Without going into the technical details of how twinning (a genetic defect, an abnormality) occurs, it is sufficient to point out that the embryo’s development is already controlled from within it by its genome. When a twin develops from an original zygote, it only serves to confirm that there was an individual existence earlier, which, by some fluke of nature, gave rise to another individual. The fact is that both individuals continue to exist as such.

5) Some theologians argue based on the high percentage of miscarriages. They ask, “Is it possible that God could have created so many human souls, foreseeing that they will never reach the level of conscious human life?”

The answer to this will never be known in this life. Perhaps, these imperfectly fertilized ova were never prepared for ensoulment. Maybe they were never true human beings. In any case, the question will not be solved by claiming that an embryo is not a person until one can be absolutely sure no miscarriage will occur.

6) Following Aristotle, some argue that the person appears only when the central nervous system (the primary organ) is developed, which would be observable in a foetus at about three months.

However, modern genetic science has established that a sequence of primordial centres of organization in the embryo goes back continuously to the nucleus of the zygote, long before the brain appears as the final centre. The information and active potentiality necessary to eventually develop the brain is already present.

Moreover, the functioning of the central nervous system has significance and value in determining the person’s existence only when he has ceased to live. It is the clearest sign of brain death.

7) Personhood has also been viewed as a social or legal construct. As someone put it, “it is not obvious that a human organism is ipso facto a human person.”

As has been studied earlier, personhood is something intrinsic to the human being. It is not imposed from outside, but pertains to his very nature. If the notion of person were relative to a society or legal system, then there would be little basis for talking about human rights. Each society could treat human beings any way it wanted to and claim that its culture demands such treatment of a person.

8) Finally, it has been argued that if the embryo or foetus is unconscious it is not really a person.

In addition to being refuted by evidence (embryos or foetuses do respond to the external environment), personhood is not determined by whether or not the subject is in fact acting, but whether or not he possesses the power to do so.

The human being is to be respected and treated as a person from the moment of conception; and therefore from that same moment his rights as a person must be recognized, among which in the first place is the inviolable right of every innocent human being to life.

If *Donum vitae*, in order to avoid a statement of an explicitly philosophical nature, did not define the embryo as a person, it nonetheless did indicate that there is an intrinsic connection between the ontological dimension and the specific value of every human life. Although the presence of the spiritual soul cannot be observed experimentally, the conclusions of science regarding the human embryo give “a valuable indication for discerning by the use of reason a personal presence at the moment of the first appearance of a human life: how could a human individual not be a human person?”. Indeed, the reality of the human being for the entire span of life, both before and after birth, does not allow us to posit either a change in nature or a gradation in moral value, since it possesses *full anthropological and ethical status*. The human embryo has, therefore, from the very beginning, the dignity proper to a person.

Respect for that dignity is owed to every human being because each one carries in an indelible way his own dignity and value. *The origin of human life has its authentic context in marriage and in the family*, where it is generated through an act which expresses the reciprocal love between a man and a woman. Procreation which is truly responsible vis-à-vis the child to be born “must be the fruit of marriage”.²⁶

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Educating in Modesty (1)

<https://opusdei.org/en-au/article/educating-in-modesty-1/>

J. de la Vega, 11.12.2014

Modesty defends the intimacy of a man or a woman, their most precious core, so as to be able to reveal it in the appropriate measure and in the right moment.

What is modesty? At first sight, it seems to be a feeling of shame that prevents us from revealing our intimacy to others. For many, it is simply a spontaneous defense against indecency, and not a few people today confuse it with prudery. Nevertheless, this conception is a bit one-sided. It is easy to appreciate this when we consider that, if neither personality nor intimacy is present, modesty has no role. Animals do not have it. Moreover, it not only applies to bad or indecent things. Modesty is also possible with respect to good things—the natural shame to manifest, for example, the gifts one has received.

Modesty as a feeling has enormous value, because it presupposes the awareness that one possesses an intimate and not a merely "public" existence. But an authentic virtue of modesty, grounded on this feeling, is also attainable. This virtue allows us to choose when and how to reveal our interior being to those who can receive and understand it as it deserves.

Value of one's intimacy

Modesty therefore has a deep anthropological value. It defends the intimacy of a man or a woman, their most precious core, so as to be able to reveal it in the appropriate measure, in the right moment, in the correct way, in the best context. Otherwise a person is exposed to mistreatment, or at least to not being taken with due consideration. Modesty is also needed to maintain one's self-esteem, an essential aspect of a rightly-ordered love for oneself. Pope John Paul II said that "by modesty the human being manifests almost 'instinctively' the need for this 'I' to be affirmed and accepted according to its true value." [1] The lack of modesty shows that one's own intimacy is not viewed as unique or especially relevant, so that nothing of what it contains deserves to be reserved for certain persons and not others.

Beauty of modesty

The term "modesty" (whether understood as a feeling or a virtue) can be applied in different ways. In its strictest sense it refers to the safeguarding of the body; in a broader sense, it embraces other aspects of intimacy such as showing one's emotions. In either case, modesty protects the mystery of the person and his or her love. [2]

As a general principle, it can be said the modesty seeks to have others acknowledge what is most personal in us. In what refers to the body, it seeks to draw attention to what is exclusive and proper to each person (face, hands, glances, gestures...). How one dresses is at the service of this capacity to communicate one's inner being, and should express the image that one has of oneself and the respect that it seeks from and offers to others. Elegance, good taste, cleanliness and good grooming are thus the first manifestations of modesty, which asks for and offers respect to those around us. That is why a lack of virtue in this area often leads to a lack of refinement and

personal hygiene. The Prelate of Opus Dei has often exhorted us to "foster and defend modesty, by contributing to the creation and spread of fashions that respect human dignity, and by protesting against impositions that fail to respect the values of authentic beauty." [3]

Something similar happens in the more spiritual aspects of modesty. This virtue brings order to our inner world, in accord with the dignity of persons and their solidarity. [4] Consideration for personal intimacy, whether one's own or that of another, allows one to be known in the appropriate measure in the various contexts of mutual self-giving and respect. Personal relationships are thus humanized, and one's personality becomes more attractive. And as the appropriate spheres of intimacy are shared, true friendship is fostered.

Therefore in teaching modesty it is essential to highlight the eminently positive meaning of this virtue. "Modesty, a fundamental component of the personality, may be considered on the educational level as the vigilant consciousness which defends the dignity of man, woman and authentic love." [5] When the profound meaning of modesty is explained, that is, the safeguarding of the one's own intimacy in order to be able to offer it to someone who can truly appreciate it, it becomes easier to accept and interiorize its practical consequences. The goal then is not so much that young people practice some specific standards of behavior in this area, as that they value modesty and embrace it as something that lies at the heart of their personal dignity.

Parents' example and the family atmosphere

As we well know, good example is an essential element in the task of education. If the parents and other adults who might be living at home, such as grandparents, give an example of modesty, the children will come to realize that these manifestations of refinement express the dignity of the various members of the family. For example, parents can and should show their mutual affection in front of their children, but being careful to reserve certain gestures for moments of intimacy. Saint Josemaría recalled the environment his parents created at home: "They didn't do anything foolish: just a little kiss. Be modest in front of the kids." [6] This doesn't mean hiding love behind a mask of coldness, but rather showing children the need for decorum in one's behavior, which is far removed from affectation.

However, the manifestations of a healthy modesty do not end here. The mutual confidence that exists in a family needs to be made compatible with a respect for personal dignity at home. A slackening in behavior or dress, such as wearing a bathrobe most of the day or changing clothes in front of the children, ends up lowering the human tone at home. Special care is needed during the summer, since the climate, the light fabrics, and perhaps the fact of being on holidays open the door to carelessness. Certainly each time and place requires dressing in an appropriate way, but one can always maintain decorum. This way of acting can at times clash with the prevailing atmosphere, but "that is why you have to be formed in such a way that you can carry your own environment about with you, and so give your own 'tone' to the society in which you live." [7]

Since modesty is so closely tied to manifesting one's personal intimacy, fostering this virtue in young people should also include the area of thoughts, feelings and intentions. Thus the example given at home needs to include the way one treats one's own intimacy and that of the others. For example, it is hardly formative that family conversations deal with things confided by other people, or that they foster gossip. Along with the possible faults against justice that behaving in this way could involve,

these kinds of comments lead children to think that they have the right to interfere in the privacy of other people.

In an analogous way, parents need to be watchful about what enters the home through the media. On our present topic, the main obstacle is not only what is indecent, which clearly should always be avoided. More problematic is the way that some programs or magazines make a spectacle of people's intimate lives. Sometimes they do so in an invasive way, acting against the ethics of the profession of journalism. Other times it is the protagonists themselves who act immorally and give themselves over to satisfying frivolous or even morbid curiosity. Christian parents have to use the means to prevent this "intimacy market" from entering their home. And they need to explain the reasons for acting this way: "the legitimate right to be oneself, to avoid ostentation, to keep within the family its joys, sorrows and difficulties." [8] The excuse usually given for this type of program, i.e. the right to information or the consent of those taking part, is restricted by the dignity of the human person. It is never ethical to damage that dignity unjustly, even if the person concerned is the one who does it.

From an early age

The sense of modesty awakens in a person with the discovery of one's own intimacy. Small children are often carried away by momentary sensations, and thus when playing or in an atmosphere of trust they may easily neglect modesty, perhaps even without particularly noticing it. Therefore during early infancy the work of upbringing should be centered on consolidating habits that will foster the development of this virtue later on. For example, it is good that children learn early on to wash and dress themselves, doing so when not in sight of their siblings. Where possible, they should get used to closing the door of their room when changing clothes, and to locking the door when in the bathroom.

These are matters of common sense that perhaps are overlooked today, and that aim to form in the child habits acquired with the help of reason, which in the future will facilitate authentic virtues. Thus if a child sometimes appears or runs around the house with no concern for modesty, parents should not make a drama out of it, nor laugh heartily (they can leave their laughter for when the child is absent). Rather they should correct the child affectionately, and make it clear that this is no way to behave. In matters of upbringing everything is important, although there are things that in themselves seem unimportant or that at their age don't mean anything.

At the same time, children should be learning to respect the intimacy of others. They are born egocentric and only gradually do they "discover" that others do not live for them, and that those others deserve to be treated as they themselves would like to be. This gradual advance can be made specific in many small points: teaching them to knock at a door and wait for a response before entering a room; or explaining to them that they should leave a room when they are invited to do so when adults want to speak alone. Their childish eagerness to explore closets and other personal items at home should also be discouraged. Thus they will get used to giving value to the privacy of others, while coming to discover their own intimate world.

Thus the foundations will be laid so that, when they grow up, they will learn to respect other persons for what they are, children of God. And they will attain "the good modesty that reserves the deep things of the soul to the intimacy between man and his Father God, between the child who has to try to be completely Christian and the Mother who always embraces that child tightly in her arms." [9]

Part 2 of this article, on educating children and adolescents in modesty, can be found at <https://opusdei.org/en-au/article/educating-in-modesty-2/>

[1] Cf. Saint John Paul II, *General audience*, 19 December 1979.

[2] Cf. *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, no. 2522.

[3] Bishop Javier Echevarría, Get-together in Las Palmas de Gran Canaria, 7 February 2004.

[4] Cf. *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, no. 2521.

[5] Congregation for Catholic Education, *Educational guidance in human love*, 1 November 1983, no. 90.

[6] Saint Josemaría, Get-together in Buenos Aires, 23 June 1974.

[7] Saint Josemaría, *The Way*, no. 376.

[8] Saint Josemaría, *Christ is Passing By*, no. 69.

[9] Saint Josemaría, Article *La Virgen del Pilar*, published in "*El libro de Aragon*," 1976.

Catechism of the Catholic Church

The Dignity of the Human Person

1700 The dignity of the human person is rooted in his creation in the image and likeness of God (article 1); it is fulfilled in his vocation to divine beatitude (article 2). It is essential to a human being freely to direct himself to this fulfillment (article 3). By his deliberate actions (article 4), the human person does, or does not, conform to the good promised by God and attested by moral conscience (article 5). Human beings make their own contribution to their interior growth; they make their whole sentient and spiritual lives into means of this growth (article 6). With the help of grace they grow in virtue (article 7), avoid sin, and if they sin they entrust themselves as did the prodigal son¹ to the mercy of our Father in heaven (article 8). In this way they attain to the perfection of charity.

Man: the Image of God

1702 The divine image is present in every man. It shines forth in the communion of persons, in the likeness of the union of the divine persons among themselves (cf chapter two).

1703 Endowed with "a spiritual and immortal" soul,⁵ The human person is "the only creature on earth that God has willed for its own sake."⁶ From his conception, he is destined for eternal beatitude.

1704 The human person participates in the light and power of the divine Spirit. By his reason, he is capable of understanding the order of things established by the Creator. By free will, he is capable of directing himself toward his true good. He finds his perfection "in seeking and loving what is true and good."⁷

1705 By virtue of his soul and his spiritual powers of intellect and will, man is endowed with freedom, an "outstanding manifestation of the divine image."⁸

1706 By his reason, man recognizes the voice of God which urges him "to do what is good and avoid what is evil."⁹ Everyone is obliged to follow this law, which makes itself heard in conscience and is fulfilled in the love of God and of neighbor. Living a moral life bears witness to the dignity of the person.

¹ Lk 15:11-32.

² GS 22.

³ Col 1:15; cf. 2 Cor 4:4.

⁴ Cf. GS 22.

⁵ GS 14 # 2.

⁶ GS 24 # 3.

⁷ GS 15 # 2.

⁸ GS 17.

⁹ GS 16.

¹⁰ GS 13 # 1.

¹¹ GS 13 # 2.

WHAT IS A HUMAN PERSON AND WHO COUNTS AS A HUMAN PERSON? A CRUCIAL QUESTION FOR BIOETHICS

William E. May, 14.6.2004.

Professor of Moral Theology, Catholic University of America
<http://www.christendom-awake.org/pages/may/humanperson.htm>

This is a central issue in Catholic theology and contemporary bioethics. I will first summarize the Catholic holistic understanding of the human person, then examine a dualistic understanding of the human person widely accepted in influential bioethical circles, and conclude with a critique of a dualistic anthropology.

1. The Catholic Theological Holistic Understanding of the Human Person

As the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* affirms, “the human person, made in the image of God, is a being at once corporeal and spiritual” (no. 362). The human body is *human* and *living* precisely because it is animated by a spiritual soul (ibid, no. 364). So closely united are body and soul in the human person that one must consider the soul to be the “form” of the “body.” [1] It is only because it is animated by a spiritual soul that the body in question is a living, human body. As Pope John Paul II has said, the human person’s “rational soul is *per se et essentialiter* the form of his body,” and the “person, including his body, is completely entrusted to himself, and it is in the unity of body and soul that the person is the subject of his own moral acts.” [2]

Genesis 2 clearly shows that the human body is personal in nature; the human body in fact reveals or discloses the person. For the “man,” on awakening from the deep sleep that the Lord God had cast upon him and on seeing the “woman” who had been formed from his rib, declares: “This one, at last, is bone of my bone and flesh of my flesh” (*Gen* 2:23). In uttering this cry, the man, as John Paul II has noted, “seems to say: here is a *body that expresses the ‘person’.*” [3] The bodily, sexual nature of the human person is a matter of utmost importance. In fact, sexuality, “by means of which man and woman give themselves to one another through the acts mutual and exclusive to spouses, is by no means something merely biological, but concerns the innermost being of the human person as such.” [4]

The human body reveals a human person; and since the human body is necessarily either male or female, it is the revelation of a man-person or a woman-person. Precisely because of their sexual differences, manifest in their bodies, the man-person and the woman-person can “give” themselves to one another bodily. Moreover, since the body, male or female, is the expression of a human person, a man and a woman, in giving their bodies to one another, give *themselves* to one another. The bodily gift of a man and a woman to each other is the outward sign of the *communion of persons* existing between them. And this sign, in turn, is the image of the communion of persons in the Trinity. The human body, thus, is the means and sign of the gift of the man-person to the woman-person and vice versa in the *communio personarum* we call marriage. John Paul II calls this capacity of the body to express the communion of persons the *nuptial meaning of the body*. [5]

Moreover, in the bodily, personal act whereby they “give” themselves to each other, the man and the woman open themselves to the “gift” of new human life. The marital or conjugal act, one proper and exclusive to them, is the kind of act *per se* apt for communicating both a unique kind of love—marital love—and for handing on life from one generation of human persons to the next. [6] The marital act is more than a mere

genital act between a man a woman who “happen” to be married; it is indeed one that actualizes their marriage, for in it the husband gives himself to his wife in a receiving sort of way and the wife receives him in a giving sort of way and in this bodily act they are called to cooperate with God in the raising up of new human life. [7]

Finally, the human person, no matter what his condition, is a being of moral worth, the subject of inviolable rights that are to be recognized and respected by others, including the inviolable right of innocent human persons to life, not to be intentionally killed, and the right of children to be born in and through the conjugal act. [8]

Summary of the Understanding of the Human Person in Catholic Theology

We can summarize the understanding of human anthropology in Catholic theology in the following propositions: 1. *The human person is a living human body, and, conversely, a living human body is a human person.* 2. *The male body person is meant to be a gift to the female body person in the communion of persons we call marriage.* 3. *Human sexuality is itself integral to the human person; it is a good “of the person,” and is meant to be expressed genitally only within marriage in the marital act, one “open” to the goods of communicating life and love.*

In this understanding of the human person no distinction is made between a *human being* and a *human person*. All human beings are persons. Being a human being, therefore, has crucial moral significance inasmuch as a person surpasses in value the entire material universe and is never to be considered as a mere means or object of use but is rather the kind of entity to whom the only adequate response is love. [9] Being a human being, being a person, makes a tremendous difference.

2. An Influential Understanding of the Human Person Widespread in Contemporary Bioethics

Many contemporary authors prominent in bioethical circles distinguish sharply between being a *human being* and being a *human person*. These authors claim that for an entity to be regarded as a person, it must have developed at least incipiently exercisable cognitive capacities or abilities. Perhaps the most prominent advocates of this anthropology, however differently each articulates it in specifying the requisite abilities, are Peter Singer and Michael Tooley; the position is held, however by many contemporary bioethicists, for instance, Daniel Maguire and Ronald Green, and one of its earliest champions was Joseph Fletcher. [10]

According to this anthropology, not all human beings are persons, but only those with the requisite cognitive abilities. Being a human being has of itself *no* moral significance, and indeed some of the advocates of this position, in particular Singer, assert that those who believe that membership in the human species is of great moral significance are guilty of *speciesism*, a prejudice similar to such immoral prejudices as *racism*. [11]

Moreover, on this view our power to generate human life is that aspect of our sexuality that we share with other animals; as such it is part of that world of subpersonal nature over which the conscious person has dominion. As *personal and human*, our sexuality consists in its ability to enable us to break out of our prison of loneliness and enter into fellowship or communion with another conscious subject. This aspect of our sexuality is personal precisely because its existence depends on consciousness. We can thus sharply distinguish between *sexual* behaviour, which can have various purposes, chief among which is pleasure whether solitary or mutual, and *reproductive* behaviour. And new “reproductive” technologies enable us to overcome the limitations of genital

reproductive “roulette” and generate life in the laboratory in order to enhance its quality. [12] As one author expresses the view: “Genital reproduction is less human than laboratory reproduction, more fun, to be sure, but with our separation of baby making from love making both become more human because they are matters of choice, not chance.” [13]

This view of the human person is, of course, dualistic inasmuch as it sharply distinguishes between a living human *body* and a living human person. Recently Leon R. Kass, chairman of President Bush’s Council on Bioethics, emphasized that the kind of human “dignity” associated with contemporary bioethics and its underlying anthropology is “*inhuman*,” because it “dualistically sets up the concept of ‘personhood’ *in opposition* to nature and the body” and thus “fails to do justice to the concrete reality of our embodied lives...and pays no respect at all to the dignity we have through our loves and longings—central aspects of human life understood as a grown togetherness of body and soul.” [14]

If the person really is not his or her body, then the destruction of the life of the body is not as such an attack on a good intrinsic to the human person. Thus the lives of the unborn, the newborn, individuals in a “persistent vegetative state,” and many others are no longer valuable or inviolable. Indeed, the body, on this view, can become a “prison” or an intolerable burden on the person, and one is doing the person a favour and in fact protecting his “right to die” by euthanizing him or assisting him in suicide.

Summary of the Understanding of the Human Person Widely Influential in Bioethics

We can summarize this anthropology in the following propositions: 1. *It conceives of the human person dualistically as a conscious subject distinct from and other than his body;* 2. *It regards the living human body not as the bodily person but as a privileged instrument of the nonbodily person;* 3. *It regards the procreative or “reproductive” aspect of human sexuality as part of the subhuman world over which the person has dominion and its “relational” or amative aspect as personal insofar as this aspect depends for its existence on consciousness.*

3. Critique of Dualistic Anthropology

Dualism separates the consciously experiencing subject—which dualism identifies with the “person”—from that subject’s body. Various arguments show the falsity of dualism. In my opinion one advanced by Patrick Lee is cogent. Lee summarizes it as follows:

1. Sensing is a bodily act, that is, an act performed by a bodily entity making use of a bodily organ. 2. It is the same thing which senses and which understands. 3. Therefore, that which understands is a bodily entity, not a spiritual [or conscious] substance making use of the body. [15]

Peter Singer, for example, engages in acts of sensation much as Fido the dog does. Such acts are and can only be *bodily* acts, acts that Singer, a bodily being, performs by making use of such bodily organs as eyes, ears, skin, etc. Singer is the same entity who can understand arguments such as his argument regarding speciesism. Singer, who is a person, *is* thus a bodily entity, not a spiritual or conscious subject using a body other than himself insofar as he is the same entity that engages in acts of sensation and in acts of understanding.

To put matters another way, if someone breaks your arm, he does not damage your instrument but hurts *you*.

Moreover, why should exercisable cognitive abilities be a trait conferring value on those who have it? Lee raises this issue elsewhere and says that the proper answer is that such functions and the capacity for them are “of ethical significance not because [these functions] are the only intrinsically valuable entities but because entities which have such potentialities are intrinsically valuable. And, *if the entity itself is intrinsically valuable, then it must be intrinsically valuable from the moment that it exists,*” and the entity with such potentialities exists from the time that a living human body exists. **[16]**

The dualistic claim that not all human beings are persons but that only those who possess exercisable cognitive abilities are to be so regarded is, moreover, marked by debates among its own advocates over precisely *which* ability or abilities must be exercisable if an entity is to be classified as a “person.” This claim inevitably leads to arbitrary and unjust criteria of “personhood.” A group of Catholic thinkers in England gives a devastating critique of this arbitrariness; it is worth citing them at length because their critique ably pinpoints the arbitrariness involved. They write:

The rational abilities necessary to these [cognitive] abilities are various, and come in varying degrees in human beings. If actual possession of such abilities is a necessary condition of the claim to be treated justly, questions will have to be faced precisely *which* abilities must be possessed, and how developed they must be before one enjoys this claim to be treated justly. And these questions can be answered only by *choosing* which to count as the relevant abilities and precisely how developed they must be to count. But any such line-drawing exercise is necessarily arbitrary....Arbitrary choices may be reasonable and unavoidable in determining some entitlements....But if one’s understanding of human worth and dignity commits one to being arbitrary about who are to be treated justly (i.e., about who are the very *subjects* of justice), it is clear that one lacks what is recognizable as a framework of justice. For it is incompatible with our fundamental intuitions about justice that we should determine who are the subjects of justice by arbitrary choice. The need for a non-arbitrary understanding of who are the subjects of justice requires us to assume that *just treatment is owing to all human beings in virtue of their humanity*. This indispensable assumption is also intrinsically reasonable. It is true that the distinctive dignity and value of human life are *manifested* in those specific exercises of developed rational abilities in which we achieve some share in such human goods as truth, beauty, justice, friendship and integrity. But the necessary rational abilities are acquired in virtue of an underlying or radical capacity, *given with our nature as human beings*, for developing precisely those abilities. **[17]**

This dualism, as John Paul has noted, is one of the roots of the “culture of death.” Referring to this dualism in *Evangelium vitae*, the Holy Father explicitly identified as one of the major roots of the “culture of death” “the mentality which...recognizes as a subject of rights only the person who enjoys full or at least incipient autonomy and who emerges from a state of total dependence on others.” **[18]**

Indeed, as Germain Grisez has said, “moral thought must remain grounded in a sound anthropology which maintains the bodiliness of the person. Such moral thought sees personal biological, not merely generically biological, meaning and value in human sexuality. The bodies which become one flesh in sexual intercourse are persons; their unity in a certain sense forms a single person, the potential procreator from whom the personal, bodily reality of a new human individual flows in material, bodily, personal continuity.” **[19]**

Endnotes

1. On this see Council of Vienne (1312; DS, 902); see also *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, no. 365.
2. Pope John Paul II, Encyclical *Veritatis splendor* (1993) 48.
3. See Pope John Paul II, "The Nuptial Meaning of the Body," General Audience of January 9, 1980, in John Paul II, *The Theology of the Body: Human Love in the Divine Plan* (Boston: Pauline Books and Media, 1997), p. 61.
4. John Paul II, Apostolic Exhortation, *The Role of the Christian Family in the Modern World (Familiaris consortio)* (1982), 11.
5. See, Pope John Paul II, "The Nuptial Meaning of the Body," General Audience of January 9, 1980, in John Paul II, *The Theology of the Body: Human Love in the Divine Plan*, pp. 60-63; "The Human Person Becomes a Gift in the Freedom of Love," General Audience of January 16, 1980, in *ibid*, pp. 63-66.
6. Genital coition is indeed the *only* kind of personal, bodily act through which new human life can be given. Non-married persons can engage in genital coition, but unlike husbands and wives, who have irrevocably "given" themselves to one another in marriage, such persons, so the Catholic understanding of the human person, male and female, contends, have not capacitated themselves to "welcome human life lovingly, nourish it humanely, and educate it religiously," i.e., in the love and service of God and neighbour. On this see St. Augustine, *De genesi ad literam*, 9,7 (*PL* 34, 397). Husbands and wives, however, by getting married, have made themselves "fit" to generate new human life and give it the home it needs and to which it has a right where it can grow and develop. On this see Pope Paul VI, Encyclical, *Humanae vitae* (1968), 12, Latin text: "coniugii actus... eos idoneos etiam facit ad novam vitam gignendam."
7. On this see Pope John Paul II, Apostolic Exhortation on *The Role of the Christian Family in the Modern World (Familiaris consortio)*, especially 17-20, 28-32; Karol Wojtyla, *Love and Responsibility*, trans. H. Willetts (New York: Farrar, Straus, Giroux, 1981), Chapter Four; William E. May, *Marriage: The Rock on Which the Family Is Built* (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1995), Chapter Two; Germain Grisez, *Living a Christian Life*, Vol. 2 of *The Way of the Lord Jesus* (Quincy, IL: Franciscan Press, 1993), pp.553-680.
8. On this see Pope John Paul II, Encyclical *Evangelium vitae* (1995); Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, *Donum vitae* (1987).
9. See, Wojtyla, *Love and Responsibility*, p. 41.
10. See Michael Tooley, *Abortion and Infanticide* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1983); Peter Singer, *Rethinking Life and Death: The Collapse of Our Traditional Ethics* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1994). See also Daniel Maguire, *Death by Choice* (New York: Doubleday, 1974) and *Sacred Choices: The Right to Contraception and Abortion in Ten World Religions* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 2001), Ronald Green, *The Human Embryo Research Debates: Bioethics in the Vortex of Controversy* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2001), and Joseph Fletcher, *Morals and Medicine* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1954, 1979) and *Moral Responsibility: Situation Ethics at Work* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1967).
11. Singer, *Rethinking Life and Death*, p. 173; cf. pp. 202-206, where Singer elaborates his new "fifth new commandment," "Do not discriminate on the basis of species."
12. See Ashley Montagu, *Sex, Man, and Society* (New York: Putnam's, 1969), especially Chapter One, "The Pill, the Sexual Revolution, and the Schools."
13. Joseph Fletcher, "Ethical Aspects of Genetic Controls: Designed Genetic Changes in Man," *New England Journal of Medicine* 285 (1971) 776-783; see also Fletcher's book, *The Ethics of Genetic Controls* (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday Anchor, 1970), significantly subtitled, *Ending Reproductive Roulette*.
14. Leon R. Kass, M.D., *Life, Liberty and the Defense of Dignity: The Challenge for Bioethics* (San Francisco: Encounter Books, 2002), p. 17; cf. p. 20.
15. Patrick Lee, "Human Beings Are Animals," in *Natural Law & Moral Inquiry: Ethics, Metaphysics, and Politics in the Work of Germain Grisez*, ed. Robert P. George (Washington: Georgetown University Press, 1998), p. 136. Lee develops this argument on pages 136-143.
16. Patrick Lee, *Abortion and Unborn Human Life* (Washington, D.C.: The Catholic University of America Press, 1997), pp. 26-27; emphasis added.
17. *Euthanasia, Clinical Practice and the Law*, ed. Luke Gormally (London: The Linacre Centre for Health Care Ethics, 1994), pp. 123-124. A similar critique was advanced in 1978 by Germain Grisez and Joseph Boyle in their book, *Life and Death with Liberty and Justice: A Contribution to the Euthanasia Debate* (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1979), pp. 220-224.

18. Pope John Paul II, Encyclical *Evangelium vitae*, 19.

19. Germain Grisez, "Dualism and the New Morality," in *Atti del Congresso sul Settimo Centenario di Santo Tomasso d'Aquino*, Vol. 5, *L'Agire Morale* (Naples: Edizioni Domenicane, 1975), p. 325.

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In this article the authors start from the false premise that persons are individuals capable of 'attributing any value to their own existence', so that being deprived of this existence would represent a loss to that individual'. An individual incapable of this is deemed to be a non-person. Only persons have rights, including the right to life. 'Merely being human is not in itself a reason for ascribing someone a right to life'.

The authors take this personhood argument to its logical conclusion, arguing that newborn babies, like fetuses, are human but not persons, and therefore have no right to life. There is no moral difference between ending the life of a fetus and ending the life of a newborn child. The authors propose the term 'after-birth abortion' to highlight the logic of their argument to a society that commonly accepts abortion but prohibits infanticide of newborns.

After-birth abortion: why should the baby live?

Giubilini A.,²⁷ Minerva F.²⁸
***Journal of Medical Ethics*, 39 (2013): 261–263.**

Abstract

Abortion is largely accepted even for reasons that do not have anything to do with the fetus' health. By showing that (1) both fetuses and newborns do not have the same moral status as actual persons, (2) the fact that both are potential persons is morally irrelevant and (3) adoption is not always in the best interest of actual people, the authors argue that what we call 'after-birth abortion' (killing a newborn) should be permissible in all the cases where abortion is, including cases where the newborn is not disabled.

Introduction

Severe abnormalities of the fetus and risks for the physical and/or psychological health of the woman are often cited as valid reasons for abortion. Sometimes the two reasons are connected, such as when a woman claims that a disabled child would represent a risk to her mental health. However, having a child can itself be an unbearable burden for the psychological health of the woman or for her already existing children,¹ regardless of the condition of the fetus. This could happen in the case of a woman who loses her partner after she finds out that she is pregnant and therefore feels she will not be able to take care of the possible child by herself.

A serious philosophical problem arises when the same conditions that would have justified abortion become known after birth. In such cases, we need to assess facts in order to decide whether the same arguments that apply to killing a human fetus can also be consistently applied to killing a newborn human.

Such an issue arises, for example, when an abnormality has not been detected during pregnancy or occurs during delivery. Perinatal asphyxia, for instance, may cause severe brain damage and result in severe mental and/or physical impairments comparable with those for which a woman could request an abortion. Moreover, abnormalities are not always, or cannot always be, diagnosed through prenatal screening even if they have a genetic origin. This is more likely to happen when the disease is not hereditary but is the result of genetic mutations

²⁷ Centre for Applied Philosophy and Public Ethics, Charles Sturt University, Canberra, Australian Capital Territory, Australia

²⁸ Centre for Applied Philosophy and Public Ethics, University of Melbourne, Melbourne, Victoria, Australia. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1136/medethics-2011-100411>

occurring in the gametes of a healthy parent. One example is the case of Treacher-Collins syndrome (TCS), a condition that affects 1 in every 10 000 births causing facial deformity and related physiological failures, in particular potentially life-threatening respiratory problems. Usually those affected by TCS are not mentally impaired and they are therefore fully aware of their condition, of being different from other people and of all the problems their pathology entails. Many parents would choose to have an abortion if they find out, through genetic prenatal testing, that their fetus is affected by TCS. However, genetic prenatal tests for TCS are usually taken only if there is a family history of the disease. Sometimes, though, the disease is caused by a gene mutation that intervenes in the gametes of a healthy member of the couple. Moreover, tests for TCS are quite expensive and it takes several weeks to get the result. Considering that it is a very rare pathology, we can understand why women are not usually tested for this disorder.

However, such rare and severe pathologies are not the only ones that are likely to remain undetected until delivery; even more common congenital diseases that women are usually tested for could fail to be detected. An examination of 18 European registries reveals that between 2005 and 2009 only the 64% of Down's syndrome cases were diagnosed through prenatal testing.² This percentage indicates that, considering only the European areas under examination, about 1700 infants were born with Down's syndrome without parents being aware of it before birth. Once these children are born, there is no choice for the parents but to keep the child, which sometimes is exactly what they would not have done if the disease had been diagnosed before birth.

Abortion and after-birth abortion

Euthanasia in infants has been proposed by philosophers³ for children with severe abnormalities whose lives can be expected to be not worth living and who are experiencing unbearable suffering.

Also medical professionals have recognised the need for guidelines about cases in which death seems to be in the best interest of the child. In The Netherlands, for instance, the Groningen Protocol (2002) allows to actively terminate the life of 'infants with a hopeless prognosis who experience what parents and medical experts deem to be unbearable suffering'.⁴

Although it is reasonable to predict that living with a very severe condition is against the best interest of the newborn, it is hard to find definitive arguments to the effect that life with certain pathologies is not worth living, even when those pathologies would constitute acceptable reasons for abortion. It might be maintained that 'even allowing for the more optimistic assessments of the potential of Down's syndrome children, this potential cannot be said to be equal to that of a normal child'.³ But, in fact, people with Down's syndrome, as well as people affected by many other severe disabilities, are often reported to be happy.⁵

Nonetheless, to bring up such children might be an unbearable burden on the family and on society as a whole, when the state economically provides for their care. On these grounds, the fact that a fetus has the potential to become a person who will have an (at least) acceptable life is no reason for prohibiting abortion. **Therefore, we argue that, when circumstances occur after birth such that they would have justified abortion, what we call *after-birth abortion* should be permissible.**

In spite of the oxymoron in the expression, we propose to call this practice 'after-birth abortion', rather than 'infanticide', to emphasise that **the moral status of the individual killed is comparable with that of a fetus (on which 'abortions' in the traditional sense are performed) rather than to that of a child.** Therefore, we claim that **killing a newborn could**

be ethically permissible in all the circumstances where abortion would be. Such circumstances include cases where the newborn has the potential to have an (at least) acceptable life, but the well-being of the family is at risk. Accordingly, a second terminological specification is that we call such a practice 'after-birth abortion' rather than 'euthanasia' because the best interest of the one who dies is not necessarily the primary criterion for the choice, contrary to what happens in the case of euthanasia.

Failing to bring a new person into existence cannot be compared with the wrong caused by procuring the death of an existing person. The reason is that, unlike the case of death of an existing person, failing to bring a new person into existence does not prevent anyone from accomplishing any of *her* future aims. However, this consideration entails a much stronger idea than the one according to which severely handicapped children should be euthanised. If the death of a newborn is not wrongful to her on the grounds that she cannot have formed any aim that she is prevented from accomplishing, then it should also be permissible to practise an after-birth abortion on a healthy newborn too, given that she has not formed any aim yet.

There are two reasons which, taken together, justify this claim:

1. The moral status of an infant is equivalent to that of a fetus, that is, **neither can be considered a 'person'** in a morally relevant sense.
2. It is not possible to damage a newborn by preventing her from developing the potentiality to become a person in the morally relevant sense.

We are going to justify these two points in the following two sections.

The newborn and the fetus are morally equivalent

The moral status of an infant is equivalent to that of a fetus in the sense that **both lack those properties that justify the attribution of a right to life to an individual.**

Both a fetus and a newborn certainly are human beings and potential persons, but **neither is a 'person' in the sense of 'subject of a moral right to life'. We take 'person' to mean an individual who is capable of attributing to her own existence some (at least) basic value such that being deprived of this existence represents a loss to her. This means that many non-human animals and mentally retarded human individuals are persons, but that all the individuals who are not in the condition of attributing any value to their own existence are not persons. Merely being human is not in itself a reason for ascribing someone a right to life.** Indeed, many humans are not considered subjects of a right to life: spare embryos where research on embryo stem cells is permitted, fetuses where abortion is permitted, criminals where capital punishment is legal.

Our point here is that, **although it is hard to exactly determine when a subject starts or ceases to be a 'person'**, a necessary condition for a subject to have a right to X is that she is harmed by a decision to deprive her of X. There are many ways in which an individual can be harmed, and not all of them require that she values or is even aware of what she is deprived of. A person might be 'harmed' when someone steals from her the winning lottery ticket even if she will never find out that her ticket was the winning one. Or a person might be 'harmed' if something were done to her at the stage of fetus which affects for the worse her quality of life as a person (eg, her mother took drugs during pregnancy), even if she is not aware of it. However, in such cases we are talking about a person who is at least *in the condition* to value the different situation she would have found herself in if she had not been harmed. And such

a condition **depends on the level of her mental development,⁶ which in turn determines whether or not she is a 'person'.**

Those who are only capable of experiencing pain and pleasure (like perhaps fetuses and certainly newborns) have a right not to be inflicted pain. **If, in addition to experiencing pain and pleasure, an individual is capable of making any aims (like actual human and non-human persons), she is harmed if she is prevented from accomplishing her aims by being killed. Now, hardly can a newborn be said to have aims, as the future we imagine for it is merely a projection of our minds on its potential lives.** It might start having expectations and develop a minimum level of self-awareness at a very early stage, but not in the first days or few weeks after birth. On the other hand, not only aims but also well-developed plans are concepts that certainly apply to those people (parents, siblings, society) who could be negatively or positively affected by the birth of that child. Therefore, **the rights and interests of the actual people involved should represent the prevailing consideration in a decision about abortion and after-birth abortion.**

It is true that a particular moral status can be attached to a non-person by virtue of the value an actual person (eg, the mother) attributes to it. However, this 'subjective' account of the moral status of a newborn does not debunk our previous argument. Let us imagine that a woman is pregnant with two identical twins who are affected by genetic disorders. In order to cure one of the embryos the woman is given the option to use the other twin to develop a therapy. If she agrees, she attributes to the first embryo the status of 'future child' and to the other one the status of a mere means to cure the 'future child'. However, the different moral status does not spring from the fact that the first one is a 'person' and the other is not, which would be nonsense, given that they are identical. Rather, the different moral statuses only depends on the particular value the woman projects on them. However, such a projection is exactly what does not occur when a newborn becomes a burden to its family.

The fetus and the newborn are potential persons

Although fetuses and newborns are not persons, they are potential persons because they can develop, thanks to their own biological mechanisms, those properties which will make them 'persons' in the sense of 'subjects of a moral right to life': that is, **the point at which they will be able to make aims and appreciate their own life.**

It might be claimed that someone is harmed because she is prevented from becoming a person capable of appreciating her own being alive. Thus, for example, one might say that we would have been harmed if our mothers had chosen to have an abortion while they were pregnant with us⁷ or if they had killed us as soon as we were born. However, whereas you can benefit someone by bringing her into existence (if her life is worth living), it makes no sense to say that someone is harmed by being prevented from becoming an actual person. The reason is that, by virtue of our definition of the concept of 'harm' in the previous section, in order for a harm to occur, it is necessary that someone is in the condition of experiencing that harm.

If a potential person, like a fetus and a newborn, does not become an actual person, like you and us, then there is neither an actual nor a future person who can be harmed, which means that there is no harm at all. So, if you ask one of us if we would have been harmed, had our parents decided to kill us when we were fetuses or newborns, our answer is 'no', because they would have harmed someone who does not exist (the 'us' whom you are asking the question), which means no one. And if no one is harmed, then no harm occurred.

A consequence of this position is that the interests of actual people over-ride the interest of merely potential people to become actual ones. This does not mean that the interests of actual people always over-ride *any* right of future generations, as we should certainly consider the

well-being of people who will inhabit the planet in the future. Our focus is on the right to become a particular person, and not on the right to have a good life once someone will have started to be a person. In other words, we are talking about particular individuals who might or might not become particular persons depending on our choice, and not about those who will certainly exist in the future but whose identity does not depend on what we choose now.

The alleged right of individuals (such as fetuses and newborns) to develop their potentiality, which someone defends,⁸ is over-ridden by the interests of actual people (parents, family, society) to pursue their own well-being because, as we have just argued, merely potential people cannot be harmed by not being brought into existence. Actual people's well-being could be threatened by the new (even if healthy) child requiring energy, money and care which the family might happen to be in short supply of. Sometimes this situation can be prevented through an abortion, but in some other cases this is not possible. In these cases, **since non-persons have no moral rights to life, there are no reasons for banning after-birth abortions.** We might still have moral duties towards future generations in spite of these future people not existing yet. But because we take it for granted that such people *will* exist (*whoever* they will be), we must treat them as *actual* persons of the future. This argument, however, does not apply to this particular newborn or infant, because we are not justified in taking it for granted that she will exist as a person in the future. Whether she will exist is exactly what our choice is about.

Adoption as an alternative to after-birth abortion?

A possible objection to our argument is that after-birth abortion should be practised just on potential people who could never have a life worth living.⁹ Accordingly, healthy and potentially happy people should be given up for adoption if the family cannot raise them up. Why should we kill a healthy newborn when giving it up for adoption would not breach anyone's right but possibly increase the happiness of people involved (adopters and adoptee)?

Our reply is the following. We have previously discussed the argument from potentiality, showing that it is not strong enough to outweigh the consideration of the interests of actual people. Indeed, however weak the interests of actual people can be, they will always trump the alleged interest of potential people to become actual ones, because this latter interest amounts to zero. On this perspective, the interests of the actual people involved matter, and among these interests, we also need to consider the interests of the mother who might suffer psychological distress from giving her child up for adoption. Birthmothers are often reported to experience serious psychological problems due to the inability to elaborate their loss and to cope with their grief.¹⁰ It is true that grief and sense of loss may accompany both abortion and after-birth abortion as well as adoption, but we cannot assume that for the birthmother the latter is the least traumatic. For example, 'those who grieve a death must accept the irreversibility of the loss, but natural mothers often dream that their child will return to them. This makes it difficult to accept the reality of the loss because they can never be quite sure whether or not it is irreversible'.¹¹

We are not suggesting that these are definitive reasons against adoption as a valid alternative to after-birth abortion. Much depends on circumstances and psychological reactions. What we are suggesting is that, if interests of actual people should prevail, then after-birth abortion should be considered a permissible option for women who would be damaged by giving up their newborns for adoption.

Conclusions

If criteria such as the costs (social, psychological, economic) for the potential parents are good enough reasons for having an abortion even when the fetus is healthy, **if the moral status of**

the newborn is the same as that of the foetus and if neither has any moral value by virtue of being a potential person, then the same reasons which justify abortion should also justify the killing of the potential person when it is at the stage of a newborn.

Two considerations need to be added.

First, we do not put forward any claim about the moment at which after-birth abortion would no longer be permissible, and we do not think that in fact more than a few days would be necessary for doctors to detect any abnormality in the child. In cases where the after-birth abortion were requested for non-medical reasons, we do not suggest any threshold, as it depends on the neurological development of newborns, which is something neurologists and psychologists would be able to assess.

Second, we do not claim that after-birth abortions are good alternatives to abortion. Abortions at an early stage are the best option, for both psychological and physical reasons. However, if a disease has not been detected during the pregnancy, if something went wrong during the delivery, or if economical, social or psychological circumstances change such that taking care of the offspring becomes an unbearable burden on someone, then people should be given the chance of not being forced to do something they cannot afford.

Acknowledgments

We would like to thank Professor Sergio Bartolommei, University of Pisa, who read an early draft of this paper and gave us very helpful comments. The responsibility for the content remains with the authors.

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Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith
Instruction *Dignitas Personae* on Certain Bioethical Questions 20.6.2008.
Benedict XVI, (nn. 4-10)

First Part: Anthropological, Theological & Ethical Aspects of Human Life & Procreation

4. In recent decades, medical science has made significant strides in understanding human life in its initial stages. Human biological structures and the process of human generation are better known. These developments are certainly positive and worthy of support when they serve to overcome or correct pathologies and succeed in re-establishing the normal functioning of human procreation. On the other hand, they are negative and cannot be utilized when they involve the destruction of human beings or when they employ means which contradict the dignity of the person or when they are used for purposes contrary to the integral good of man.

The body of a human being, from the very first stages of its existence, can never be reduced merely to a group of cells. The embryonic human body develops progressively according to a well-defined program with its proper finality, as is apparent in the birth of every baby.

It is appropriate to recall the *fundamental ethical criterion* expressed in the Instruction *Donum vitae* in order to evaluate all moral questions which relate to procedures involving the human embryo: “*Thus the fruit of human generation, from the first moment of its existence, that is to say, from the moment the zygote has formed, demands the unconditional respect that is morally due to the human being in his bodily and spiritual totality. The human being is to be respected and treated as a person from the moment of conception; and therefore from that same moment his rights as a person must be recognized, among which in the first place is the inviolable right of every innocent human being to life.*”

5. This ethical principle, which reason is capable of recognizing as true and in conformity with the natural moral law, should be the basis for all legislation in this area. In fact, it presupposes a *truth of an ontological character*, as *Donum vitae* demonstrated from solid scientific evidence, regarding the continuity in development of a human being.

If *Donum vitae*, in order to avoid a statement of an explicitly philosophical nature, did not define the embryo as a person, it nonetheless did indicate that *there is an intrinsic connection between the ontological dimension and the specific value of every human life. Although the presence of the spiritual soul cannot be observed experimentally, the conclusions of science regarding the human embryo give “a valuable indication for discerning by the use of reason a personal presence at the moment of the first appearance of a human life: how could a human individual not be a human person?”*. Indeed, the reality of the human being for the entire span of life, both before and after birth, does not allow us to posit either a change in nature or a gradation in moral value, since it possesses *full anthropological and ethical status*. The human embryo has, therefore, from the very beginning, the dignity proper to a person.

6. Respect for that dignity is owed to every human being because each one carries in an indelible way his own dignity and value. The origin of human life has its authentic context in marriage and in the family, where it is generated through an act which expresses the reciprocal love between a man and a woman. Procreation which is truly responsible vis-à-vis the child to be born “must be the fruit of marriage”.

Marriage, present in all times and in all cultures, “is in reality something wisely and providently instituted by God the Creator with a view to carrying out his loving plan in human beings. Thus, husband and wife, through the reciprocal gift of themselves to the other – something which is

proper and exclusive to them – bring about that communion of persons by which they perfect each other, so as to cooperate with God in the procreation and raising of new lives”. In the fruitfulness of married love, man and woman “make it clear that at the origin of their spousal life there is a genuine ‘yes’, which is pronounced and truly lived in reciprocity, remaining ever open to life... Natural law, which is at the root of the recognition of true equality between persons and peoples, deserves to be recognized as the source that inspires the relationship between the spouses in their responsibility for begetting new children. The transmission of life is inscribed in nature and its laws stand as an unwritten norm to which all must refer”.

7. It is the Church’s conviction that what is human is not only received and respected by *faith*, but is also purified, elevated and perfected. God, after having created man in his image and likeness (cf. *Gen 1:26*), described his creature as “very good” (*Gen 1:31*), so as to be assumed later in the Son (cf. *Jn 1:14*). In the mystery of the Incarnation, the Son of God confirmed the dignity of the body and soul which constitute the human being. Christ did not disdain human bodiliness, but instead fully disclosed its meaning and value: “In reality, it is only in the mystery of the incarnate Word that the mystery of man truly becomes clear”.

By becoming one of us, the Son makes it possible for us to become “sons of God” (*Jn 1:12*), “sharers in the divine nature” (*2 Pet 1:4*). This new dimension does not conflict with the dignity of the creature which everyone can recognize by the use of reason, but elevates it into a wider horizon of life which is proper to God, giving us the ability to reflect more profoundly on human life and on the acts by which it is brought into existence.

The respect for the individual human being, which reason requires, is further enhanced and strengthened in the light of these truths of faith: thus, we see that there is no contradiction between the affirmation of the dignity and the affirmation of the sacredness of human life. “The different ways in which God, acting in history, cares for the world and for mankind are not mutually exclusive; on the contrary, they support each other and intersect. They have their origin and goal in the eternal, wise and loving counsel whereby God predestines men and women ‘to be conformed to the image of his Son’ (*Rom 8:29*)”.

8. By taking the interrelationship of these two dimensions, *the human and the divine*, as the starting point, one understands better why it is that man has unassailable value: *he possesses an eternal vocation and is called to share in the trinitarian love of the living God*.

This value belongs to all without distinction. By virtue of the simple fact of existing, every human being must be fully respected. The introduction of discrimination with regard to human dignity based on biological, psychological, or educational development, or based on health-related criteria, must be excluded. At every stage of his existence, man, created in the image and likeness of God, reflects “the face of his Only-begotten Son... This boundless and almost incomprehensible love of God for the human being reveals the degree to which the human person deserves to be loved in himself, independently of any other consideration – intelligence, beauty, health, youth, integrity, and so forth. In short, human life is always a good, for it ‘is a manifestation of God in the world, a sign of his presence, a trace of his glory’ (*Evangelium vitae*, 34)”.

9. These two dimensions of life, the natural and the supernatural, allow us to understand better the sense in which *the acts that permit a new human being to come into existence*, in which a man and a woman give themselves to each other, *are a reflection of trinitarian love*. “God, who is love and life, has inscribed in man and woman the vocation to share in a special way in his mystery of personal communion and in his work as Creator and Father”.

Christian marriage is rooted “in the natural complementarity that exists between man and woman, and is nurtured through the personal willingness of the spouses to share their entire

life-project, what they have and what they are: for this reason such communion is the fruit and the sign of a profoundly human need. But in Christ the Lord, God takes up this human need, confirms it, purifies it and elevates it, leading it to perfection through the sacrament of matrimony: the Holy Spirit who is poured out in the sacramental celebration offers Christian couples the gift of a new communion of love that is the living and real image of that unique unity which makes of the Church the indivisible Mystical Body of the Lord Jesus”.

10. The Church, by expressing an ethical judgment on some developments of recent medical research concerning man and his beginnings, does not intervene in the area proper to medical science itself, but rather calls everyone to ethical and social responsibility for their actions. She reminds them that the ethical value of biomedical science is gauged in reference to both the *unconditional respect owed to every human being* at every moment of his or her existence, and the *defense of the specific character of the personal act which transmits life*. The intervention of the Magisterium falls within its mission of *contributing to the formation of conscience*, by authentically teaching the truth which is Christ and at the same time by declaring and confirming authoritatively the principles of the moral order which spring from human nature itself.

Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, Instruction *Donum vitae*, I, 1: AAS 80 (1988), 79. Human rights, as Pope Benedict XVI has recalled, and in particular the right to life of every human being “are based on the natural law inscribed on human hearts and present in different cultures and civilizations. Removing human rights from this context would mean restricting their range and yielding to a relativistic conception, according to which the meaning and interpretation of rights could vary and their universality would be denied in the name of different cultural, political, social and even religious outlooks. This great variety of viewpoints must not be allowed to obscure the fact that not only rights are universal, but so too is the human person, the subject of those rights” (Address to the General Assembly of the United Nations [18 April 2008]: AAS 100 [2008], 334). Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, Instruction *Donum vitae*, I, 1: AAS 80 (1988), 78-79.

Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, Instruction *Donum vitae*, II, A, 1: AAS 80 (1988), 87.

Paul VI, Encyclical Letter *Humanae vitae* (25 July 1968), 8: AAS 60 (1968), 485-486.

Benedict XVI, Address to the Participants in the International Congress organized by the Pontifical Lateran University on the 40th Anniversary of the Encyclical *Humanae vitae*, 10 May 2008: *L'Osservatore Romano*, 11 May 2008, p. 1; cf. John XXIII, Encyclical Letter *Mater et magistra* (15 May 1961), III: AAS 53 (1961), 447.

Second Vatican Council, Pastoral Constitution *Gaudium et spes*, 22.

Cf. John Paul II, Encyclical Letter *Evangelium vitae*, 37-38: AAS 87 (1995), 442-444.

John Paul II, Encyclical Letter *Veritatis splendor*, 45: AAS 85 (1993), 1169.

Benedict XVI, Address to the General Assembly of the Pontifical Academy for Life and International Congress on “The Human Embryo in the Pre-implantation Phase” (27 February 2006): AAS 98 (2006), 264.

Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, Instruction *Donum vitae*, Introduction, 3: AAS 80 (1988), 75.

John Paul II, Apostolic Exhortation *Familiaris consortio* on the role of the Christian family in the modern world (22 September 1981), 19: AAS 74 (1982), 101-102. Cf. Second Vatican Council, Declaration *Dignitatis humanae*, 14.

CHAPTER 2. THE PSYCHOSOMATIC UNITY OF MAN

Introduction

2.1 The Human Soul

2.2 The Human Body

2.3 Human Sexuality

2.4 Finitude and Transcendence

Introduction

This course began with the “curiosity” of human beings about themselves, not from the point of view of experimental science but from a philosophical one. Philosophy asks the ultimate and most transcendental questions about ourselves, and so we “discovered that through our senses we get to the knowledge of things; then we see how our intellect presents to the will those goods to which it can be attracted. Later on the study of “freedom” showed us that we are not predetermined to a choice, but we can ponder it and finally opt whether to take it or refuse it. So far the study has focused on the “operations” proper to man, or proper to the powers of man. The next challenge is to look for the cause of these operations, if we are allowed to put it this way. The ultimate principle of man’s operations is *the soul*.

The study of the soul is very interesting and it could take long to study all the topics related to it. In this course there is no time to go through all of them.

Some of the most contentious points relating to the study of the soul include its origin, its spiritual nature and its immortality.²⁹ The spiritual nature of the soul leads, more or less hand in hand, to the study of the human body, since the soul is created to reside in a body; this leads to the issue of when it is created and when it can be found in the body (a very relevant point when it comes to the defence of the embryo). The human body is either male or female, so then a study of human sexuality, from an anthropological point of view, comes to the fore, and this ties in with questions of masculinity and femininity, of fashion and so on. Other aspects of this topic include: sickness and the way to approach it, terminal illness, etc.

It is important to state that the abovementioned points of study can be approached strictly from a philosophical perspective; i.e. not only faith gives the answers to these questions, although faith sheds a powerful light which comes to the aid of our intellect.

2.1. The Human Soul

The Meaning of Soul³⁰

The basic meaning of the word ‘soul’ is that of vitalising principles, the principle, that is, by which a thing is able to perform the activities which we associate with ‘being alive’. Common sense sees it as the power of self-movement as, for example, when a child pokes a strange object with a stick to see if it will move. The philosopher narrows down the minimum functions of vital activity to the powers of nutrition, growth, and reproduction. In certain marginal beings, as in the case of the virus, it is difficult to tell whether all or only some of these functions are realised, so that there is argument as to whether or not they should be called alive. In other words, the dividing line between living and nonliving is not precisely clear to us.

²⁹ These two ideas are not exactly the same.

³⁰ This section and the next are extracts from Sullivan, *Introduction to Philosophy*, p. 111.

In the sense of 'vitalizing principle', then, it is proper to say that plants, animals, and men have souls, though not of the same kind. The animal soul differs from the plant soul in that it adds to the minimum of vital functions the power of sensation and of movement from place to place. The human soul differs from the animal in that it adds the powers of the intellect and will to the animal powers.

The Existence of the Soul

By studying the powers of the soul we learn about the nature of the soul itself as the ground and origin of these powers. The powers themselves cannot be the soul, because they are not always in act. We do not think, for example, when we are asleep or unconscious. We do not see when our eyes are closed. Yet the power to think and the power to see remain. There must be some anterior reality, the, in which these powers are seated.

Because we do not have immediate, first-hand knowledge of the soul but have to learn about it indirectly through its activities, some philosophers have denied its existence. No one has ever seen a soul, they say, or photographed one, or isolated one in a test tube, or weighed one in a laboratory.

The fact that we cannot sense a thing does not mean, of course, that it does not exist. I cannot see or touch the national debt, or my right to vote, or my neighbours' love for their children, yet no one seriously doubts that these things are real. We know that the soul exists through inference. It follows necessarily from certain observed facts, in the same way, for example, that an astronomer may know there is a certain body in the heavens, even though he cannot see it with his telescope' he knows it because the movements of other heavenly bodies which he can see make the presence of the unseen heavenly body necessary as the only possible explanation. Similarly in the case of man, certain activities are performed which cannot be explained in their totality merely as a response of inert matter to physical forces. These activities differ in kind from purely material activities, and therefore we have to conclude that there is a special way of being which is the ground and explanation of these activities. This principle of being we call the soul.

The Human Soul³¹

Human beings are first of all bodily substances (substances are beings capable of existing on their own, unlike colour or taste, for example which only exist in other things). Following Aristotle's terminology we say that substances have 'substantial forms', and so a human being, as a substance, has a substantial form. This means that humans have a certain basic way of being which gives them their particular kind of being as distinct from other basic kinds of being, e.g. 'human' against 'tree'. Since a human being is a bodily substance, his or her substantial form is limited by matter, otherwise there would not be individual human beings but only 'humanness'. A human being therefore is a being made up of *matter* (the body) and *form*.

Matter and form are complementary principles – one does not come into existence without the other. In the case of human beings, the soul could not have come into existence except as the *form* of the human body. It also means that the living human body always has a rational soul, which is what makes it be alive. Without the rational soul, it is not a human body. The unity of the human being is so profound

³¹ Adapted from Sullivan p112-4

that the body and soul should not be thought of as two separate beings. They are, rather, two distinct aspects of the same being, the human person.

The root of a person's activities is in their *form*. The first act of the form is the act of living, or *being alive*. We refer to the form as the 'soul', which means 'life principle', and say that the rational (human) soul is the substantial form of the human person.

The soul is also at the root of all our other capacities or powers, which range from basic activities of nutrition, growth and reproduction, which are found in plant life, up through the animal powers to the specifically human powers (see the chart below).

The Human Being: A Composite of Body and Soul

Matter (in us, the human body), limits, circumscribes and gives quantity and dimensions. It individuates the form, causing it to be the form of this particular body. Thus the form exists in time and space. So, as Montaigne says, when I sit down, my thoughts sit down with me. Because the spirit informs a body, it 'acquires a whole, biological, psychological and social individuality.'

When all is said, however, it remains true that the formal and material aspects of the human being (soul and body), are different and one cannot be reduced to the other. They are united and yet in a state of tension – the spirit is a principle of unity, matter of multiplicity and dispersion. This unity involves the possibility of disaggregation.

The concept of spirit

We will study shortly the spirituality of the human soul. However, before going into that topic, it would be appropriate to define what is meant by spiritual or spirit. A spiritual being is opposed to a corporeal being. A spirit does not possess matter as part of its essence, though it may be linked to it in some manner.

The souls of plants and animals are not spiritual. They are so bonded with matter that they die together with the being. Not so with the human soul. Though a soul does not normally exist separated from the body it vivifies, it can *subsist* separated from matter, as does the separated soul after death.

The uniqueness of the human soul

Since the soul is what makes a body be what it is and is its principle of determination and unification, as well as its substantial form, the soul has to be unique.

Thus, man does not possess three souls, one vegetative, another animal and another intellectual. Rather, the intellectual powers assume the other two into just one soul. If man had several souls, one would not know if it were the same person who is thinking, eating, or seeing. Furthermore, since the soul constitutes the body as such, it could not have existed as a live body earlier, which would have been the case were there some other principle of life in it. Proof of this is that when a person dies, i.e., his soul leaves his body, the body corrupts.

Other forms of spiritual life: pure spirits

Other spirits are not at all united to a body and are therefore not linked at all to matter. Such are the pure spirits, namely, angels and God. While angels do not possess matter, they still do have potency, whereas God is Pure Act. An angel's act of knowing does not depend on the senses, that is, on the grasping of a species, but rather through some form of infused knowledge. God knows in the act of creating. When He knows things, they begin to exist. The study of the psychology of pure spirits pertains to Theology.

Number and kinds of faculties of the soul

The number and kinds of faculties of the soul can be identified through the person's different operations and their objects, since the powers are ordained to certain acts and these acts are specified by their objects.³² The soul is the substantial form that is the source of operations. It is the vital principle that forms the organism into a unity and develops it through the process of differentiating the faculties and organs. Once the organism is complete, it supports itself and perfects itself through a plurality of operations.

The powers are ordered in a hierarchy. The lowest in the rung are the vegetative powers (nourishment, growth, reproduction), whose only object is the being's own body and the preservation of the species. The next in the hierarchy are the sensitive powers, whose object consists of not only the being's own body but any other sensible body. The highest are the spiritual powers (intellect and will), whose object is all beings.³³ In the case of man, his soul assumes the vegetative and sensitive powers into itself.

Since the faculties are accidents, they have to inhere in a subject who performs the corresponding operations. The operations of the human soul, thinking and willing, are not organic and therefore, the subject of their corresponding faculties is the soul itself. Other operations, like sensing and imagining, are organic and their subject is man himself and not the soul.³⁴

One should not lose sight of the fact that though it is possible to speak of diverse operations, all of them are performed by the unity of body and soul, namely, man himself. It is not only the eye that sees or the mind that thinks; it is the whole person who sees and thinks.³⁵

³² cf. ARISTOTLE, *De anima* II, 4: 415 a 14-22; *S. Th.* I, q.77, a.3.

³³ cf. *S. Th.*, I, q. 78, a.1

³⁴ cf. *S. Th.* I, q.77, a.5

³⁵ cf. *De Ver.*, q.2, a.6, ad 3

The Powers of Man

Rational Powers			Intellect
			Will
Animal Powers	Knowing	Internal	Unifying sense
			Estimation
			Memory
			Imagination
		External	Sight
			Hearing
			Smell
			Taste
	Appetitive	Irrascible	Touch
			Hope
			Courage
			Fear
			Despair
		Concupiscible	Anger
			Love
			Desire
			Joy
			Hate
Vegetative Powers	Aversion		
	Sorrow		
	Reproduction		
		Growth	
		Nutrition	

The Spirituality of the Soul

We learn about our souls by studying the operations they perform. We cannot directly know our soul as it does not fall under our senses. We can work out what kind of soul something has by observing what it does. While many activities human beings perform are bodily acts (nutrition, sensing, and other activities also performed by plants and animals), the activities of understanding and willing do not basically depend upon anything material. They are spiritual activities, revealing that human beings have the faculties or powers to perform these spiritual activities. This tells us about the nature of the human soul – that it is spiritual – able to exist and operate independently of matter.

The human soul is an ‘incomplete’ spirit, however, as it can come into existence in the first place only in union with matter, as the soul of the body. Furthermore, many of its activities, such as sensing, are basically dependent on the body which it animates. There is an ‘accidental’ dependence on the body even for the acts of

thinking and willing, because the soul would be a 'blank slate' without the senses which are the channels of information to be thought about. The human soul, separated from the body which it animates, is an incomplete substance, for it is the nature of the soul to be the form of a body.³⁶

What makes a being a human being is not to have a body, or life, or emotions (animals have all these too), but to have intelligence and freedom, powers which, as we have seen, are spiritual. What makes a man to be a man, is the substantial form, life principle, or 'soul', whose nature is spiritual. The rational human soul is a spiritual soul, meaning that it possesses spiritual faculties or powers (intellect and will), not possessed by plants or animals, that enable the human being to perform spiritual activities (reasoning, loving, etc). The spiritual soul, as the life principle, actualizes the body and all its potencies, and constitutes a human being that is a substantial union composed of body and soul.

The fact that the human soul is spiritual makes it a very special type of substantial form, since it has a "subsistence" of its own: it is not totally absorbed by the body but exceeds the body, so to speak; it not only in-forms the body but is an act in itself. In other words, when the body dies the soul, being spiritual, lives on by virtue of its own subsistence: the human soul as we shall see, is immortal.

Other Views of the Soul³⁷

Not all philosophers accept the existence of the soul, or the Aristotelian-Thomist view of the soul as the substantial form of the body. Dualistic philosophers tend to deny the profound unity between the human body and soul, while other, materialist, thinkers deny the existence of a spiritual soul altogether, or that, if it exists, that it can be known. In modern philosophy the tendency has been to discuss this in terms of the 'mind-body problem'. The following table shows some positions:

³⁶ 'To be separated from the body is not in accordance with the soul's nature'. (*ST*, I, q. 89, a. 1) We know from our Christian faith that there will be a resurrection of the body, and it is a reasonable belief (although we cannot strictly prove it by reason alone) due to the natural inclination of the separated soul. The spiritual nature of the human soul can be gleaned both from the metaphysical and phenomenological points of view.

From the metaphysical aspect, the operation of intellect does not depend on any bodily organ. When the intellect abstracts (i.e. it gets what is universal from what is concrete and thus separates the material aspect of the known object to arrive at the concept) its operation is not linked to matter. Therefore, soul is immaterial since intellective activity is one of its operations. St. Thomas affirms that the intellective principle is the same principle that makes someone a man. Each person experiences that he is the one knowing. (cf. *S. Th.*, I, q.76, a.1)

From the phenomenological aspect, the soul's spirituality can be seen from the person's capacity of reflexion. Man is capable of knowing his own existence and thus establish a relationship with his own self. He can reflect on his experiences and what they do to him, his reactions, in a word, his inner life. This cannot be done by something material.

If therefore, the soul is spiritual and performs operations independent of the body, it must therefore have the capacity to subsist in itself. St. Thomas explains this by saying that the soul is a form that has *esse* in itself (*primo et per se*), which it gives to the body. The unity of man is not a union of two substances: the substance of the soul and the substance of the body. The body is not a substance. It receives its *esse* from the soul, which constitutes it as a body.

Therefore, if the soul has *esse primo et per se*, it is incorruptible. It possesses its own existence, thus it is immortal. One should not confuse the immortality of the soul with the immortality of man. The human person dies when the soul leaves the body.

³⁷ Taken from www.takeonit.com

Do Human Beings have Spiritual Souls?

Yes	No
<p>Experts in Philosophy <i>René Descartes, Father of Western Philosophy</i> 'These men will be composed, as we are, of a soul and a body. First I must describe the body on its own; then the soul, again on its own; and finally I must show how these two natures would have to be joined and united in order to constitute men who resemble us'.</p> <p>Experts in Christianity <i>The Catholic Church, Largest Christian Church</i> The Church teaches that every spiritual soul is created immediately by God. It is not "produced" by the parents. It is immortal: it does not perish when it separates from the body at death, and it will be reunited with the body at the final Resurrection.</p>	<p>Experts in Law <i>Thomas Jefferson, 3rd United States President</i> To talk of immaterial existences is to talk of nothings. To say that the human soul, angels, God, are immaterial, is to say they are nothings, or that there is no God, no angels, no soul. I cannot reason otherwise [...]. At what age of the Christian church this heresy of immaterialism, this masked atheism, crept in, I do not know. But a heresy it certainly is. Jesus told us indeed that 'God is a spirit,' but he has not defined what a spirit is, nor said that it is not matter.</p> <p>Experts in Atheism <i>Richard Dawkins, Evolutionary Biologist, Atheism Activist</i> The theory that there is something non-material about life, some non-physical vital principle [...] according to which a body has to be animated by some anima [or] vitalized by a vital force. Energized by some mysterious energy. Spiritualized by some mysterious spirit. Made conscious by some mysterious thing or substance called consciousness. In [this] sense of [a soul] science has either killed the soul or is in the process of doing so [but] science [is absolutely not] killing soulfulness...</p> <p>Experts in Parapsychology <i>Susan Blackmore, Psychology Lecturer, Former Parapsychologist</i> Imagine a world in which each of us has a special inner core - a 'real self' - that makes us who we are, that can think and move independently of our coarse physical body, and that ultimately survives death, giving meaning to our otherwise short and pointless lives. This is (roughly speaking) how most people think the world is. It is how I used to think -and even hope - that the world is. I devoted 25 years of my life to trying to find out whether it is. Now I have given up</p> <p>Experts in Philosophy <i>Daniel Dennett, Philosophy Professor</i> There is no privileged centre, no soul, no place where it all comes together—aside from the brain itself. ... I have come to realize over the years that the hidden agenda for most people concerned about consciousness and the brain (and evolution, and artificial intelligence) is a worry that unless there is a bit of us that is somehow different, and mysteriously insulated from the material world, we can't have free will—and then life will have no meaning.</p>

Origin of the human soul³⁸

As we have seen, the human soul must be spiritual since some of its activities are of a spiritual nature, that is, independent of the limitations of matter. We have, therefore, the existence of spiritual forms in a material universe. What is the origin of the spiritual human soul?

We cannot say that the human soul comes from bodies because the gap between the material and the spiritual is too great to be crossed. A thing cannot produce something greater than itself any more than a stone can burst into song.

Neither can we say that one soul comes from another because what is spiritual cannot be divided – you cannot, for instance, cut an idea in two. Our bodies come from our parents, but we cannot say the same for our souls. A soul cannot split itself to produce another soul: only matter has parts outside parts (quantity) that can break apart.

Spirit cannot be produced from matter, nor can it create itself. It must have its origin in some spiritual being who has the power to create new beings. The spiritual being who has the power to create new beings out of nothing is the being we call God. Every human soul is a direct creation of God, and is infused into the human body generated by the parents. The human body proceeds from the parents by generation: they transmit human nature in its material part, thus preparing it for the reception of the soul from God. Three persons then intervene in the begetting of a human being: the man, the woman and God. That is why human generation is called *procreation*: the Creator intervenes directly.

This is the source of the nobility and dignity of the spiritual perfection of man: that the human soul comes directly from God, and then, through its specific operation of knowing and loving, it can reach God directly.

Immortality of the human soul³⁹

Once a spiritual soul has come into existence it cannot be destroyed. It is immortal. A substance can be destroyed in two ways. First, from the inside, through the un-uniting of its essential parts. This is what happens in the destruction of bodies when the form (the life principle in the bodies of living beings) is separated from matter. The human soul is spiritual. It cannot be separated into parts and so cannot be broken down from within.

The second way a substance can be destroyed is from the outside, though some external factor, for instance the destruction of another thing that it cannot function without. This is what happens to the souls of plants and animals. Their souls are totally bound up with the bodies, and when the bodies are destroyed they disappear, like the form of a tree, its life principle, disappears when the matter is burnt down to a pile of ashes. Matter is able to receive new forms, for instance the matter of tree, when burnt, takes on the form of ash.

In the case of human beings, the soul is the form and life principle of the body, but it is also spiritual. It has activities that, being intrinsically independent of the body for their exercise, indicate an act of existence independent of the body. The human soul, then, does not die, for it cannot be broken into parts nor is it vitally dependent on some other being whose destruction it would share. The only conceivable way the soul could go out of existence is by annihilation, which would be an act of destruction by the Creator of the soul, and for this philosophy can envisage no good reason.

³⁸ Adapted from Sullivan, p. 118.

³⁹ Adapted from Sullivan, p. 118-9.

2.2. The Animated Body

Not only spiritual beings

Man is a creature astride pure spirit and simple material life. In him the entire universe is represented since he is both material and spiritual. While the human soul is the lowest of the spiritual forms, the human body is the most noble and perfect body of the material universe because of its spiritual principle.

Spiritual being is more perfect than material being. But does this mean that material being is evil? This is another metaphysical error, since *all* being is good. Material being is simply less perfect than spiritual being, more limited, more potential. Thus, due to the limitation of the body, the human soul has the perfections of pure spirits but only participated, i.e. in a lower degree. For example, while the intelligence of the angels is pure intellect, the intelligence of man is more "reason" than intellect.

The spiritual creature is placed at the summit of the universe and directly related to God. In this lies his dignity: that he or she can know and love God directly. The spiritual creature can transcend the created world through his spiritual activity, namely knowing and loving God, albeit in an imperfect manner. Only God can fully satisfy created intelligence and will as Total Truth and Total Goodness. He is then the last end of all human activity: the dignity of man lies in being God-oriented, and this is the basis for his inalienable right to worship God, for his religious freedom.

Body & Soul: Work, Matter, Rationality and Freedom⁴⁰

Philosophy does not often question the nature and value of work ... This is not due to a problem about whether or not people should work: in our contemporary society, labour (or work) is a common and essential daily reality in the life of almost every single human being... The problem, as I already said, is not work itself: the problem is anthropology....

Throughout the history of philosophy it is almost impossible to define work as a human activity. Work has to be substituted by machines. This idea of work stems from a negative notion of matter. ...

Let us answer the first question: Are the actions by which we fulfil our bodily needs irrational? As the human being is a living being and more specifically an animal (with a rational soul, but still an animal), it is undeniable that man needs to be nourished. But precisely because he is human, his way of eating allows for a great variety of cultural expressions. Geography, climate and culture, for instance, are determining factors that modify in an artful way the performing of one of man's natural activities (e.g. eating) and its product (e.g. food). Man's natural instinct shows itself as a tendency to respond to and open himself to the reality around him. We see the same tendency in the way he meets other basic needs, such as providing clothing and shelter for himself. While animals need no clothing for survival, man must clothe himself and does so in an infinite variety of ways, satisfying not only this need, but also channelling this need to perform various roles in society.

Something similar happens with respect to the need for shelter: man does not find it in nature, and so he invents it. If we did not have a body, we would not feel the basic needs of food, clothing, and shelter. The reality is that we do have bodies, and we do more than simply sensing these needs instinctively and satisfying them materially. To eat and to

⁴⁰ This section is extracted from Paper by Maria Pia Chirinos

drink, to dress and to seek shelter, are actions in man that participate in the universality of reason.⁴¹ The involvement of our spirit in all that refers to what is corporeal turns our corporality into something cultural: it no longer is exclusively animal; it becomes human; that is, free and rational but not absolutely free, but rather dependent on the very same material conditions.

Certainly all that we have seen allows us to consider other human activities that are less natural in the same terms. Such is the case of manual and material work. By manual labour man modifies matter, multiplies his potentiality, and contributes to his own existence. Work finds its origins in this reality. The ability to invent an instrument requires understanding what it is, understanding the properties and possibilities that the instrument presents, and, finally, putting the instrument to work through corporeal ability.

Can we speak of human intelligence working through the hands, for example? What kind of knowledge or insight do we acquire through our hands?

Again, the history of philosophy can help us. In a famous sentence, possibly the first philosophical formulation of the hand known to us, Anaxagoras claims, "Man is the most intelligent of animals because he has hands". However, Aristotle corrects the expression in saying, "Man has hands because he is the most intelligent".⁴² For Aristotle, the soul is the active principle of the body and after observing the entire animal kingdom, Aristotle concludes that our hands are the organs that best exemplify the influence of the soul upon the body. Saint Thomas further perfects the two Greek formulations. If, as Aristotle asserts, the soul is "in a certain sense all things",⁴³ according to the Aquinas the hands are, by analogy, "all things", as they enable man to do things. For both of these philosophers, our hands are "the instrument of all instruments because with them, man can prepare instruments of infinite variety, and by virtue of them, infinite effects".⁴⁴

By means of our hands, we exercise a type of sensory knowledge, more precisely, a tactile knowledge. The sense of touch, which has always been considered the least "spiritual", (as opposed to sight and hearing), is indeed very specific. St. Thomas explains that touch is the sense that acts as the foundation for all the other senses because it best reflects the human bodily-spiritual reality.⁴⁵ Touch, for instance, is not linked to a specific organ (it is not even specific to the hand) and cannot be found in any specific bodily part. Yet, touch is present throughout the whole body through the sensitivity of the skin. Furthermore, unlike most senses (with the exception of taste), the typical characteristic of touch is the happy medium between two opposites- cold and heat, humid and dry, etc. In connection to these opposing mediums, Thomas sees a resemblance of touch to the soul, which is infinitely open to all things.⁴⁶

Despite its presence in animals as well, it can be said that the sense of touch present in man enjoys a richer, more varied sensitivity and is gifted with greater nuances. Thus,

⁴¹ ARISTOTLE, *On the Soul*, 431 b.

⁴² ARISTOTLE, *On the Parts of Animal*, 678 a 8.

⁴³ ARISTOTLE, *On the Soul*, 431 b.

⁴⁴ "Anima intellectiva, quod est universalium comprehensiva, habet virtutem ad infinita. Et ideo non potuerunt sibi determinari a natura vel determinatae existimationes naturales, vel etiam determinata auxilia, vel defensionum vel tegumentorum; sicut aliis animalibus, quorum animae habent apprehensionem et virtutem ad aliqua particularia determinata. Sed loco horum omnium, homo habet naturaliter rationem, et manus, quae sunt organa organorum, quia per eas homo potest sibi praeparare instrumenta infinitorum modorum, et ad infinitos effectus". T. AQUINAS, *Summa Theologiae*, I, q. 76, a. 5, ad 4.

⁴⁵ See *Summa Theologiae*, I, q. 75, a. 5

⁴⁶ Recently, Leon R. Kass has exposed these thesis in a very clearly and interesting book: see *The Hungry Soul. Eating and the Perfecting of Our Nature*, The University of Chicago Press, Chicago 1999, chapter 2.

while considering that man, of all animals, is endowed with the most developed sense of touch,⁴⁷ St. Thomas also adds further details. "Among these same men, those with the most developed sense of touch are the most intelligent".⁴⁸ With this insight, Aquinas attributes to man a special type of knowledge that is based upon the abilities of the hand and upon manual actions.

If human intelligence can act through the hand, it is then legitimate to ask oneself whether or not freedom appears through our hands as well. If we stop for a moment to reflect on the nature of our hands, we will discover many interesting things. Now I will discuss some results of paleontological research that can help us to understand this possible characteristic better.

Hominids' hands are clearly different from those of their predecessors. The former are capable of handling small objects. They present unlimited mobility and an extremely high movement precision. "Our hand" holds small objects with the tips of the thumb and the forefinger. Its responses transcend the physical and biological conditions present in animals: man's reactions are not univocal, but free.

As a first conclusion of this first question, I would quote Leonardo Polo, a Spanish philosopher, who has affirmed that work, and perhaps more appropriately, manual work, constitutes the "mark of psychosomatic unity": unity made of soul and body, of rationality and animality.⁴⁹ The examples of labour ... such as eating and cooking, dressing and sewing, etc., should not be understood solely as metabolic actions. Even though metabolic actions and manual work refer to basic needs and depend on them, this bodily labour ... allows us to manifest intelligent and free actions that can also be defined as human acts.

2.3. Human sexuality

The human species, individuality and differences

The human species does not exist without sexual specification. Humans are either male or female: sexuality is a *manner of being*. A human being does not simply exist, but exists **as** a man or as a woman. Sexuality is a modality of a person's corporeity. This reality of human sexuality can be considered on different levels:

1) Sexuality is based on a specific *genetic* structure. This explains the biological origin of sexual differentiation. Current studies about homosexuality being genetically based are inconclusive.⁵⁰

2) Sexuality is a differentiation of *sexual organs* designed for procreation, gestation, and nourishment of offspring.

⁴⁷ These statements later found a confirmation in the results of neuro-physiological studies: the hand - especially the fingers- as much as the taste -tongue- are remarkably more sensitive in man than in the rest of the animals; these senses are associated with the most developed areas of the thalamus. See F. PONZ PIEDRAFITA, *Neurofisiología, Síntesis*, Madrid 1989, pp. 120-121; J. JIMÉNEZ VARGAS and A. POLAINO LLORENTE, *Neurofisiología psicológica fundamental*, Ed. Científico-médica, Barcelona 1992, 3rd ed., pp. 74-82.

⁴⁸ "Et propter hoc homo inter omnia animalia melioris est tactus. Et inter ipsos homines, qui sunt melioris tactus, sunt melioris intellectus", T. AQUINAS, *Summa theologiae*, I, q. 75, a. 5. See also the observations made by A. ZIMMERMANN, *Thomas lesen, Legenda 2*, Frankfurt 2001, p. 194.

⁴⁹ L. POLO, "Tener y Dar", in *Estudios sobre la Enc. Laborem Exercens*, BAC, Madrid, 1987, p. 212, note 13.

⁵⁰ cf. KIELY, Fr Bartholomew, SJ, "Antecedents of Homosexuality: Science and Moral Evaluation", in *L'Osservatore Romano*, May 28, 1997

3) Sexuality is not manifested only in the biological origin and structure of a human being, but also in the psychological, affective and cognitive characteristics of a person of each gender. These factors influence a man and woman's manner of being, reacting, way of thinking, and behaving. A person's sexual identity forms part of their personal identity.

"Sexuality possesses a familial, institutional, legal, social and cultural dimension that is termed *gender*, which can thus be defined as the cultural and social dimension of sexuality."

Sex & Gender⁵¹

Usually when speaking about gender our reference is to the male gender or the female gender. Just as the male sex exists, the female sex also exists. Today, in a number of international organizations, the concept "gender" is used without providing any clear definition of the term. In this sense, the term "sex" refers to natural traits. Thus two sexes exist that are differentiated in distinctly anatomical ways. But, together with sex, there is also "gender," a term that describes the roles played by individuals in society. These roles are born in the course of history and result from the interaction between culture and nature. Recently, however, an equivocal concept of "gender" has appeared, one conceived as exclusively coming from culture and therefore can appear and disappear depending on the currents of society and also individuals. The individual-family-society link is lost and the person is reduced to the individual. Some, for example, affirm that maternal love is not inscribed in the nature of woman; rather it is a feeling born in a particular cultural context and can thus disappear or be destroyed if the culture changes. We find ourselves in the presence of a new cultural revolution. Whatever their sex, humans (according to this view) can choose their gender: they can choose heterosexuality, homosexuality, lesbianism. They can opt for transsexuality, to change their sex. Some plans for declarations of "gender" rights exist. This strange disassociation of sex and gender, nature and culture, destroys the personal dimension of the human being and reduces it to simple individuality. The ideology of "gender" therefore includes a radical calling into question of the family and everything that it means in and for society. (É Sexual and Reproductive Rights; Discrimination Against Women and CEDAW; An Ideology of Gender: Dangers and Scope; Motherhood and Feminism; New Definitions of Gender; Patriarchy and Matriarchy; Equal Rights for Men and Women)

The Ideology of Gender

The feminist ideology of gender began during the decade 1960-1970. According to it, masculinity and femininity are not fundamentally determined by sex, but instead by culture. While the term "sex" refers to nature and implies two possibilities (man and woman), the term "gender" comes from the field of linguistics and includes three varieties: masculine, feminine, and neuter. The differences between male and female (outside of the obvious morphological differences) would not correspond to a "given" nature, instead they would be culturally "fashioned" according to socially constructed roles and stereotypes that each society assigns to the sexes.⁵² This viewpoint emphasizes (not unreasonably) that in the past the differences were overemphasized, which led to situations of discrimination and injustice for many women. For many centuries, there was a "feminine destiny" to be an inferior being excluded from public

⁵¹ This section on Sex and Gender is a paper from moral theologian Jutta Burggraf, *Lexicon of Ambiguous and debatable terms regarding family life and ethical questions*, Pontifical Council for the Family, *Human Life International*, 2003. WUCWO Org.Circ.2 – Appendix 2, January 2008.

⁵² In languages in which two different words are not available (sex-gender), one usually hears of "biological sex" and "psychosocial sex". And so, for example, in German, it is "biologisches Geschlecht" – "psychosoziales Geschlecht".

decisions and higher education. But today – they continue affirming - women are aware of having been victimized, so they break out of the role that was imposed on them. They want to free themselves, above all, from marriage and motherhood.⁵³

Some, following different considerations, assert the existence of four, five or six genders: male heterosexuals, female heterosexuals, homosexuality, lesbianism, bisexuality, and transgendered. In that way, masculinity and femininity do not appear in any way to be the only naturally derived models of a biological sexual dichotomy. Any sexual activity would be justifiable.⁵⁴

Far from being “obligatory,” heterosexuality would mean nothing more than one of the possible sexual practices; its procreative role would not make it preferable. Some affirm that in “more imaginative” societies, biological reproduction could be assured with other techniques.⁵⁵ And since gender identity is allegedly undefined and indefinitely adaptable to new and different meanings, it would be up to each individual to freely choose the kind of gender to which he or she would like to belong in the different situations and stages of life.

To obtain universal acceptance of these ideas, the promoters of radical gender feminism try to achieve a gradual cultural change, the so-called “deconstruction” of society, beginning with the family and the education of children.⁵⁶ They use ambiguous language to make new ethical presuppositions seem reasonable. The goal consists in “reconstructing” a new and arbitrary world that, in addition to the masculine and feminine, includes other genders in describing human life and interpersonal relations.

These pretensions found a favourable environment in the individualistic anthropology of radical neo-liberalism. They depend, on the one hand, upon different Marxist and structuralist theories,⁵⁷ and on the other, on the postulates of some of the representatives of the “sexual revolution”, such as Wilhelm Reich (1897-1957) and Herbert Marcuse (1898-1979) who invited everyone to experiment with all types of sexual situations. More directly, one can see the influence of atheistic existentialism on Simone de Beauvoir (1908-1986) who announced in 1949 her well-known aphorism: “You are not born a woman! They make you into a woman!”⁵⁸ later completed with the logical conclusion: “You are not born a man; you are made into a

⁵³ Some gender feminist adepts propose the following: “In order to be effective in the long run, family planning programs should not only focus on attempting to reduce fertility within existing gender roles, but rather on changing gender roles in order to reduce fertility.” The quotation is taken from DIVISION FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF WOMEN FOR THE EXPERT GROUP MEETING ON FAMILY PLANNING, HEALTH AND FAMILY WELL-BEING, Gender Perspective in Family Planning Programs, Bangalore (India), 26-30 October 1992, organized in collaboration with the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA).

⁵⁴ Cf. JUDITH BUTLER, *Gender Trouble. Feminism and the Subversion of Identity*, New York-London 1990, p.6: “In theorizing that gender is a radical construction independent of sex, gender itself comes to be an artifice free of ties. As a consequence, man and masculine could mean a feminine body as much as a male body; woman and feminine can mean a masculine body as much as a feminine body”. Though this work is itself criticized in several even more radical extremist circles for not completely separating itself from the biological dimension, it can be considered one of the key works presenting the ideology of gender.

⁵⁵ H. HARTMAN: *The Unhappy Marriage of Marxism and Feminism*, Boston 1981, p. 16. Like many others, the author anticipated, in part, the complete disassociation between sexuality and procreation, motherhood, fatherhood, and filiation which artificial interventions make possible today.

⁵⁶ PONTIFICAL COUNCIL FOR THE FAMILY, *Familia, matrimonio y unions de hecho* (26 July 2000), 8. Gender feminism has been well received in a good number of important international institutions, among which stand the United Nations. And some universities are also trying to raise Gender Studies to a new scientific rank.

⁵⁷ It was Friedrich Engels who established the union between Marxism and feminism. Cf. F. ENGELS, *The Origin of the Family, Property and State*, New York 1972. (original German *Der Ursprung der Familie, des Privateigentums und des Staates*, 1884).

⁵⁸ S. DE BEAUVOIR: *Le Deuxième Sexe*, Paris 1949.

man! So neither is the condition man a given reality in principle”.⁵⁹ The sociocultural studies of Margaret Mead (1901-1978) can also be included in this historical process that consolidated a new branch of radical feminism, even though the scientific validity of her contributions was questioned by other investigators.⁶⁰

Proclaiming that masculine and feminine genders are exclusively social factors wholly unrelated to personal sexual dimensions, the proponents of this gender theory oppose a model, equally unilateral as theirs, that sustains a contrary viewpoint, denying any interaction between the individual and the community at the time of setting a personal identity as man or woman. It affirms that each sex has, given its biological needs, corresponding fixed social functions, invariable in history.⁶¹ This model, however, is considered false today at both the theoretical and legal levels, at least in the western world.⁶² The problem has been partly, not totally, resolved through legislation,⁶³ but there remains an undeniable influence of these ideas in social practice.

The Process of Identifying with One's Own Sex

In the human person, sex and gender – the biological principle and the cultural expression – are not identical, but neither are they completely independent. To establish a correct relationship between them, it is good to consider the process in which the identities of a man and a woman are formed. The experts point out three aspects of this process which are normally and harmoniously woven together: biological sex, psychological sex and social sex.⁶⁴

“Biological sex” describes the bodily aspect of the human person. It is customary to distinguish several factors. The “genetic or chromosomic sex”, determined by the XX chromosomes in the female, or the XY in the male, is set from the moment of fertilization and, through the gonadal sex, is responsible for hormonal activity. The “gonadal sex”, in turn, influences the “somatic or phenotypic sex” in determining the structure of the internal and external reproductive organs. It is good to consider the fact that these biological foundations profoundly intervene in the entire organism, in such a way that, for example, each cell of the female body is different from each cell in the male body. Medical science even indicates different structural and functional differences between the male brain and the female brain.⁶⁵

⁵⁹ DE BEAUVOIR: *Alles in Allem*, Hamburg 1974, p.455.

⁶⁰ Cf. M. MEAD, *Male and Female. A Study of the Sexes in a Changing World*, New York 1949; G. SOLÉ ROMEO, *Historia del feminismo. Siglos XIX y XX*, Pamplona, 1995, 50-53.

⁶¹ With respect to the different models that are presented relating to man and woman, Cf., the clarifying framework of M. ELÓSEGUI, *La transexualidad. Jurisprudencia y argumentación jurídica*, Granada 1999, 91-118.

⁶² The subordination of women is contrary to the principle of equality between the sexes and against human rights recognized by the Universal Declaration of the United Nations in 1948, as well as in many other documents of the UN.

⁶³ Cf. the studies of M. ELÓSEGUI, “Los derechos reproductivos. Un nuevo concepto jurídico procedente del mundo legal anglosajón”, in *Anuario de Derecho Eclesiástico del Estado*, 16 (2000), 689. “There still exists today direct, indirect and hidden discrimination in the field of work, in social security, in banking law, etc.”.

⁶⁴ Biological sex is ordinarily and simply called sex, while psychological and social sex are called gender.

⁶⁵ Cf. D. D. KELLY, “Sexual Differentiation of the Nervous System”, in *Principles of Neural Science*, by E. R. KANDEL - J. H. SCHWARTZ - T. M. JESSEL, Appleton and Lange, Norwalk, (Connecticut) 2000, 1131-1149; P. NOPOULOS - M. FLAUM - D. O'LEARY - N.C. ANDREASEN, “Sexual dimorphism in the human brain: evaluation of tissue volume, tissue composition and surface anatomy using magnetic resonance imaging”, *Psychiatry Res* (2000) 2, 1-13. H. DAVIDSON - K.R. CAVE - D. SELLNER, “Differences in visual attention and task interference between males and females reflect differences in brain laterality”, *Neuropsychologia* (2000) 4, 508-514. N. SADATO, V. IBANEZ - M.P. DEIBER - M. HALLETT, “Gender Difference in Premotor Activity During Active Tactile Discrimination”, in *Neuroimage* (2000) 5, 532-540. K. KANSAKU - A. YAMURA - S. KITAZAWA, “Sex Differences in Lateralization Revealed in the Posterior Language Areas”, in *Cereb Cortex* (2000) 9, 866-872.

Psychological sex refers to human psychic experiences as man or woman. It consists in the consciousness of belonging to a determined sex. This consciousness is formed, from the beginning, between the ages of 2 and 3 years old, and usually coincides with the biological sex. It can be profoundly affected by the education and environment provided to the child.

Sociological or civil sex is the sex assigned to a person from the moment of birth. It is expressed as it is perceived by the surrounding persons. It signifies the specific way of acting of a man or a woman. In general, it is understood as the result of historic-cultural processes. It refers to functions, roles and stereotypes which are assigned in each society to diverse groups of persons.

These three aspects should not be understood as isolated from each other. On the contrary, they must be integrated into a wider process consisting in the formation of one's own identity. A person progressively acquires, during infancy and adolescence, a consciousness of "being oneself" ("who one is"). They discover their sexual identity and in it each time more profoundly the sexual dimension of their own being. Coming to realize bio-psychological factors of one's own sex and the difference regarding the other sex, they gradually acquire a gender identity and discover the psychosocial and cultural factors of the role that men and women have in society. In a correct and harmonious process of integration, both dimensions correspond and complement each other.

A special consideration ought to be given to intersexual states (the so-called intersex persons) since some argue that the existence of transsexuals and hermaphrodites would demonstrate that there are more than two sexes. But these intersexual states are anomalies with various clinical characteristics that tend to occur at a very early embryonic stage of human development. They are defined by the contradiction of one or more of the criteria of sexual definition. That is, transsexual persons have a pathology in some of the links of the biological chain leading to sexual differentiation. They suffer alterations in the normal development of the biological sex and, as a consequence, also of the psychosocial sex.⁶⁶ Instead of using them as propaganda to obtain the "deconstruction" of the foundations of the family and of society, one should show respect to them and give them appropriate medical treatment.

One must distinguish sexual identity (man or woman) from sexual orientation (heterosexuality, homosexuality, and bisexuality). Sexual orientation is commonly understood to be the sexual preference that is established in adolescence coinciding with that stage of human cerebral development. It has a biological basis influenced by other factors such as education, culture, and personal experiences. Even though the numbers vary according to diverse investigations, one can say that the immense majority of human persons are heterosexuals.⁶⁷

Another matter that must be considered is sexual conduct. In the normal sense, it is designated as personal chosen behaviour, since there is a wide margin of freedom in the manner in which men and women can live their sexuality.

⁶⁶ The phenotypical sex does not fully correspond, for example, to the chromosomic and the gonadal sex, just as there is little correspondence between external and internal sexual organs. Thus transsexual persons perceive themselves as belonging to the opposite sex from the one indicated by their anatomy. For more information, Cf. J. GONZÁLEZ MERLO, "Estados Intersexuales", in *Ginecología*, Barcelona 1998, chpt. 3, A. C. MARCUELLO – M. ELÓSEGUI, "Sexo, género, identidad sexual y sus patologías", in *Cuadernos de Bioética* (1999) 3, 459-477.

⁶⁷ Cf., for example, the studies of psychiatrist G. J. M. VAN DEN AARDWEG, *Das Drama des gewöhnlichen Homosexuellen. Analyse und Therapie*, Neuhasen-Stuttgart ³1995, 17-47. (original English Homosexuality as a Disease of Self-Pity).

Towards an Understanding of Sexual Difference

Since the whole human person is either man or woman “in the unity of body and soul”,⁶⁸ masculinity or femininity extends to all areas of his/her being: from the profound significance of the physical differences of man and woman and its influence in corporeal love, to the psychic differences between both and their different ways of manifesting their relationship with God. Although no specific psychological or spiritual trait can be attributed to only one of the sexes, there are characteristics that are to be found with special frequency and in a more pronounced way in men, and others in women. It is supremely difficult to distinguish rightly in this area. It will probably never be possible to determine with scientific exactness what is “typically masculine” or “typically feminine”, for nature and culture, the two great formative influences, are closely intertwined from the beginning. But the fact that men and women experience the world in different ways, carry out their tasks differently, sit down, plan and react differently, shows that each of the latter has a solid foundation in the biological constitution of both man and woman.

Sexuality reveals both identity and otherness. Men and women have the same human nature, but they have it in different ways. In a certain sense, they complement each other. A man “constitutionally” tends towards a woman, and a woman tends towards a man.⁶⁹ They do not seek an androgynous unity, as the mythical vision of Aristophanes in *The Banquet* suggests. But they do mutually need each other to fully develop their humanity.⁷⁰ The Creator gave woman to man as a “helper”, and vice-versa - which is not a “servant”, nor does it express disdain.⁷¹ In the husband-wife relationship, the “submission” is not unilateral, but reciprocal. What is desirable is mutual subordination in love.

It is a biological fact that only a woman can be a mother, and only a man can be a father. Procreation is thus ennobled in them by the love in which it develops and by their union in love, placed by God in the centre of the human person as a joint labour of both sexes. Common parenthood is a special protagonist and evidence of an immense confidence in God.

Both man and woman are capable of satisfying the fundamental needs of each other. In their mutual relationship, each leads the other towards self-discovery and self-realization in their own sexual being. Each one also makes the other conscious of being called to a communion and capacity to give self to the other in mutual loving subordination. Both, from different perspectives, find inner happiness in serving the happiness of the other.

While the arbitrary change of gender testifies to a certain eagerness for self-sufficiency, human sexuality shows a clear disposition towards the other person. It is evident that human plenitude is found precisely in this relationship, in this being-for-the-other. The search for human fulfillment clearly pushes a person to go out of self, look for the other and rejoice in his/her presence. It is like a seal placed by the God of Love in the structure itself of human nature. Although each person is loved by God “for himself/herself”⁷² and called to individual fulfillment, this cannot be achieved without communion with others. Humans are made to love and be loved. From this we see that sexual life has an immense value in itself. Both sexes are called by God Himself to act and live together.⁷³ This is their vocation. It can also be affirmed that God did not create us men and women primarily so that we can engender new human beings.

⁶⁸ VATICAN COUNCIL II, Pastoral Constitution *Gaudium et spes*, 14.

⁶⁹ Cf. A. SCOLA, *¿Qué es la vida?*, Madrid 1999, 128.

⁷⁰ Cf. A. Scola: *¿Qué es la vida?*, 129. 20

⁷¹ Cf. JOHN PAUL II, Apostolic Letter *Mulieris Dignitatem* (15 August 1988), 10. Also the psalmist says to God: “You are my help”. *Ps* 70, 6. cf. *Ps* 115, 9.10.11.; 118, 7; 146, 5).

⁷² Cf. *Gaudium et Spes*, 24, and *Mulieris Dignitatem* 7, 10, 13, 18, 20, 30.

⁷³ Human sexuality makes reference to the ineffable will of God. Cf. *Gen* 1, 27: “God created man in His image, in His image God created them; man and woman He created them.”

On the contrary, man, created in the image and likeness of God, is capable of engendering so as to express and perpetuate that divine image reflected in his sexual condition.

But it must be clarified that to be a woman or a man does not consist solely in being a mother or a father. In considering the specific qualities of woman, “spiritual motherhood” becomes a subject of reflection. Pope John Paul II defines this concept and aptly speaks of the “feminine genius”.⁷⁴ This concept constitutes a basic and firm attitude that corresponds to the physical structure of the mother and is strengthened by it. In effect, it is far from absurd to suppose that intense guardianship of life by a woman can generate in her certain particular dispositions. Just as, during pregnancy, a woman experiences a unique closeness towards a new human being, so also her nature favours an interpersonal encounter with those who surround her. And so “feminine genius” can be translated as a delicate sensibility towards the needs and requirements of others, in their capacity to recognize and understand their possible interior conflicts. She can be carefully identified with a special capacity to show love in a concrete way⁷⁵ and to develop a caring “ethic”.

Where there is a “feminine genius”, there must also be a “masculine genius”, a talent specific to man. By nature, man stands at a greater distance apart from concrete life. He is always “outside” pregnancy and birth, and can only be a part of them through his wife. This greater distance can enable him to undertake more serene actions to protect life and assure a future. It can lead him to be a true father, not only in a physical dimension but also in a spiritual dimension.⁷⁶ It can lead him to be a faithful, confident and trusted friend. But it can also lead him towards a certain disinterest in concrete and daily matters, which unfortunately has been fostered in the past by a unilateral education.

In all the areas and sectors of society, in culture, art, politics and economics, in public and private life, men and women are called to mutually accept each other and to build together a habitable world. This world will reach its fullness at the moment when both sexes harmoniously give their specific contributions.

A Just Relationship Between Sex and Gender

There is a profound unity between the corporeal, psychological and spiritual dimensions of the human person, an interdependence between the biological and the cultural. Work is founded on nature and cannot be wholly dissociated from it.

The unity and equality between man and woman does not eliminate these differences. Although the feminine and masculine qualities vary in great measure, they cannot be ignored completely. A background of natural formation is present that cannot be annulled without desperate efforts that definitely lead to self-denial. Neither woman nor man can go against his/her own nature without falling into unhappiness. Breaking with biology frees neither the woman nor the man: it is rather a path that leads to pathology.

Culture in turn must provide an adequate answer to nature. It should not be an obstacle to the progress of human groups. It is evident that many injustices against women have existed historically and some continue to exist in the world. This long list of different kinds of discrimination has no biological foundation, but rather cultural roots, and these must be eradicated. Social functions cannot be considered as irremediably united to genetics or biology. It is desirable that women assume new roles that are in harmony with their dignity. In

⁷⁴ Cf. J. BURGGRAF, “Juan Pablo II y la vocación de la mujer”, in *Scripta Theologica* 31 (1999) 1, 139-155.

⁷⁵ Cf. *Mulieris Dignitatem*, 30.

⁷⁶ Spiritual fatherhood supposes freeing oneself from egocentrism, “to be conquered by love”. Cf. K. WOJTYLA, “Radiation of fatherhood”, in ID., *The Collected Plays and Writings on Theater*, Berkeley 1987, 355.

this sense, Pope John Paul II explicitly rejects the fixed biological notion that all roles and relations between both sexes are fixed into one static model, and calls on men to participate in “the great process of women's liberation.”⁷⁷ It is clear that the incorporation of women in the labor market is an advance that certainly creates new challenges for both sexes.

The term gender can be accepted as a human expression which is based on a masculine or feminine biological sexual identity. It correctly describes the cultural aspects that surround the construction of the functions of men and women in society. Yet not all of these functions are things that are voluntarily constructed. Some have larger biological roots. Therefore, “one can appreciate that the presence of a certain diversity of roles in no way is bad for women, for that diversity is not the result of an arbitrary imposition, but rather an expression of what is specifically masculine or feminine”.⁷⁸

Today many persons are beginning to see clearly again that they cannot become free beyond the limits of their own nature. They see that sex is more than a privilege or a discrimination but is always an opportunity for one's personal development. Hence they strive to promote the welfare of women not only outside the home but within it as well. While it is certain that women are not only wives and mothers, many are or want to be, so one must create the possibilities for them to achieve these desires in a dignified manner. Women who have an active external professional life cannot be the sole model, the only ideal of feminine independence, notwithstanding all the respect that this model deserves.

The family is certainly not the exclusive task of women. But even when the man demonstrates his responsibility and adequately lives his professional and family duties, it cannot be denied that the woman plays a supremely important role in the home. The specific contribution they make must be taken fully into account in legislation and should also be justly remunerated in economic and socio-political ways.⁷⁹ The collaboration needed for this type of legislation must also be internationally considered not only as the right, but also as the duty of women.

Final Note

The development of society depends on the employment of all human resources. Therefore, women and men must participate in all spheres of public and private life. The attempts to reach that just goal on the levels of political government, business, culture, social and family circles can be undertaken under “the perspective of gender equality” if that equality includes the right to be different. In fact, some countries and international organizations take into account the different situations of men and women, and develop plans for equal opportunities that can lead to the promotion of women. When the time comes to set up policies, the “gender perspective” can lead to an understanding of the possible effects of those decisions for the respective realities of men and women.

This “gender perspective” that defends the right to differences between men and women and promotes co-responsibility in work and family, should not be confused with the radical proposal noted at the beginning of this discussion that ignores and crushes the natural differences of both sexes.

⁷⁷ JOHN PAUL II: *Letter to Women* (29 June 1995), 6.

⁷⁸ JOHN PAUL II: *Letter to Women*, 11.

⁷⁹ JOHN PAUL II: Encyclical *Laborem exercens* (14 September 1981), 19.

The being of man and woman; sexual attraction and its integration into the human reality of love; value and aspects of human sexuality

Sexuality, upon modifying a person's corporeity, also manifests itself in a mutual attraction between man and woman. Sexual differentiation is at the same time complementarity of the sexes. A person of one gender sees the need to complete himself or herself through another person of opposite gender. This need is first of all reproductive, for the preservation of the species. This is something humans possess in common with animals.

Sexuality in human beings is not limited only to reproduction or procreation. It acts also as a vehicle for man and woman to give themselves to one another, to enter into communion with one another. "Sexuality affects all aspects of the human person in the unity of his body and soul. It especially concerns affectivity, the capacity to love and to procreate, and in a more general way the aptitude of forming bonds of communion with others."⁸⁰ Thus, sexuality is not only a modification of corporeity, it is a physical and psychological *capacity* to perform "an action, the sexual act, which accomplishes what it signifies. This action signifies that two persons unite themselves and give themselves to each other, they reciprocally tend towards each other."

The feminist movements of modern times

Seriously initiated more than one hundred years ago, feminism (we really should speak of "feminisms") has strongly marked the twentieth century. It continues to take many forms, without having arrived yet at any definitive expression that might be fully coherent in itself as well as consistent with the deeper insights of anthropology.

Responding to the many abuses of preceding centuries, feminists accentuated the equality of rights and dignity between man and woman. These were, and are, efforts to achieve a genuine recognition in practice of woman's equal dignity with man, along with her equal opportunity to participate fully in public life. Nevertheless it must be added that a large part of the feminist movements, in centring almost entirely on issues of equality and dignity, neglected or even obscured other aspects to human sexuality which are fundamental and which cannot be disregarded without grave loss to both men and women. These are above all:

a) the complementarity of the sexes, which harmonizes their equality with their differences; and

b) the sexual identity proper to each: an identity understood also as a goal to be attained by each individual so as to "realize" his or her own life. These two aspects are interdependent, for without well-defined sexual identity on the part of those who compose each sex, there cannot be genuine complementarity between the two.

It was earlier stated that one of the characteristics of a person is the capacity to give. Furthermore, when a person loves, he or she gives him or herself to the loved one. This capacity to give oneself through one's sexuality gives rise to a special type of love. One can have a love of benevolence with someone of the opposite sex. It is special in the sense that one's sexuality enters into the picture: one loves another insofar as he or she is a person modified by sexuality and is someone who can fulfil oneself. This love can then develop into an actual mutual self-giving: a love that is total, fruitful, exclusive and perpetual, namely, *conjugal love*.

⁸⁰ CCC, no. 2232

The mutual attraction between male and female and the capacity to express this attraction in mutual self-giving has an objective and intrinsic foundation. Intrinsic means that its basis is in human nature itself. Sexual complementarity is not a consequence of socio-cultural factors. Persons were created male and female. Objective means that this attraction, being rooted in human nature, exists prior to the subjective attraction of man and woman to each other.

Education in sexuality: it's ordering to love through the profound dimension of the person (intellect and will)

Sexuality is a vehicle for self-giving, it is a means by which love between man and woman can be expressed. Since the person is a uni-totality of body and soul, three elements come into play whenever love is expressed: the sensual, the affective and the rational.

Sensuality is a reaction to the sexual value the opposite sex has for us. This is the level of purely physical attraction.

The *affective* level is that of the sentiments. The attraction is no longer merely physical (the body of the opposite sex), but involves other factors that single a person out, such as character, interests, certain physical traits, etc.

While sexuality is involved in these two levels, one cannot speak of self-giving, and hence, of true love. The other person is valued on the basis of what he or she "means to me" and not what the person is in himself or herself. As long as the *rational* element of man, namely intellect and will, does not come into play, the mutual attraction between man and woman will always be selfish, since the sensual and sentimental elements are not capable of self-giving. On the other hand, they may be the strongest values that attract one person to another. This just goes to show that the ordering of sexuality towards true love is a commitment that has to be undertaken, thus involving the intellect and the will. The goodness or value of the person as such has to be recognized by the *intellect* and one should will to treat the person accordingly. Therefore, an education in sexuality is necessary, learning how to use the intellect and will in directing it to its proper end.⁸¹

Sexual life as part of conjugal love between husband and wife

Sexuality as a means of self-giving reaches its highest manifestation in *conjugal love* between man and woman, that is, when persons give themselves to one another in their sexualities. Necessarily, such love has to be total, which means "accepting in an unconditional way the other person in his or her sexuality, and giving oneself unconditionally to that person in one's own sexuality." Were it not so, there would be an element of selfishness involved, and the other person would not be loved for his or her own sake, but would become an object of use.

Traditional Conception of the Masculine and Feminine Characters

Whatever way we choose to express the masculine or feminine typification of the human person, it will probably provoke the immediate critical reaction which every type of generalization tends to elicit. An "active" masculine character in contrast with a "passive" feminine one; man devoted to the public forum and woman to the home; reasoning in contrast with feeling or intuition; justice in contrast with pity...

Today such an analysis is less and less accepted. It seems to offer simple stereotypes and over-rigid portraits that assign ways of being, characteristics, and virtues exclusively to one or the other sex, as if the values or virtues to be developed

⁸¹ Cf. PONTIFICAL COUNCIL FOR THE FAMILY, *The Truth and Meaning of Human Sexuality*, nos. 10-13.

and assimilated so as to attain a properly fulfilled personal humanity were fundamentally different in the case of man and woman. Today it is rather held that each human person can achieve integral development only if he or she acquires all the human values or virtues.

One consequence of this is that sexual activity outside conjugal union is not a manifestation of love, simply because the total self-giving of man and woman does not exist as a reality. Therefore, lacking this element of total self-giving, sex then becomes mere sensuality or sentiment, and is therefore self-seeking.

The other consequence is that the sexual act becomes the fulfilment of the total self-giving in conjugal love. Husband and wife make reality what they have expressed in their mutual consent at marriage. Thus, the performance of the sexual act in marriage becomes an obligation on the part of the spouses.

Training in virtues related to sexuality

Reason and will play an important role in guiding a person towards the proper exercise of sexuality. However, the reality of original sin and wounded human nature make it imperative for human persons to struggle against a disordered use of sex. The rational element in our human nature is thus assisted by the training and development of virtues that directly affect sexuality.

1) *Chastity* is the virtue that helps man to direct his sexual urges towards its proper end. “Chastity includes an *apprenticeship in self-mastery* which is a training in human freedom. The alternative is clear: either man governs his passions and finds peace, or he lets himself be dominated by them and becomes unhappy.”⁸²

2) Since sexuality should find its true meaning in love, one has to be educated in love. Thus the virtue of *charity* is necessary. It is “characterized by respect, altruism, and service.”⁸³

3) “The practice of *decency* and *modesty* in speech, action and dress is very important for creating an atmosphere suitable to the growth of chastity, but this must be well motivated by respect for one’s own body and the dignity of others.”⁸⁴ These two virtues are helped by a sense of shame which, though it be a consequence of original sin, makes man realize that there is something wrong in manifesting certain things that belong to the sphere of one’s privacy.

4) *Self-control* is also needed. It indicates that one has dominion over oneself. “Children and young people should be encouraged to have esteem for, and to practise self-control and restraint, to live in an orderly way, to make personal sacrifices in a spirit of love for God, self-respect, and generosity towards others, without stifling feelings and tendencies, but channelling them into a virtuous life.”⁸⁵

⁸² CCC, 2339; cf. PONTIFICAL COUNCIL FOR THE FAMILY, nos. 16-19. ‘Chastity means the positive integration of sexuality within the person. Sexuality becomes truly human when it is integrated in a correct way into the relationship of one person to another. Chastity is a moral virtue, a gift of God, a grace, and a fruit of the Holy Spirit’. (CCCC 488). ‘The virtue of chastity involves an *apprenticeship in self-mastery* as an expression of human freedom directed towards self-giving. An integral and continuing formation, which is brought about in stages, is necessary to achieve this goal’. (CCCC489)

⁸³ PONTIFICAL COUNCIL, no. 55.

⁸⁴ PONTIFICAL COUNCIL, no. 56

⁸⁵ PONTIFICAL COUNCIL, no. 58

“Gender equality” can be a misleading expression. A better expression might be "equality of dignity and opportunity between men and women". Man and woman are not "equal" in the sense of being the 'same' in their respective sexual nature or in the sense that sexual difference has no meaning; they are quite different. They are not "equal" but *complementary*. Even the concept of "personal equality" can be improperly understood. Persons are *equal in dignity*; but there are no two "equal" (i.e. identical) persons; each person is unique.

The Sexual Identity of Man and Woman

The Sexual Identity of Man

"The nucleus of man's condition is precisely *enthusiasm for woman*.⁸⁶ The Book of Genesis speaks of the reaction of joy in Adam when he first beheld Eve. It was the initial human response to sexuality, a response not of desire but of sexual enthusiasm, of someone who has found a new dimension to life that fills in something he now realizes was lacking. The deepest reaction to sexuality should in fact be one of joy, joy before what is designed to be complementary and therefore fulfilling and enriching. Certainly, both sexes need to understand this, just as they need to try to create and maintain the conditions that facilitate this reaction –which seems less and less frequent in today's society. Man has probably the greater need for understanding in the matter; woman the more decisive role in creating the conditions which facilitate the adequate human reaction.

Among major aspects to be noted here is how the instinct of respecting or protecting woman, as well as admiration for virginity and for motherhood, is fundamental to the development of true masculine character. Modern man is not different with regard to these needs; the problem is rather that he may not be aware of how deep his needs are here. The situation is more serious inasmuch as the dominant social and cultural atmosphere in no way encourages him to take stock of these needs or of his lack of awareness of them; rather the contrary. Another question is whether women appreciate their role in this.

Romance seems absent, sadly and perhaps cynically absent, in modern presentations of man-woman relations. Contemporary sexual culture is sensual but not romantic. Attraction is becoming bereft of human charm and reduced to simple animal magnetism. It is urgent that service and the different ways (including the complementary masculine-feminine ways) in which it is manifested be understood, be rediscovered, as an expression of love.

The Sexual Identity of Woman

The last two decades have witnessed the emergence of a new feminism. Building from suppositions not just of equal dignity and opportunity for the sexes, but of complementarity between them, it emphasizes woman's distinctiveness and points of characterological difference with regard to man. It holds that women have their own way of achieving personal maturity and human fulfilment. This neo-feminism is in direct contrast to the hitherto dominant feminist trends which tended to hold that "equality" is achieved by insisting on similarities between the sexes.

According to this "complementarity" analysis, woman is characterized in general by a special "caring for others" attitude or ability. The feminists of the former predominant school see in this an implied subordination of woman to others (especially to men), something they find not acceptable; moreover, if at times they try to connect the two major human characterological models ("autonomy" and "relatedness"), there seems little doubt that for them personal

⁸⁶ Julian Marias, *La Felicità Umana: un impossibile necessario*, Milan, 1990, p. 333

"autonomy" remains the more important factor.

If it is true that to "develop" or fulfil "self" in the masculine mode means making one's self independent *from* others, while the "self" in its feminine mode develops through relating *with* others ("separation" in contrast to "connection"), then women, in appraising and creating their own identity, need to use certain parameters that are peculiar to them. Some psychologists also hold that masculine identity is forged in relationship to the world, while feminine identity is actuated in relationships of intimacy with some other person. If this is so, then the idea of "human maturity" as applied to each sex (and despite many factors in common) is probably to be appraised according to different although equally valid definitive norms. The major questions of sexual identification and sexual education should perhaps work from the idea that a mature woman and a mature man relate differently to the world.

The "war of the sexes," in its minor or major expressions in married life (where it also occurs), can only be settled when victory is understood in terms of surrender, and surrender is seen as victory. It is the loss-gain experience of two persons, each of whom gives self and accepts the other in a love-union of mutual self-giving where the two become one.

In attempting to explicate sexual identity, it would be as absurd to ignore completely the distinctive procreative roles of man and woman, as to limit this identity to these different roles. While the cooperation of both man and woman is essential in bringing children into the world, it is clear that woman has by far the greater part to play. This is a fact, whether we choose to regard it as an unfair disadvantage and burden, as a simple duty or mission, or as a unique privilege. Within this last view a first principle of feminine role and identity could be formulated as: Woman's most distinguishing role is "to give life to humanity and to give humanity to life."⁸⁷

Femininity

Today "feminine grace" seems to be a notion that many women do not really understand. As for men, while they probably do not consciously think of the concept, they are still enormously impressed and attracted by the reality when they encounter it. The impact of Audrey Hepburn, back in the 1950s (in contrast, say, to that of Marilyn Monroe), could serve as an illustration.

Feminine grace has certainly something to do with behaviour, insofar as outward bearing suggests interior quality. Yet it is not mainly identifiable (far from it) with mere physical beauty. It is truly a form of "sex appeal," although not in the sense in which the term tends to be used and understood today. Grace in action and look is a revelation of interior character and self-possession.

Our modern age puts a premium on physical looks, and thereby penalizes the girl who is not particularly endowed in that way. Worse still, the current social ethic pressures her to be "sexy"; maybe she can manage to do so, but in that case she exercises on men a totally different attraction from that of being "feminine."

It could be argued that a woman who does not acquire genuine feminine grace (which lies within the reach of all women) suffers a greater limitation in sexual identity than a man who is weak or lacks drive.

Gentleness, tenderness, feminine tact, modesty... These are among the qualities that a man, consciously or unconsciously, looks for in a woman. If he marries and does not find them in his wife, disillusionment sets in; the marriage can begin to break down. Something similar can be said for the woman who does not find in her husband a certain strength: the capacity to face job or family difficulties with optimism and initiative, and particularly the strength of taking

⁸⁷ P. Urbano: *El Hombre de Villa Tevere*, Madrid. 1995, p. 62.

a full share in building the family and home.

If sexual awareness centres on physical relations, the potential of sex for giving happiness becomes greatly limited. Morality apart, sexuality is impoverished and becomes impoverishing if it is reduced to tactile sensation or absorbed in physical appetite, whereas it is enriching when it is a school where one learns to appreciate complementary qualities. A woman who emphasizes the merely physical aspects of her sex easily bring out the worst in man. It is when she develops true femininity and shows it that she inspires him. The same applies vice-versa, but not so powerfully. So we understand how it is that woman has such humanizing and saving power -or the opposite.

In physical strength man is superior; the qualities woman possesses do not lie in the merely physical field, but in that humanizing power of hers. Emmanuel Mounier writes of women's capacity for self-giving, and suggests a double consequence: "from this comes her weakness, for she always feels the need for support; but also her strength, for she is the main enemy of selfishness in this world."⁸⁸

Traditionally, man has more muscle; woman more heart. Women have been held to have a greater capacity for self-denial than men; and this was thought to constitute one of the most attractive and authoritative aspects of her womanly character. Today, many women, especially those raised in a culture of Western individualism, would look on "self-denial" as a defect. This is certainly the case with most modern feminists: and the model of woman that their feminism offers is certainly free of such a trait. And yet, a self-denial in its personalist sense (self-gift; self-forgetfulness), free, other-centred and motivated by love, is a virtue and a sign of maturity.⁸⁹

It is particularly difficult for a woman to overcome the inner conviction that "self-assertion" is often merely selfishness: something which stands in opposition to the gift of self that is so necessary for the attainment of feminine identity. It is not easy for a woman to find her identity through self-assertion.

A 'masculinization' of women is often the result of badly directed feminism. So many women, unable to recognize true and distinctive feminine values, push their imitation of men to the point where they find little difficulty in assimilating men's defects. Is it overly negative to suggest that we are heading toward a society dominated by (the worst of) masculine qualities? "When women, entering professional life in a masculinized world, adopt masculine 'defects', they become *hard and violent* (instead of strong), *independent and uprooted* (instead of sociable and linked to personal values), *technical* (instead of practical and concerned with what is concrete)."⁹⁰

Those who seek fulfilment through self-assertion, and fail, lapse at times into self-pity. This may happen more often in the case of women, since self-pity is possibly a greater trap for them than for men. Then feminine courage and fortitude need to be particularly summoned up.⁹¹

Radical feminism thinks that women have been treated badly and without respect throughout most of history; and it seems undeniable that this has been so in very many areas. What is surprising is that these feminists fail to appreciate *how* -and *why*- so many

⁸⁸ *Oeuvres*, II, 507.

⁸⁹ This is not about seeing oneself as a doormat, not entitled or worthy, or starving the self, depriving oneself of opportunities to flourish. Self-denial is not an end or virtue in itself.

⁹⁰ B. Castilla. *La Complementariedad Varón-Mujer*. Madrid, 1993 p. 48.

⁹¹ The increasing anger and frustration present in certain feminist writing could suggest an underlying self-pity: the more able the writing, the more easily the self-pity can spread from writer to reader.

cultures have regarded women with such profound respect and with limitless admiration. How is it that these feminists have let "motherliness" or "sisterliness" become almost unmentionable words -at least for them? All the positive content of these feminine qualities, as well as all the challenge involved in developing them, are being ignored or deliberately sent into oblivion; as is the inexpressible gratitude on the part of the many men who venerate the presence or the memory of their mother or sisters.

Fashion

Fashion tends to be a powerful factor that can favour or hinder the achievement of a true sexual identity. It usually makes its impact more at the level of appearance than at that of reality, and where it holds too much sway it can place a premium on external or bodily elements that have little to do with genuine sexual identity. A healthy independence from fashion, besides revealing a greater maturity of character, makes it easier for a person to make up his or her own mind about what it means to be a real woman or a real man.

The custom of duelling may have served to steel some fainthearted men to be brave. Yet the bravery of the duellist was almost always more apparent than real, for it was so often driven by *the fear of being considered cowardly* by others, something that reveals an immature and dependent character with standards of personal conduct shaped by what one thinks others may think. Russian roulette marks an extreme of this psychological immaturity. Beneath the utter recklessness it shows lies an adolescent fear of the presumed opinion of one's peers -an opinion that a person of average psychological discernment would dismiss as not worth having.

Many psychologists consider that attitudes to fashion can have an even more powerful influence in making or marring women's growth in sexual identity. Few women are "leaders" of fashion; most tend to follow it. Individual variations are more likely to echo the dominant tone of current fashion than to depart from it. The desire to be more fashionable is often accompanied by the fear of being too different. A woman who both lacks independence of character and has little insight into the sexual makeup of men, can be a 'slave to fashion', lead into choices that do no favours for her personal development. The natural desire to be interesting and attractive to the other sex yields to a submission to peer pressure

When bodily exposure establishes itself as a norm of fashion, disapproval in the name of morality sounds outdated to many. Bypassing any moral issue, the student of anthropology may still suggest that girls or women who readily submit to this norm show little awareness of the varying ways in which they can provoke sexual interest on the part of men, and perhaps need to ask themselves if they really want to be the object of the type of interest they are tending to provoke.

2.4. Transcendence and Finitude

Human existence and its limits in this life

We have seen that man is open to many possibilities throughout his earthly existence. Through his intellect and will, he can transcend himself and tend towards the fulfilment of his life project. However, since man is a finite creature, his earthly existence is fraught with imperfection. Metaphysically, this is explained by man's materiality, which gives him potency. In the same way that he can begin to exist, he can also cease to exist. Even in the course of his earthly life, his imperfect nature leads him to experience sickness, weakness, pain and suffering. Therefore, man is limited. However, all this has meaning. If it did not, then the life of man on earth is a useless existence. We shall now study the philosophical significance of pain and death.

The period of human life and its deep meaning

Man is immersed in space and time. His corporeity places him in this situation. He fulfils himself and realizes his life project within spatial-temporal coordinates. This is in fact what gives meaning to man's life. Meaning or purpose in life is not given by something external to man. This, of course, needs to be understood correctly. The final end or the ultimate good is not a choice. Man necessarily has to tend towards it. However, in tending towards it he makes choices regarding the means. As we have previously studied, the decisions man makes are what determine him in the fulfilment of his life project. This is precisely what gives meaning to life. Therefore, man gives himself meaning in life. The decisions he makes which help him realize his ideals are what give meaning.

However, man also transcends time with his intellect. With his memory, he can relive the past and make it present. He can make the present moment last into the future by interiorizing his experiences. He can look toward the future and plan out the accomplishment of his goals.

The period of human life is not composed of isolated instants, but of a succession of moments that are linked with one another in a duration, making up the biography of a person. Furthermore, man's life follows a cyclical rhythm (day and night, rest and work, seriousness and playfulness, etc.). This rhythm is what gives variety to life and makes us aware of time, i.e., expectancy, hope, etc.

Man in the face of sickness: health as harmony and a fulfilled life; humanism of medicine

When man is able to achieve his goals, he has a fulfilled life and is happy. However, this presumes that his health allows him to reach such goals.⁹² Thus, health can be described as harmony of the soul. It is the condition of the person that permits him to strive towards his ends. It is the situation of being free from evil, including moral evil. Health is not determined only by objective medical criteria, but also by subjective feelings which prevent a person from normally fulfilling his duties or living his life properly. Therefore, health is not only the condition of the body but of the entire person.

Sickness, on the other hand, is an intermediate stage between health and death. It makes the person aware of his possibility of ceasing to exist. Modern medicine has made it possible to prevent sickness from ending up in death or disability. This gives rise to a new relationship between doctors and sick persons.

⁹² cf. YEPES, p. 68

In modern society, a patient can be treated as an object in a technical and impersonal process, and can even be considered a client in a business or a case study. However, a patient is a person and should be treated as such. The basis for this lies in the fact that sickness is a loss of being, a person ceases to be what he should be. The doctor's role is to restore being to a person, not just replace an organ or remove an infected part of man. Being a personal encounter, the doctor should be a friend of the sick person, valuing him for what he really is. Finally, while the doctor should mitigate the patient's pain, it is not right to suppress pain at any cost, to the point of making the person lose his being.

Value of the person and pain or physical disability

This brings us now to the phenomenon of pain and suffering. The cause of pain is a present evil, the absence of a due good. As St. Thomas put it, "Two things are necessary for pain to exist, namely, the union with some evil and the perception of that union."⁹³ Pain is therefore felt, it is sensed. However, when it is interiorized in man, that is, when the intellect, imagination, and the memory intervene, it becomes suffering.

Man feels pain is because man is alive. He experiences pleasure when he possesses the good and pain when he meets evil. In this world, man is immersed in matter. Matter follows its own laws inexorably. What might be good to a person in certain situations might be evil for him in others. The same wind that can clear the air of pollution can also spread a forest fire. On the other hand, man can also use natural laws as he wills. The experience of pleasure and pain are a consequence of the harmony or disharmony that arises between man's vital tendencies and the natural tendencies of matter. Therefore, pain is part of life. It can even be said that it is a service to life because pain indicates a possible threat to life.

Pain contributes to man's development as a person only if it is freely accepted, in the sense that man can integrate it into his life as a project, and not merely as something imposed upon him. With his will, he can make the experience of pain contribute to his growth and maturity by making him stronger interiorly. Furthermore, pain has a function of purification. It helps man to be more detached from his own desires, to set the proper priorities in life, and to value things for what they really are.

After all these observations, we can now point out the true meaning of pain. Suffering has meaning only if it points to something outside of man himself, that is, the motive or end of the suffering experienced. In the case of natural pain, the motive is man's will to live. In the case of pain caused by the will of other persons or necessity, the will to live is not sufficient to give it meaning. It has to be integrated into a project in which it acquires meaning, which is to consider pain as part of the difficulties involved in achieving a goal or as a means to make other people happy. In the final analysis, what gives meaning to pain is love: love for an ideal one has to achieve or love for other persons. Only by accepting suffering does it cease to be suffering but part of man's life project. We can further note that the meaning of pain one adopts also depends on the meaning of life he has.

Dependence: a key concept for a new conception of Humanism⁹⁴

In the fields of contemporary philosophy and, I would say, American philosophy,⁹⁵ more than a few are advocating a revision of the image of man proposed by ancient and

⁹³ *S. Th.*, I-II, q. 35, a. 1

⁹⁴ This section is extracted from a paper by Maria Pia Chirinos.

⁹⁵ See A. MACINTYRE, *Dependent Rational Animals*, Duckworth, London, 1999. Martha Nussbaum's concept of Aristotelian "fragility": see *The Fragility of Goodness. Luck and Ethics in Greek Tragedy and Philosophy*, Cambridge University Press, Updated Edition 2001, chapter I and Part II. Kass's book has

modern philosophy - that is, as someone strictly rational, absolutely and autonomously free, independent, and with a will to power capable of dominating nature and interpersonal relations. As they put it: there is a need to define who man is and who woman is; to accept their limitations, their reality as creatures with bodies and souls, and to recognize their interdependence without fear. Whether we like it or not, men and women are rational animals. Antiquity and the Modern Age have tended to consider only rationality and ignored the animal. It is time to consider in depth the animal aspect of man, including the body.

This may sound like a bold statement, but the fact is that we have begun the twenty-first century facing an enormous challenge. Although the foundations of modern philosophy have already been undermined, we are still influenced by them. Following Alasdair MacIntyre, Alejandro Llano writes:

Up to now, it can be said that political philosophy and the social sciences have focused exclusively on the adult, healthy, intelligent man, in possession of full, productive and communicative powers, a citizen with full rights and a potential defender of his nation in the battlefield. In contrast, they hardly focus on children, the sick, the disabled, immigrants, or those marginalized by society. The latter are looked upon as "they"; while "we" are those who possess the positive attributes which I have enumerated at the outset.⁹⁶

We live in what could be called the culture of the superman.

Nevertheless, man needs to recover the sense of his humanity that technology, economy, and even war, have taken away from him. To do this, we must think of man in solidarity with other men rather than thinking in rationalistic or individualistic terms. That is to say, the new way of thinking that I propose does not come from a political theory that defines man as the worst enemy of man himself (coming from Hobbes' famous phrase: *homo homini lupus*: man is wolf to man). Instead, this new kind of humanism argues that man cannot live apart from others, not concerning himself about circumstances that are clearly subhuman and which cannot be ignored. This new kind of humanism has led to the emergence of activities that spring predominantly from a sense of solidarity and that seek to resolve problems of poverty, of underdevelopment and of extreme need.

The type of thinking that this new humanism fosters is not afraid to confront modern independence with the idea of dependence. It is undeniable that modernism has exalted a moral life without externally imposed norms, based on absolute freedom and on Kantian autonomy. In Kantian vocabulary autonomy is very significant because it implies that we cannot receive orders, mandates or laws from another; rather, we only give the law to ourselves.

In opposition to Kant, this new understanding of man recognizes his dependence. Because we are limited, we need to relate to, and often benefit from one another. This dependence is expressed, for example, in the need for care-giving and in the concern we have for others.

Alasdair MacIntyre has already proposed an anthropology which could be called "one of dependence".⁹⁷ A more authentic humanism, which includes the notions of man that I

many interesting and positive approaches to human body too: see *The Hungry Soul*, op. cit., chapters 1, 2 and 4. See also A. LLANO, *El diablo es conservador*, EUNSA, Pamplona, 2001, Chapter 6.

⁹⁶ A. LLANO, *Humanismo Civico*, Ariel, Madrid, 1999, p. 131

⁹⁷ A. MACINTYRE, *Dependent Rational Animals*, chapter 1.

discussed above and accepts dependent rational virtues, can only be discovered if man accepts the fact that he needs others throughout his lifetime - in infancy and old age, in sickness, family relations, education, etc.

At this point, it is relevant to address an additional aspect of manual labour. That is, the characteristic of service inherent in this type of labour when it is done in order to satisfy basic and bodily needs but within the context of the home and family. It is only taking into account this last aspect of manual labour that we can finally find proper place for work within philosophical anthropology.

Service is rooted in the human or personal dimension of human accomplishment, more or less manual. Therefore, service gives rise to manual work, which, within the context of the home, can be identified with labour previously defined as domestic. Still, as MacIntyre noted correctly in his work *Dependent Rational Animals*, "vulnerability" reveals what man is while at the same time being a consequence of his nature. When we speak of vulnerability, we must above all recognize man's corporeal dimension. For this reason, the skills needed to satisfy the daily corporeal necessities of health or of meeting material deficiencies deserve particular attention. When man works to satisfy these daily needs, he is manifesting his condition of being a creature, a bodily being.

When we conceive of man as not only a rational being but rather a corporeal being that possesses reason, we can dare to argue that man can obtain knowledge not only by way of reason, but that he can obtain a different kind of knowledge through his corporality: through the manual activities that serve corporeal needs, we can develop what has been termed as spirit of finesse. Edith Stein referred to it as empathy or knowledge by connaturality.⁹⁸ Opposed to a calculating, geometric, dominant, and rationalistic approach to knowledge, this spirit of finesse or sensitivity knows how to discover another's needs, sufferings and joys without the need for words. The spirit of finesse that I plus other philosophers argue is a natural source of knowledge, serves as a direct line between persons by means of the body's gestures, movements, or even through a smile that at times is difficult to maintain because it conceals spiritual suffering. It is a more intuitive way of knowing, less rational but definitely more human because it is directed to the heart of the other.

The labour directed not at man's intellect but rather at the totality of his being, also allows for the establishment of an entirely singular relationship with one who suffers which, in the Christian ethic, is called mercy. This virtue is absent in the Aristotelian ethic. Thus, MacIntyre attributes a most noble value to Christian morality, which springs from the marvellous service that every man must offer to his neighbour in need, despite social status, role in society, etc.⁹⁹ An attitude of service, therefore, recognizes and reveals the identical dignity of every person when he is in a state of great need. Work directed to satisfying material and daily necessities of apparently less important beings allows for the exercise of this mercy in every moment and reminds man and society of the intrinsic value of every human life.

But there is another challenge in relation to service: Discovering its positive meaning not only in the service professions, but also discovering its value as part of the manual, domestic and material work that is absolutely necessary for the flourishing of human beings. Going back to the positive notion of dependence, we will discover that

⁹⁸ See E. STEIN, *Zum Problem der Einfühlung*, Halle, Waisenhaus, 1917, Re-impression, Munich, Kaffke, 1980.

⁹⁹ A. MACINTYRE, *Dependent Rational Animals*, chapter 10. Aquinas develops this theme in *Summa Theologiae*, II-II, qq. 30-31

understanding that dependence is a good is totally revolutionary. Not only that, dependence helps us to introduce the new humanism that I am trying to explain.

We need to recognize that dependence is not opposed to the fullness of rationality or successful participation successfully in public life. This new humanism asserts that man can reach a fully rational maturity only by means of the full development of family relations. Family is the proper setting to acquire what MacIntyre calls dependent rational virtues — for example: generosity, responsibility, sobriety, respect for one's elders, etc. Along the same lines, the Italian sociologist Pierpalo Donati affirmed that the family represents the necessary link between the public and private sectors: while it belongs to the private sphere, it constantly has to relate to society.¹⁰⁰ These dependent rational virtues may not be fashionable virtues, but they have a tremendous social potential in forming rational and mature agents for the future. To a great degree this education is acquired through the material conditions of the home: well-balanced meals, making sure that the house is clean and orderly, having nice decorations, etc. These tasks are part of the foundation of the family, and the family is in the basis of society. The domestic tasks done with a spirit of service may not be as spectacular as volunteering at a soup kitchen or a shelter for the homeless, but they have a social impact that humanizes man and therefore serves the most important cell of society.

In conclusion, I wish to draw your attention to the fact that we are currently in a cultural period of great transcendence. There is a need to recover extremely deep anthropological notions never discovered in their entirety during Ancient times and forgotten in the recent past, dominated by rationalism. One of these notions is the concept of dependence that we have been considering —a positive value in the new humanism and linked to concepts such as "service", "care-giving", etc. The tasks that alleviate the sense of isolation and individualism fostered by rationalism and that serve man's bodily needs are essential for society because they are essential for family, and family is essential for human beings.

Man in the face of death and the existential problem of the afterlife

Death is the separation of body and soul, that is to say, the principle of life ceases to animate the organism it is united to. However, it should be kept in mind that the subject of death is a person. A corpse is not a dead person, it is not a person at all. Therefore, death is not simply the biological fact of life ceasing. It forms part of man's existence and has to be seen in the light of the person facing death.

From the point of view of the biological aspect of death, it can be observed that the more life beings possess, the more felt is their death. Lower forms of life merely cease to exist or they divide (like cells). From the socio-cultural perspective, death does not only have repercussions in the individual who dies, but also in society. Death is a social event. By dying, a person does not cease to be part of society. He is integrated into it in a different manner. Thus, one observes the varied customs that exist to remember those who have died.

Considered phenomenologically, death is a manner of being that affects man from the very beginning. It presents man with a horizon that determines his possibilities and makes them finite. Therefore, it is not only a future event that will eventually happen. It is also a present phenomenon to man. He has to live his life and carry out his projects with the end of his life within view. Man's view of life thus also affects his view of death. A fulfilled life produces, at the moment of death, a sentiment of having carried out one's destiny.

¹⁰⁰ See P. DONATI, *Manual de Sociología de la Familia*, EUNSA, Pamplona, 2003, Part 1, Chapter 1.

Death presents a problem. The experience of love and happiness in life seems to point to something beyond this life. The capacity to love is not finite. One can love totally and forever. Likewise, if happiness were to end with death, it would be useless. Why be happy if it were to end? Something in man therefore yearns to go beyond this life. As we have seen in the first part of this course, this is the soul which is immortal. Furthermore, death is an evil, the privation of life. Nonetheless, the following questions arise when one reflects on death:

- 1) If the soul is incorruptible and immortal, the experience of death is necessarily traumatic;
- 2) If the person dies and his soul lives, the life of the soul is incomplete and imperfect.

Regarding the first question, it is true that it is not natural for man to die. Death is indeed a traumatic experience for human nature. Thus, if death is not natural, then it must have been an evil provoked by man himself, a sort of punishment. Philosophy does not give an answer to this. But the answer is provided by religion, with the doctrine of original sin. Death is a punishment to restore the disorder caused by sin. Viewed from this perspective, death (as well as suffering) loses its bitterness since it is the way of re-establishing the disorder in nature.

Regarding the second, the human soul is incomplete in the sense that it does not constitute a person. It goes against its nature to be separated from the body. The religious doctrine of the resurrection of the body answers this demand.

Death is not a goal

Man's daily routine life shows the cyclical pattern of human temporality. That which we do every day appears to us as something that we can do "all" days, i.e., always. The limit of this time life is "death." Death is accompanied with inevitable forms of human limitation: suffering, illness, tears, effort, fatigue, frustration, ignorance, and evil.

Death is natural and anti-natural. It is natural because it is inevitable. That we all die is a factual and not a theoretical experience. It is anti-natural because it is repugnant to us. When we think of our own death, we find this a real drama. We take it most seriously, we connect it with a subjective experience that has to do with the meaningfulness or meaninglessness of how we lived our lives —fully or in an empty way, good or bad, normally or passionately. We then ask the question: "What happens to us after death?"

We die because the body disintegrates, not because we stop being capable of knowing and loving. Since the person is a composite of body and spirit, neither his body nor his spirit dies; rather it is the entire person and not his body that dies. In philosophical terms, we say that death is the body's loss of the soul. Hence, we say that to die is to lose life. Nonetheless, the person aspires for immortality because it can know and love infinitely. Even at his deathbed, he can love and continue loving. We can love because we are immortal; we are immortal because we can love. In fact, we can even give up our lives for the person we love. The loved one is more valuable than our own life in this case; so strong is love that we can transcend the evil of death. Immortality is found in the essence of love, happiness and the capacity to give one's life for a noble cause. The capacity to go beyond time points to something immortal in man, something that lives beyond death. This philosophical statement is not necessarily a religious one. The custom of burying the dead is the empirical support to this.

The human aspiration for immortality shows when we provide the ultimate justification of happiness. We want to be happy, and to be happy is a necessity. If we were to end only in death, then happiness would be false. For happiness to be true, it would need to be supported by the hope of immortality after death so that the person can be happy *forever*. If it is to be perfect, it should not be lost ever.

After-life. A destiny undiscoverable by philosophy

Death is not a goal; immortality is. The former is inevitable; the latter is a quest. Man desires to live not merely for a future which still ends; he seeks to live forever, i.e., eternally. The future is a category of time; eternity is not. There is no direct human experience of the future, much less of eternity. We can foresee a future but we cannot foresee eternity. Eternity and an eternal kind of life is undiscoverable, unreachable by philosophy. It is religion that provides some answers.

In principle, the after-life can be proven indirectly. These indirect proofs cannot show its non-existence. What reason cannot reach, belief provides. If death seems anti-natural, since there is something in the person that cannot die, death puts an end to the person but not to his spirit. Death seems to be repugnant to us because we seem to consider it as something that does not belong to our nature; something must have gone wrong in our origins that accounts for this traumatic reaction towards death. Religion, especially Christianity, provides the explanation to this by affirming that death is not an absolute evil as nihilism posits; it is a relative evil, a punishment to sin. In this light, death ceases to be an absolute annihilation and is seen as a cure accompanying the punishment. This perspective softens the impact of death and leaves hope for immortality.

If the person dies and yet something —his soul— lives on, then this living on must be imperfect and incomplete because it is not the whole person that lives on but only the spirit. If my soul is not my "I," it is because my soul separated from my body is an incomplete entity. This ontological composition of the person proves reincarnation weak. The latter posits that souls reincarnate in different bodies after death; but the person is not his soul alone and much less is the person his soul united to a body different from the one he had while he was alive. The soul is the substantial form of the body and, as such, requires that it unite after death to that body if it is to be the same person. It is also reasonable to give the corresponding reward or punishment in the afterlife to the entire person because it was the person in his psychosomatic unity that acted. Without this it would be-difficult to take any sense of responsibility and seriousness of one's actions in temporal life.

How we are to live in the after-life and what relation and dependence exists between the after-life and the life we now live are questions answered by theology.

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SUPPLEMENTARY READINGS ON THE CORPOREO-SPIRITUAL UNITY OF THE HUMAN PERSON

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Personal testimonies 06/05/2018

Anna Corry, a supernumerary member of Opus Dei, had many messages to pass on before she died of cancer on the 29th of March 2018, in Sydney, Australia. Anna was 51 years of age, wife of Martin and mother of three boys: Michael (17 years old), Dominic (14) and Andrew (11). She was misdiagnosed and told she didn't have cancer but a chest infection. Then soon afterwards she was told she only had 12 months to live. She went through chemotherapy twice but ultimately to no avail. She wanted to be honest about her interior struggle caused by her intense physical suffering and having to leave behind her young family.

This video was recorded two weeks before she died and is a summary of an extensive interview where she spoke about her final months on earth.

Transcript of the interview is found below:

They gave me a time limit of 12 months to live and it just, it shook me to the bone. I just said to them... I think I screamed out: "I can't say goodbye to my sons. I just can't do it!"

I was at home some nights. I remember saying to even the children or to my husband that I can't go through this anymore. I just can't cope. It is too painful, it is too dehumanising. I was worried that because I had been through so many things what was next?

When I came into this hospital, straight away my pain levels... they started me on a syringe drive which is a 24 hour pump that evenly distributes the narcotic or opioid that is required and it was exactly what I wanted. They titrated that according to my pain to my neurological levels and I was most impressed because when a person is without pain or at least me I just think life is worth living, life is beautiful.

I guess when you're in pain you can be irrational, illogical, you don't notice anything, you're kind of in your own world. It's a terrible situation to be in. I don't think God necessarily... you know we can offer it up and it does tremendous good but I don't think He necessarily wants us to be in pain if it can be treated.

And I know he gives us all crosses and we've got to bear them and sometimes they're emotional, we've got to work through them, or spiritual or moral. But with this physical cross he gave me... it was incredible to endure it and then to be treated for it. So the difference was amazing.

I was begging God to align His will with... sorry... my will with His. That's all I wanted but I didn't know how it was going to occur. I just didn't know how. I just couldn't see myself... Martin would say these words of wisdom... he'd even read things in the Bible or talk about Job... tell me to read Job...about his affliction...that he had so many afflictions, and what helped him.

And in the end the message... Well I actually read it myself... the message I got from that was that "you must pray for your enemies, you must do God's will or love his will." And I started reading some of the saints and particularly Saint Teresa who agreed that if we align ourselves to God's will it's more pleasing to Him than our prayer, our mortification, etc... not

that they're not pleasing, they very much are but this was more pleasing even ... and I started to think of the beauty in that.

I lacked a lot of trust, a lot. And I didn't realise until I endured this illness how much I lacked. Trust that he will look after the children...or Our Lady will. Apparently the two of us from heaven, or me from purgatory maybe, will look after the children so we will both raise them. What could be better than that?

So I lacked a lot of that trust but that's since become... well, you know best. And that's through the spiritual reading I've done, it's through talking to very wise people, the priest in spiritual direction, confession once a week... has been incredible... because they're very busy and they're giving this time for one person only. I've received communion daily which has given me tremendous graces.

And then more and more people would come with intentions mainly about their children you know; women were coming you know and it was just so beautiful to be able to help them either by just words but more praying for them because I did have quite a few hours so I was able to pray a lot.

So I've had a few regrets and I'm trying to make up for it now in spiritual communions. I've had lots of regrets in the apostolate. Trying to reach out and I wish I had been more generous with my time, towards others, I really do... and going to the tabernacle to do my prayer. That's a regret that I have.

But also I'd like to say that Father has anointed me and it's been unbelievable the graces to receive... sometimes this room was full of people and I was anointed last Sunday. I was anointed and the room was full of people. So they got to see me so happy, so relaxed after that.

Can I just say too that not on the 11th of March but on the 4th of March that I did my fidelity and it was the best day... one of the best days of my life.

Now my wedding day, the days I gave birth to my children, various other days in my life... but the days I've spent in here. Some of these days have been the best days of my life equivalent to those and that's due to most of the things I just said.

And I know that sounds crazy because here am I sitting up in a hospice but that's the truth. That's how I feel internally.

If I want to give advice to anyone... stay in the state of grace... to get to heaven. If they understand what that is.

THE CONVERSATION

Protecting your kids from failure isn't helpful. Here's how to build their resilience

Mandie Shean, Lecturer, School of Education, Edith Cowan University
July 10, 2018 6.02am AEST

Failure is a gift disguised as a bad experience.

In recent years, there has been a concerted effort to protect children from failure in order to safeguard their fragile self-esteem. This seems logical – failure is unpleasant. It tends to make you look bad, you have negative feelings of disappointment and frustration, and you often have to start again.

While this is logical, it actually has the opposite effect. Children and adolescents in Australia appear less able to cope than ever before.

The problem is, in our efforts to protect children, we take valuable opportunities for learning away from them. Failure provides benefits that cannot be gained any other way. Failure is a gift disguised as a bad experience. Failure is not the absence of success, but the experience of failure on the way to success.

The gift of coping

When we fail, we experience negative emotions such as disappointment or frustration. When children are protected from these feelings they can believe they are powerless and have no control over mastery.

The answer is not to avoid failure, but to learn how to cope with small failures. These low-level challenges have been called “steeling events”. Protecting children from these events is more likely to increase their vulnerability than promote resilience. When adults remove failure so children do not have to experience it, they become more vulnerable to future experiences of failure.

The gift of understanding natural consequences

One of the greatest gifts failure brings is we learn natural consequences to our decisions. It's a very simple concept developed by early behaviourists: “when I do X, Y happens”. If I don't study, I will fail; if I don't practice, I may lose my spot on the team.

Allowing children to experience these outcomes teaches them the power of their decisions.

When parents and teachers derail this process by protecting children from failure, they also stand in the way of natural consequences. Studies show children who are protected from failure are more depressed and less satisfied with life in adulthood.

The gift of learning

Mistakes are the essence of learning. As we have new experiences and develop competence, it's inevitable we make mistakes. If failure is held as a sign of incompetence and something that should be avoided (rather than a normal thing), children will start to avoid the challenges necessary for learning.

Failure is only a gift if students see it as an opportunity rather than a threat. This depends on their mindset.

Children with a growth mindset believe intelligence is malleable and can be changed with effort. Those with a fixed mindset believe they were born with a certain level of intelligence. So, failure is a signal for growth mindset children to try harder or differently, but a sign they aren't smart enough for children with a fixed mindset.

Praise should be focused on effort

Praise can be used to compensate and help children feel valuable in the face of failure. We see this when children get a participation ribbon in a running race for coming in last.

But research indicates, paradoxically, this inflated praise has the opposite effect. In the study, when parents gave inflated praise (“incredibly” good work) and person-focused praise (such as “you’re beautiful”, “you’re smart” or “you’re special”), children’s self-esteem decreased.

Read more: Children learn from stress and failure: all the more reason you shouldn't do their homework

Praise that is person-focused results in children avoiding failure and challenging tasks to maintain acceptance and self-worth. This is because praise is conditional on “who they are” rather than their efforts.

Praise for effort sounds like “you worked really hard”. This is better because children can control how hard they work, but they can’t control how smart or special they are. Children need to be free to learn without there being a risk to their sense of worth.

Tips for parents

So how do we do this well? Here are some tips to help parents support their children:

How to teach your children it's okay to fail

- 1 Don't protect children from **low-risk natural consequences**.

For example, if they don't study and fail an assessment don't defend them, let them deal with the consequences at school.



- 2 Use experiences of failure as a **chance to grow and learn**.

Talk through the experience and work out what to do differently next time.

- 3 Remind your child that **negative emotions come with failure and they are OK**.

They should feel them and move on to do things differently in the future.



- 4 Give **genuine praise for effort** ("you tried hard", "great perseverance"), but **don't feel the need to give inflated untrue praise** when children haven't actually done anything.



Protecting your child from failure isn't actually helpful. Allow them to feel and live it, and let them have the gifts failure brings. Experiencing failure will make them more resilient and more likely to succeed in the future.

CHAPTER 3. THE SOCIAL NATURE OF THE HUMAN PERSON

3.1 The Social Nature of the Person

3.1.1 Dialogue and communication between humans

3.1.2 Language and symbol

3.1.3 The nature of society

3.1.4 Forms of social relations

3.2 Friendship and its characteristics

3.3 Flourishing as Individuals and in Society

3.1 The Social Nature of the Person

Earlier, when studying the characteristics of person, we saw man's dialogic nature, that is, his natural tendency to interact with other people. Man needs others to behave according to what he is and thus reach his fullness. Therefore, we affirm that man is naturally altruistic: he is naturally concerned about the welfare of others. This then leads him to relate to them.

The reason why man needs other men is because his human nature cannot fully develop without others. He needs others for his nourishment and growth when he is still a baby. He depends on others for his education and training. As an adult, his interaction with other people helps him develop socio-cultural traits that form his personality.

Only rational creatures can form communities because the end has to be known and wanted in conjunction with others. Several elements of social life arise in order to achieve those ends: human action, language, communication or exchange, money, authority, division of labour or the organization of common duties, and justice and law.

Non-rational beings merely group together. Since they do not know ends but act only out of instinct, their grouping together is simply to preserve the species, e.g., for mutual protection, for nourishment, for reproduction. Thus, the individuals of a group become merely means to serve the ends of the species. They do not establish ends for themselves; they are given in their nature and they tend towards them instinctively.

Aristotle remarks that "every man feels naturally like a friend to other men". The natural and spontaneous feeling of man towards other men is friendliness.

It is then natural and spontaneous for men to form societies: there is no need for an *explicit* contract.

3.1.1 Dialogue and communication between humans

When the members of a community share the same ends and means, they need to dialogue with one another. Communication and exchange thus comes into play. It should be kept in mind that different types of goods can be exchanged or communicated.

There are *material* goods, like money or property. These types of goods cannot be shared by many. They are rather distributed among many. If one person has them, another cannot have them. Moreover, material goods usually serve as means to achieve ends.

Then there are *spiritual* goods, like ideas, knowledge, a country's laws. These goods are shared through language and, in modern times, through means of mass communication. In contrast to material goods, spiritual goods do not diminish when shared. On the contrary, they are multiplied. Furthermore, spiritual goods have value in themselves. They are not means to an end. But their important characteristic is that they can be shared, which is precisely what makes a community possible: many share in something common.

One can also communicate *services*, a mixture of material and spiritual goods. In a community authority is necessary to establish order in the sharing of goods and in the achievement of ends. Authority is a form of service. Also, common action has to be organized to achieve ends and use the means most efficiently. Thus, division of labour now comes into play.

3.1.2 Language and symbol

Language is a demand of inter-subjectivity. People have to communicate with one another and they do so through language. But language is also a consequence of inter-subjectivity. Men have to concur in a manner of expression which can be understood by others. Voice in itself does not have meaning, but only manifests internal states. A dog's bark indicates whether it is happy, angry, or in pain. In that sense, it communicates. However, it cannot vocalize concepts. Human voice therefore needs language in order to express meaningful concepts. Language has to use conventional symbols (letters grouped together into words, characters, figures) to be able to carry out this function. The symbols used have to be agreed upon and this is where we see that language is a product of a rational nature. The symbols chosen reflect the culture of the persons who developed the language. It has been rightly said that symbols in language are a continuation of nature.

3.1.3 The Nature of Society

Society in general refers to any union of persons which aims, under a constant authority, at a common end. Societies may be of different kinds depending on their origin and ends. There are natural societies (e.g.: the family) and other societies (e.g.: cultural, religious, or professional societies).¹⁰¹

3.1.4 Forms of social relations

Depending upon one's point of view, social relations can take on varied forms. The most basic form of social relation is that of *friendship* and *love*, when one person relates to another or several other persons, but in such numbers that one can establish a close relationship.

If we look at social relations from the point of view of achieving the ends of man, that is, man's fulfilment as a person, then several social institutions are involved. These institutions then give rise to specific forms of social relations, usually directed towards achieving the ends that they try to achieve. They are as follows:

The Family

The *family* is the first and most basic human institution. It is natural in its origin. It is where the person is born, grows, reproduces, and dies. The relationship of personal love is proper to a family. It is the venue where the individual is loved for his own sake and learns to love others in turn. Furthermore, through the family, the original stock is also spread and is perpetuated through generations. However, the family does more than account for man's biological life. It

¹⁰¹ Sullivan, D. *An Introduction to Philosophy*, (TAN: 1957), pp. 172-3.

is also in the family where man develops his personality. He acquires knowledge, ways of behaving and thinking, customs, habits.

The family is the first natural society.

The Church considers the family as the first natural society, with underived rights that are proper to it, and places it at the centre of social life. Relegating the family “to a subordinate or secondary role, excluding it from its rightful position in society, would be to inflict grave harm on the authentic growth of society as a whole”. The family, in fact, is born of the intimate communion of life and love founded on the marriage between one man and one woman. ... it is the principal place of interpersonal relationships, the first and vital cell of society. The family is a divine institution that stands at the foundation of life of the human person as the prototype of every social order.¹⁰²

Importance of the Family for the Person

The family has central importance in reference to the person. It is in this cradle of life and love that people are born and grow; when a child is conceived, society receives the gift of a new person who is called “from the innermost depths of self to communion with others and to the giving of self to others”. It is in the family, therefore, that the mutual giving of self on the part of man and woman united in marriage creates an environment of life in which children “develop their potentialities, become aware of their dignity and prepare to face their unique and individual destiny”. ...

“The first and fundamental structure for ‘human ecology’ is the family, in which man receives his first formative ideas about truth and goodness, and learns what it means to love and to be loved, and thus what it actually means to be a person”. The obligations of its members, in fact, are not limited by the terms of a contract but derive from the very essence of the family, founded on the irrevocable marriage covenant and given structure in the relationships that arise within it following the generation or adoption of children.¹⁰³

Importance of the Family for Society

The family, the natural community in which human social nature is experienced, makes a unique and irreplaceable contribution to the good of society. The family unit, in fact, is born from the communion of persons. “‘Communion’ has to do with the personal relationship between the ‘I’ and the ‘thou’. ‘Community’ on the other hand transcends this framework and moves towards a ‘society’, a ‘we’. The family, as a community of persons, is thus the first human ‘society’”.

A society built on a family scale is the best guarantee against drifting off course into individualism or collectivism, because within the family the person is always at the centre of attention as an end and never as a means. It is patently clear that the good of persons and the proper functioning of society are closely connected “with the healthy state of conjugal and family life”. Without families that are strong in their communion and stable in their commitment peoples grow weak. In the family, moral values are taught starting from the very first years of life, the spiritual heritage of the

¹⁰² CSDC 211.

¹⁰³ CSDC 212.

religious community and the cultural legacy of the nation are transmitted. In the family one learns social responsibility and solidarity.¹⁰⁴

The priority of the family over society and over the State must be affirmed. The family in fact, at least in its procreative function, is the condition itself for their existence. With regard to other functions that benefit each of its members, it proceeds in importance and value the functions that society and the State are called to perform. The family possesses inviolable rights and finds its legitimization in human nature and not in being recognized by the State. The family, then, does not exist for society or the State, but society and the State exist for the family.

Every social model that intends to serve the good of man must not overlook the centrality and social responsibility of the family. In their relationship to the family, society and the State are seriously obligated to observe the principle of subsidiarity. In virtue of this principle, public authorities may not take away from the family tasks which it can accomplish well by itself or in free association with other families; on the other hand, these same authorities have the duty to sustain the family, ensuring that it has all the assistance that it needs to fulfil properly its responsibilities.¹⁰⁵

Natural societies

As distinct from "artificial" or voluntary societies, such as a university or a business corporation, "natural" societies are those which arise spontaneously, without any new inclination of the will. These are the family, and civil society.

On a wider scale, one can refer to the human family, the family of mankind: different societies comprising the larger international community. In a manner of speaking, one can also refer to the human race, since all men descended from a single stock. With the phenomenon of globalization, the awareness of a need for nations to help and support one another to achieve common goals, namely, the universal common good.¹⁰⁶

Economic and Professional Institutions

Economic and *professional* institutions exist to provide the means to satisfy man's needs through technology and work. The basic institution is the *company*. Persons are usually valued for their utility. Through division of labour and task specialization, each is needed to achieve the company's goals. However, it is also possible that friendship is also developed among workers in a company, but this does not alter the relationship of utility.

Political and Juridical Institutions

Political and *juridical* institutions establish authority in a community, for the sake of ordering towards the common good. The usual form of this type of institution is the government or state. The relationships between persons that arise are based on justice.¹⁰⁷

¹⁰⁴ CSDC 213.

¹⁰⁵ CSDC 214.

¹⁰⁶ Cf. CCC, 1911.

¹⁰⁷ Despite the social differences that exist among men, unity and love go beyond them. Societies and communities are formed for a practical purpose, they exist for pragmatic reasons. However, love values the person for what he is. Love seeks union with the beloved and puts aside any factors that can bring about disunity. It seeks to give oneself, to sacrifice for the other, to desire what is best for the other.

Educational Institutions

Educational institutions train persons to carry out their role in society by giving them a profession and pointing out the way for them to achieve their fulfilment as persons. An educational institution is in fact a microcosm of society where authority, friendship, division of labour exist. To a certain point, an educational institution can even be an extension of the family, where parents are involved in the formation of their children.

Cultural and Religious Institutions

Cultural and *religious* institutions help men develop certain values. The more important ones are those that are directed towards the development of human behaviour, namely those that try to achieve moral and religious ends. What is specific to these types of institutions is the cultivation of man and his inner life, as well as the worship due to his Creator. The relations between persons in such institutions can even be stronger than in any of the above-mentioned institutions.

3.2 Friendship and its characteristics

Friendship is a relationship of benevolent love, that is, loving the good for the other person, valuing the person as “another I”. However, friendship adds the characteristic of dialogue and reciprocation. Love that is not reciprocated cannot be called friendship. Likewise, it has been said that “friendship is a habitual dialogue, a conversation that is interrupted only on some moments”. There are two types of friendship: *personal* and *private*, meaning that one shares one’s intimacy with one or some friends; *civil* or *friendly relations*, directed towards all persons. In both cases the characteristics of friendship apply, though less intensely in the latter than in the former. Let us now study those characteristics:

1) Friendship does not seek one’s own interest or pleasure. It is *disinterested*. A friend is loved for his or her own sake.

2) True friendship springs from *sharing a common task*. One characteristic typical to friendship is to seek the company of a friend. This companionship is usually achieved in the fulfilment of a shared task, striving for a common objective.

3) Disagreements can arise between friends. However, disagreements do not necessarily have to be divisive. They can be an opportunity to dialogue and share experiences and thus enrich each one’s point of view.

4) Friendship implies *likeness*. They are alike in their tastes and interests. This is another aspect of sharing something in common. This explains why friends are motivated to do things which they would not do if they were alone. To be with people we know is also a natural preference.

5) Friendship develops with *time*. The reason for this is that true friendship starts only when friends open up their inner lives to one another. As long as this does not happen, then friendship is superficial and eventually disappears. This characteristic depends on the character of persons. Timidity, shyness, high regard for one’s privacy will evidently make friendship more difficult.

6) Once friendship has developed, it becomes stable because it is based on an intimate and personal knowledge of another which facilitates help, understanding, dialogue,

and sharing of one's own concerns. As long as dealing continues, friendship develops even more and intensifies.

7) Friendship is related to justice. To be a friend means to give what is due to the other. However, in the case of friendship, love goes together with justice since it leads one to love the other as deserved.

3.3 Flourishing as Individuals and in Society

Society is for the person, not the person for society:

“Far from being the object or passive element of social life, the human person is rather, and must always remain, its subject, foundation and goal. The origin of social life is therefore found in the human person, and society cannot refuse to recognize its active and responsible subject; every expression of society must be directed towards the human person.”¹⁰⁸

Pluralism

The social nature of human beings is not uniform but is expressed in many different ways. In fact, the common good depends on a healthy social pluralism. The different components of society are called to build a unified and harmonious whole, within which it is possible for each element to preserve and develop its own characteristics and autonomy. Some components — such as the family, the civil community and the religious community — respond more immediately to the intimate nature of man, while others come about more on a voluntary basis. “To promote the participation of the greatest number in the life of a society, the creation of voluntary associations and institutions must be encouraged ‘on both national and international levels, which relate to economic and social goals, to cultural and recreational activities, to sport, to various professions, and to political affairs’. This ‘socialization’ also expresses the natural tendency for the sake of attaining objectives that exceed individual capacities. It develops the qualities of the person, especially the sense of initiative and responsibility, and helps guarantee his rights”.¹⁰⁹

We can say that the *end*, purpose or goal of society is *the good of every man in that society*.

The Common Good

The common good is defined as “the sum total of social conditions which allow people, either as groups or as individuals, to reach their fulfillment more fully and more easily.”¹¹⁰

The common good concerns the life of *all*, and has three essential elements:

First, the common good presupposes respect for the person. In the name of the common good, public authorities are bound to respect the fundamental and inalienable rights of the human person. Society should permit each of its members to fulfil his

¹⁰⁸ CSDC 106

¹⁰⁹ CSDC 151.

¹¹⁰ CCC 1906; *Gaudium et Spes*, 26.

vocation. In particular, the common good resides in the conditions for the exercise of the natural freedoms indispensable for the development of the human vocation, such as "the right to act according to a sound norm of conscience and to safeguard . . . privacy, and rightful freedom also in matters of religion."¹¹¹

Second, the common good requires the social well-being and development of the group itself. ... Certainly, it is the proper function of authority to arbitrate, in the name of the common good, between various particular interests; but it should make accessible to *each* what is needed to lead a truly human life: food, clothing, health, work, education and culture, suitable information, the right to establish a family, and so on.¹¹²

Finally, the common good requires peace, that is, the stability and security of a just order. It presupposes that authority should ensure by morally acceptable means the security of society and its members. It is the basis of the right to legitimate personal and collective defence.¹¹³

It is the role of the state to defend and promote the common good of civil society, its citizens, and intermediate bodies.¹¹⁴

Human interdependence is increasing and gradually spreading throughout the world. The unity of the human family, embracing people who enjoy equal natural dignity, implies a universal common good. This good calls for an organization of the community of nations able to "provide for the different needs of men; this will involve the sphere of social life to which belong questions of food, hygiene, education, and certain situations arising here and there, as for example, alleviating the miseries of refugees dispersed throughout the world, and assisting migrants and their families."¹¹⁵

The common good of society is not an end in itself; it has value only in reference to attaining the ultimate ends of the person and the universal common good of the whole of creation. God is the ultimate end of his creatures and for no reason may the common good be deprived of its transcendent dimension, which moves beyond the historical dimension while at the same time fulfilling it ... A purely historical and materialistic vision would end up transforming the common good into a simple socio-economic well-being, without any transcendental goal, that is, without its most intimate reason for existing.¹¹⁶

Society is essential to the fulfillment of the human vocation.¹¹⁷ The Social Doctrine of the Church enunciates fundamental principles, 'including those pertaining to the social order,' 'to the extent that they are required by the fundamental rights of the human person or the salvation of souls'.¹¹⁸

With her social doctrine, the Church aims "at helping man on the path of salvation". This is her primary and sole purpose. There is no intention to usurp or invade the duties of others or to neglect her own; nor is there any thought of pursuing objectives that are foreign to her mission. This mission serves to give an overall shape to the Church's

¹¹¹ CCC 1907

¹¹² CCC 1908

¹¹³ CCC 1909

¹¹⁴ CCC 1910. At the same time, everyone is responsible for promoting the common good.

¹¹⁵ CCC 1911.

¹¹⁶ CSDC 170

¹¹⁷ CCC1886

¹¹⁸ CSDC 71.

right and at the same time her duty to develop a social doctrine of her own and to influence society and societal structures with it by means of the responsibility and tasks to which it gives rise.¹¹⁹

In the social doctrine of the Church can be found the principles for reflection, the criteria for judgment and the directives for action which are the starting point for the promotion of an integral and solidary humanism.¹²⁰

The key principles of the Church's social teaching are human dignity, the common good, subsidiarity and solidarity. The principles are interconnected and must be appreciated in their unity, not taken partially or separately.¹²¹

A summary of some of the Church's key social principles and teachings is included in the supplementary readings.

Individualisms and Collectivisms

Individualist doctrine regarding life in society

In the history of philosophy, men have sometimes emphasized the importance of the individual to the extent of downplaying his social nature. Society would be a body of autonomous individuals who have no other choice but to live with one another. *Thomas Hobbes* was the principal proponent of this modern liberal individualism. His thought can be summarized in the following points:

- 1) Each man's free choice ends where the another man's begins;
- 2) Man seeks his own interests above everything else and is incapable of disinterested actions.

There is nothing wrong in affirming the importance of freedom and that it should be exercised according to each one's manner of being. However, liberal individualism focuses on the egoistic aspect of a person's actions. Egoism fosters self-interest above all, leading people to isolate themselves from others. Human beings then consider themselves to be self-sufficient and to not need others for anything. It creates the mentality of "each to their own".

Individualism establishes an exaggerated separation between private and public life. One's private life is the domain of personal beliefs, values, interests, in a word, one's intimacy. No one can meddle in this. One's public life, on the other hand, consists of one's relations with others. Beliefs and values have no place in public life because they would be impositions on other people's beliefs and values. It is the state's duty to regulate individuals so that their privacy is respected and so that each one contributes to the state the way they should.

Collectivist doctrines

Collectivism is the exact opposite of individualism. Whereas the latter focuses on the unbounded freedom of the individual, the former places society above the individuals composing it.

As a philosophical doctrine, collectivism originated with French socialism at the end of the 18th century. The first socialist movement failed during the French revolution in 1796. It was revived

¹¹⁹ CSDC 69

¹²⁰ CSDC 7.

¹²¹ CSDC 162.

by *Count de Saint-Simon* (1760-1825), a socialist whose principal contribution was to propose a naturalistic science of society as a guide to social reconstruction. *Charles Fourier* (1772-1837) performed some social experiments, grouping people into communities which were autonomous, self-sufficient, devoted to work and love in an atmosphere of freedom, enthusiasm and harmony. *Louis Blanc* advocated a socialist state that would enforce equality by state ownership of the means of production. From him came the slogan, “from each according to his ability, to each according to his need.”

Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel (1770-1831) maintained that individual man disappears into the collective historical spirit, that is to say, the evolutionary process of the spirit achieving self-revelation through dialectics.

These different philosophies would influence *Karl Marx* (1818-1833) in his doctrine of the socialist state with its revolutionary praxis to set-up the dictatorship of the proletariat, eventually giving way to the definitive communist state.

The human person may never be thought of only as an absolute individual being, built up by himself and on himself, as if his characteristic traits depended on no one else but himself. Nor can the person be thought of as a mere cell of an organism that is inclined at most to grant it recognition in its functional role within the overall system. Reductionist conceptions of the full truth of men and women have already been the object of the Church's social concern many times, and she has not failed to raise her voice against these, as against other drastically reductive perspectives, taking care to proclaim instead that “individuals do not feel themselves isolated units, like grains of sand, but united by the very force of their nature and by their internal destiny, into an organic, harmonious mutual relationship”[234]. She has affirmed instead that man cannot be understood “simply as an element, a molecule within the social organism”, and is therefore attentive that the affirmation of the primacy of the person is not seen as corresponding to an individualistic or mass vision.¹²²

Further Reading:

Boudreau, J., *Ubuntu- “I am what I am because of who we all are”*

What does the Church say about the Common Good? (10 second summary)

Promoting Human Flourishing: Principles and Major Themes of Catholic Social Teaching

Sources for Chapter 3:

- Cenzone, M. A. *Introduction to Philosophical Anthropology*
- Burke C. *Man and Values. A Personalist Anthropology*, Scepter, 2007.
- Yepes, R., *Fundamentos de Antropología: un ideal de la excelencia humana*, Pamplona 1996.

¹²² CDSC 125.

SUPPLEMENTARY READINGS ON THE INDIVIDUAL PERSON AND SOCIETY

- Boudreau, J., *Ubuntu- "I am what I am because of who we all are"*
- Promoting Human Flourishing: Principles and Major Themes of Catholic Social Teaching

Ubuntu- “I am what I am because of who we all are”

Jen Boudreau, 2 December 2002.

<https://motivationinspirationandlife.wordpress.com/2012/06/02/ubuntu-i-am-what-i-am-because-of-who-we-all-are/>

“Ubuntu is a philosophy that considers the success of the group above that of the individual.” Stephen Lundin- *Ubuntu!*

The word ‘Ubuntu’ originates from one of the *Bantu dialects of Africa*, and is pronounced as uu-Boon-too. It is a traditional African philosophy that offers us an understanding of ourselves in relation with the world. According to Ubuntu, *there exists a common bond between us all and it is through this bond, through our interaction with our fellow human beings, that we discover our own human qualities.* Or as the Zulus would say, “Umuntu Ngumuntu Ngabantu”, which means that a person is a person through other persons. We affirm our humanity when we acknowledge that of others. The South African Nobel Laureate Archbishop Desmond Tutu describes Ubuntu as:

It is the essence of being human. It speaks of the fact that my humanity is caught up and is inextricably bound up in yours. I am human because I belong. It speaks about wholeness, it speaks about compassion. *A person with Ubuntu is welcoming, hospitable, warm and generous, willing to share. Such people are open and available to others, willing to be vulnerable, affirming of others, do not feel threatened that others are able and good, for they have a proper self-assurance that comes from knowing that they belong in a greater whole.* They know that they are diminished when others are humiliated, diminished when others are oppressed, diminished when others are treated as if they were less than who they are. The quality of Ubuntu gives people resilience, enabling them to survive and emerge still human despite all efforts to dehumanize them.¹²³



“An anthropologist studying the habits and customs of an African tribe found himself surrounded by children most days. So he decided to play a little game with them. He managed to get candy from the nearest town and put it all in a decorated basket. at the foot of a tree. Then he called the children and suggested they play the game. When the anthropologist said “now”, the children had to run to the tree and the first one to get there could have all the candy to him/herself. So the children all lined up waiting for the signal. When the anthropologist said “now”, all of the children took each other by the hand ran together towards the tree. They all arrived at the same time divided up the candy, sat down and began to happily munch away. The anthropologist went over to them and asked why they had all run together when any one of them could have had the candy all to themselves. The children responded: “Ubuntu. How

¹²³ <http://www.buzzle.com/editorials/7-22-2006-103206.asp>

could any one of us be happy if all the others were sad?" Ubuntu is a philosophy of African tribes that can be summed up as "I am what I am because of who we all are."¹²⁴



"A person with Ubuntu is open and available to others, affirming of others, does not feel threatened that others are able and good, based from a proper self-assurance that comes from knowing that he or she belongs in a greater whole and is diminished when others are humiliated or diminished, when others are tortured or oppressed" -Desmond Tutu

"One of the sayings in our country is Ubuntu – the essence of being human. Ubuntu speaks particularly about the fact that you can't exist as a human being in isolation. It speaks about our interconnectedness. You can't be human all by yourself, and when you have this quality – Ubuntu – you are known for your generosity. We think of ourselves far too frequently as just individuals, separated from one another, whereas you are connected and what you do affects the whole World. When you do well, it spreads out; it is for the whole of humanity." -Desmond Tutu



¹²⁴ <http://morvensblog.wordpress.com/2012/04/23/ubuntu-a-lesson-from-the-children/>

Promoting Human Flourishing

Principles and Major Themes of Catholic Social Teaching

This material is sourced and paraphrased from the Diocese of St Paul Minneapolis, <http://www.osjspm.org/> Used by: Tohill, Angela, Passion for Justice: A Social Justice Teaching Resource. Copyright: St Vincent de Paul Society Victoria, 2004. Used with permission.

The following summary highlights ten major themes from Catholic Social Teaching (CST) of the last century or more. It's informed by various publications including documents by popes, bishops and synods. These principles are not exclusive to the Catholic Church of course but are common to many religious traditions and humanist approaches to full human development. They have come to be known as the Principles of Catholic Social Teaching because they are articulated and enshrined in many of the official documents of the Church.

Dignity of the Human Person

Belief in the intrinsic dignity of the human person is the basis of all Catholic social teaching. Human life is sacred and the dignity of the human person is the starting point for an ethical vision of society. This principle is grounded in the idea that the person is made in the image of God. The dignity of the human person is not diminished by age, ability, ethnicity, economic status or any other factor. Human dignity belongs to all people at all times simply by virtue of their being human.

Common Good and Community

The human person is both holy and social. Humans realise their dignity and human rights in relationship with others, in community. Human beings grow and achieve completion in community. Human dignity can only be realised and protected in the context of relationships with the wider society. How we arrange our society – in economics and politics, in law and policy – directly affects human dignity and the capacity of individuals to grow in community. The obligation to 'love our neighbour' has an individual dimension, but it also requires a broader social obligation. Everyone has a responsibility to contribute to the good of the whole society, to the common good.

Preferential Option for the Poor

The moral test of a society is how it treats its most vulnerable members. The poor have the most urgent moral claim on the conscience of the nation. We are called to look at public policy decisions in terms of how they affect the poor. The 'preferential option for the poor' is not an adversarial slogan that pits one group or class against another. Rather it states that the deprivation and powerlessness of the poor wounds the whole community. The option for the poor is an essential part of society's effort to achieve the common good. A healthy community can be achieved only if its members give special consideration to those with special needs, to those who are poor or on the margins of society.

Subsidiarity

The State has a positive moral function. It is an instrument to promote human dignity, protect human rights and build the common good. All people have a right and a responsibility to participate in political institutions so that government can achieve its proper goals. The principle of subsidiarity holds that the functions of government should be performed at the lowest level possible (that is, at the level closest to those people who are affected by decisions and policies) as long as they can be performed adequately. When the needs in question cannot be adequately met at the lower level, then it is not only necessary but crucial that higher levels of government intervene. In other words, the Principle of Subsidiarity holds that no responsibility should accrue to a higher body that can rightly and satisfactorily be undertaken by a lesser body.

The Universal Purpose of Goods

The goods of Earth are for all people to share. People have the right to own private property, however, this right comes with a caveat: we may not accumulate excess wealth for ourselves alone. Justice demands that all people should have access to the goods of society and that these must be equally shared in order to allow all to flourish.

Stewardship of Creation

The goods of Earth are gifts from God and they are intended for the benefit of everyone. There is a 'social mortgage' that guides our use of the world's goods, and we have a responsibility to care for those goods as stewards and trustees, not as mere consumers and users. How we treat the environment is a measure of our stewardship, not only for the present but for generations yet to come. Earth is home not only to the human family but to a wide diversity of plant and animal life as well. Stewardship means safeguarding the diversity of all life and recognising the interdependence of all life forms on the planet.

Promotion of Peace

Christian values promote peace as a positive, action-oriented concept. In the words of Pope John Paul II, '... peace is not just the absence of war. It involves mutual respect and confidence between peoples and nations. It involves collaboration and binding agreements.' There is a close relationship between peace and justice. Peace is the fruit of justice and is dependent upon right order among human beings. The common good is able to flourish more readily in a peaceful context.

Participation

All people have a right to participate in the economic, political and cultural life of society. It is a fundamental demand of justice and a requirement for human dignity that all people be assured of a minimum level of participation in the community. It is wrong for a person to be excluded unfairly or to be unable to participate in society.

Global Solidarity

We are one human family. Our responsibilities to each other cross national, racial, economic and ideological differences. We are called to work globally for justice. Authentic development must be fully human development. It must respect and promote personal, social, economic and political rights, including the rights of nations and of peoples. It must avoid extremes of underdevelopment on the one hand and 'super development' on the other. Accumulating material goods and technical resources will be unsatisfactory and debasing if there is no respect for the moral, cultural and spiritual dimensions of the human person.

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CHAPTER 4: CULTURE AND HUMAN ACTIVITY

- 5.12 What is Culture?
- 5.13 Manifestations of human nature in culture
- 5.14 Human Beings are Cultural Beings
- 5.15 Cultural relativism and evaluation of cultures
- 5.16 Values as ends of human behaviour; their hierarchy and transmission
- 5.17 The transcendental foundations of values
- 5.18 Language and tradition
- 5.19 Expressions of culture. Religion, arts, laws
- 5.20 The formation of the human person in time
- 5.21 The problem of the inculturation of the faith

4.1 What is Culture?

Human activity can be classified as natural, and cultural or artificial.

1. *Natural* activity includes those actions that spring from the essence of man, in accordance with the classical adage *operari sequitur esse* (action follows being). Such activities (eg. thinking, willing, laughing, etc) would be common to all men since all men possess the same essence.
2. *Cultural* or *artificial* activities are those that spring from what man has made himself to be, (eg. that a man plays the guitar, or can sing certain songs, or that he becomes a doctor).

These two spheres of human activity are not opposed. In fact, as we will see later on, human nature and culture are not two separate spheres of activity but belong to the same reality of the person. What is necessary to point out at this stage is that no human activity can be dissociated from the good of man. Since actions are commanded by the will, following the intellect's operation, they all determine man in relation to his end, to what he wants to make of himself. Man's activity either develops him as a person or degrades him. Our choices and actions play a role in making us into the people we become.

The verb *colere* comes from the Latin world and has three meanings:

- Physical (to cultivate the earth),
- Ethical (to cultivate one's self according to the ideal of *humanitas*), and
- Religious (to give cult to God).

In socio-cultural anthropology, the term "culture" has its own meaning, different from its everyday usage, however it conserves the three meanings of *colere*.

4.2 Manifestations of human nature in culture

From one perspective, culture can be viewed as everything that man learns and retains in himself as part of his inner life. It therefore has the connotation of interior wealth. A person who thus knows a lot about a particular subject is said to be cultured.

From another point of view, culture is a manifestation of human nature. In this sense, one can speak of several dimensions:

1) Culture is composed of expressive actions, since one characteristic of the person is *the external expression of what is inside of him*. In this case, culture would be knowing how to speak, etiquette and courtesy towards others, etc.

2) Human expression makes use of material to which it adds a form not there before. This is what happens when man performs *productive actions* that end up in human works, such as producing a painting.

3) Culture also has a *symbolic* function: things have certain use and an end. Thus, for example, a clenched fist can signify victory for some people, and can mean a physical challenge to others. Language also varies from one people to another.

4) Culture is *historical*. Since human beings are immersed in time and develop over time, their actions can also vary over a historical period.

All cultures have a system of evaluation (an *ethos*), a series of cognitive existential elements (world view) and a deposit of sacred symbols (religion). The combination of these three activities and, more specifically, the result of the three is called "culture."

4.3 Human Beings are Cultural Beings

We have mentioned that nature and culture are linked in the reality of the person. Some philosophies have seen an opposition between the two. Nature is identified with what is purely biological in man, what is stable in him: his essence. Culture would be whatever is added on to that nature, what changes. However, this would be reducing human nature to what is least human. Man would be a merely biological entity with a different configuration from other biological entities.

However, nature should not be understood in its mechanist or naturalist sense that is, as something completely self-sufficient and enclosed in itself. Nature is rather the principle of operations. It tends towards an end, which is the good of the possessor of that nature. Therefore, when man engages in activity, he grows in culture and manifests the culture he has. Thus, man can be called a cultural being. Nature is not opposed to culture but flows into it.

Objective and subjective meanings of the term "culture"

Culture can be viewed objectively and subjectively. Objectively, culture would be the reality grasped by persons which begins to form part of their inner life as well as the product of possessing culture. However, culture is also subjective in the sense that knowledge is processed by the person and acted upon in his own particular way perhaps different from another person. For example, music is the science or art of ordering tones or sounds in succession, in combination, and in temporal relationships to produce a composition having unity and continuity. This is its objective meaning. However, when composing or interpreting music, a Japanese person might do so differently from an American or Cuban person.

4.4 Cultural relativism and evaluation of cultures

Nonetheless, truth always underlies any subjective cultural manifestation. Culture is not merely the expression of subjectivity, but also an expression of truth seen from a subjective point of view.

Furthermore, culture is a manifestation of human nature. This is objective. Therefore, certain cultural traits can indeed be contrary to human nature and be judged as such. One would not say that cannibalism is a legitimate cultural trait of some tribal people or that the offering of human sacrifice is culturally acceptable generally.

Cultural relativism is an error. To say that all cultures or cultural traits are good because they all depend on a cultural group's use of their legitimate freedom is wrong. Cultures can be evaluated from the standpoint of the truth and of human nature. A culture that does not meet those criteria is de-humanizing.

4.5 Values as ends of human behaviour, their hierarchy and transmission

Any culture will typically end up possessing values. Certain practices or traditions will be observed because they are *valuable*. Values therefore make reference to the end (purpose or goal) of an action. Often, those ends are the values each one possesses. For example, elegance is a value that guides a person's way of dressing, and it is believed that elegance dignifies a person. Values have "value" in themselves. All other things are measured in reference to those values.

Through different sources, man adopts a set of values. These values are not equally important. They have a certain hierarchy. The more intensely and profoundly they affect the person as such, the higher they are.

As to their origin, three sources can be pinpointed:

1. Values followed in the society one lives in;
2. Values received through education, be it through learning institutions or the family;
3. Values discovered through personal experience, either one's own or through friends.

Values are manifested in personal lifestyles. These lifestyles give rise to models, and it is through these models that values are often transmitted to others. A model is presented as a hero or idol, someone who has achieved a humanity that is more perfect than one's contemporaries, therefore, models can have a positive effect on others. The problem is choosing the right models. People can end up choosing models who really have no qualification to be so. In modern times, popularity or success is mistakenly equated to being a model, which often should not be the case.

Universal cultural patterns

Cultural patterns of behaviour have been found since the beginning of mankind to the present. They are universal.

A. Utensils

The first cultural pattern is the making of tools, instruments, or utensils. Anatomically equipped with a brain, the human intelligence enables man to adapt to the environment, remember the past and gather experience, correct the past, analyse the present, and prepare for the future.

His ability to experiment leads him to extend his body parts like the hands. Thus, tools were invented and will continue being invented to achieve his goals efficiently and more comfortably: from stones to knives, from spears, hooks to nets, from axes to arrows, from horse carriages to cars and ships, from airplanes to computers and handheld gadgets. He also invented ways of procuring food: from hunting and fishing to the domestication of animals to agriculture.

From worshipping fire, humans learned to domesticate it and use it for light and to keep warm. From being nomadic, he learned to settle down, first living in caves, then in huts and today in high-rise buildings and even in space for research purposes. All tools are, in fact, a result of the intelligence's ability to abstract and objectivise.

B. Norms.

The second cultural pattern is the establishment of rules or norms to regulate human relations and individual and social activity.

Since man has no instincts in the strict sense, his natural tendencies are substituted or made up for by the forging of habits and by the institutionalization of socially agreed upon customs and juridical and ethical norms.

C. Human language

The third cultural pattern is language. A language is understood as a system of communication used by a social group (*lingua*, languages or language systems). It is distinguished from human language or the human capacity for intelligible speech. What we are interested in here is the latter, a specifically human phenomenon.

4.6 The transcendental foundations of values

Values are not arbitrary. Without a solid foundation or basis, they lose their meaning. There is a current trend of thought that bases values on a person's subjective understanding of what is important or not. Since this understanding can vary from person to person, no fixed set of values exists. One person's value system can very well differ from another's. But as has been said earlier, without a solid basis for values, there will then be no common ground for agreement as to which values should be respected. Such common basis will then have to be provided by something else, for example, by authority through legislation, or by some conventional agreement among the members of a society. Even then, one could question that right to establish one particular set of values and not another.

Values have to be based on the truth and the good, which are the natural ends of man. The truth and the good are objective and do not depend on different ways of understanding a situation. Values, in fact, are the concrete application of the truth and the good. In the end, it can be said that values have the being of things as their foundation: what things *are*, not what I *perceive* them to be.

4.7 Language and tradition

How is culture transmitted from one generation to another? The more common channels are language and tradition.

Language

By language, we refer not only to the commonly understood use of the term, but to any expressive or communicative actions. Culture is nothing other than the expression of the human spirit. On the one hand, gestures and behaviour (body language) are a first form of language. Simple gestures such as a wave or a handshake, to more complicated forms of behaviour, indicate the cultural background of people. On the other hand, we have language, which has its varied manifestations in the spoken or written word, transmitted through conversation or through the mass media. Language reveals our thoughts, feelings, interior states, and the cultural milieu in which we have been brought up.

Human being is the most biologically deficient animal. Nonetheless, human anatomy, man's hands, and brain make up for this deficiency. With his hands and brain, man

creates what his physiological structure does not provide. This deficiency and the indetermination of his morphology produces a kind of behaviour that builds up on what we could call the process of *humanization*.¹²⁵

Humanization is the process of creating culture models of behaviour.

The humanization process does not end with full development of the body. It rather ends with the death of the individual. For the collectivity of mankind, humanization does not end with an individual's death but with the end of the world.

Tradition

Any community builds up a treasury of experiences, practices, and knowledge in the course of pursuing its common objectives. This deposit is called 'tradition' insofar as it is transmitted from one generation to another. The notion tradition adds to culture is its link to the past and the ability to work on it so that it be a vehicle for future actions. Tradition forms the culture of an institution or community.

The most effective way of preserving culture and tradition is through the creation of institutions. Institutions unify the different roles in a community under authority, through juridical regulation, placing them at the service of a common task. When persons assume their roles and work, their work is an expression of their cultural background. Institutions therefore preserve the culture of a society or nation because they express the culture of the people belonging to them. For example, building houses in a particular way indicates the cultural influences of the people constructing them. This would be the institution of house design or construction.

More specifically, cultural institutions play a direct role in guarding the culture of a people. They are more directly concerned with the values of a people.

4.8 Expressions of culture. Religion, arts, laws

Religion

Religiosity is an observable phenomenon in man. We have seen how the spirit of man is in itself open to the Absolute, the infinite, which transcends his own existence and this world, but who can be reached. One can also determine the existence of the Absolute from the examination of oneself. Religion is a cultural phenomenon because it gives rise to behaviour that is made up of symbols of special intensity because they often realize what they symbolize. For example, to kneel in adoration symbolizes the reality of a person's internal adoration of the Supreme Being. Religion is also expressed in cult and liturgy, in the feast and rituals which accompany them. Through religion, a person enters into a relationship with the Divinity and this affects his moral behaviour, thus producing a certain lifestyle and way of being in society.

Art

Any cultural product that is characterized by beauty can be thought of as art. The dimensions of art in its historical perspective are varied. The historical beginning of art is characterized by its symbolic function. The first uses of art were magical and religious. Thus, art does not merely expressive the subjective state of the artist, but is also a representation of the mysterious, the spiritual, or simply what is distant to man. The production of an art work needs technical skill or technique. As the Greeks understood it, technique is not merely technical knowledge, but also art. Art was used for the production of things that were functional, like weapons, houses, and other structures. Pre-modern artists were artisans, experts in certain techniques. The symbolic function was still present because whatever was constructed symbolized goods

¹²⁵ Maria Pia Chirinos, Ch 2.

needed by men. In modern times, art tends to be more expressive and independent from function and need. It seeks more the aspect of beauty and is governed more by laws of aesthetics.

Law

Law can be defined in several ways. For our purposes, we can define law as a measure of the movement by which something reaches its fullness. When the laws of nature are followed, they allow all creation to live in harmony. When persons follow the laws of a country, they are helped to reach the common and individual good proper to them. From the anthropological point of view, laws guide persons by helping them acquire habits and customs. In fact, laws themselves derive from custom. We have seen earlier how customs facilitate man's conduct. Customs become law when the legislator sanctions and promulgates them as approved modes of behaviour. Sometimes customs are not promulgated but remain what we call unwritten law.

4.9 The formation of the human person in time

A human person develops in time. We have also studied that man needs to learn. He does not act merely on instinct, but needs to acquire knowledge in order to act in a human way. This formation takes time and has to keep pace with his biological growth. The end of this formation is for man to acquire the necessary perfections in his operative powers that will allow him to develop himself as a human person. In other words, man has to learn what has been called *the art of living*.

Education

Education comes from the Latin words *ex + ducere*, which mean to draw out or lead out from something. In effect, if one were to strictly follow the etymological meaning of the word, education would mean drawing out knowledge from man, rather than giving it to him. However, we know quite well that man has no innate knowledge, no pool of pre-existing ideas in his mind. Man gets all his knowledge from reality outside of him, then processes that information to gain more knowledge of the essence of things or to apply it to action. The "drawing out" of education would then make reference to this process by which man is helped to formulate more elevated concepts and judgments from the more primitive knowledge one possesses.

A more complete notion of education can be as follows: Education is transmitting and teaching, not only theoretical knowledge, but models and values that guide practical knowledge and action, and help one acquire convictions and ideals. Education is an education in values and virtues, in the use of freedom, and in the search of goods proper to living a good life within the framework of certain customs and laws. Since the good follows upon the truth, education then deals with the knowledge of the truth.

Education therefore has a practical end. Its aim is to help man live his life to the full. Education is an inter-personal effort. Men need to help one another in order to transmit knowledge and culture to their fellowmen. The agents of education are persons: friends, teachers, one's own parents and relatives. Different means can be used. The primary and most basic educational institution is the family, where a person learns the rudiments of being a person: values, customs, etc. Society in general is also a means of education. In society, man's knowledge begun in the family is widened. He learns social customs and gets to exercise the values taught to him at home. Educational institutions like schools and universities help man specialize in his knowledge and give him a broader outlook in life.

Education is incomplete without the transmission of culture. Culture is the deposit where personal experiences and aspirations acquire meaning. One's own world is enriched through

the assimilation of culture. This is why the effort to grow in cultural knowledge makes a person a better person. Note however that this enrichment will not be achieved simply by the acquisition of information. A person is enriched when he makes an effort to live whatever he has learned, when he makes it his life and allows it to influence his decisions.

Since he lives in space and time, man cannot avoid also adopting the culture of the society he is in. Likewise, with his personal achievements, man should also be concerned about enriching the social culture he is immersed in.

Culture and time

Contemporary culture tries to overcome time through speed, i.e., dominating the clock with precision. Speed results in productivity, competitiveness, and benefits. The rule is to do more things in less time and well ahead of the rest. Primacy is given to what has immediate results; everything has to be swift. Technology has achieved this but has generated the pathologies called *rush, doping and stress*. It has not developed in persons the capacity to be patient and to wait. Persons instead are slaves of schedules and results. In the end, since great things are savoured in a hurry, people miss out on important values gained only with patience and serenity, such as growing through experience and time. Maturity cannot be hurried. The fear of silence and hyper-activism does not lend to the practice of contemplation.

Human temporality requires persons to live everything at its time. Hence, there is time to be serious and time to have fun, time for work and time for rest or leisure. What is serious is what is necessary, done with effort, what requires our attention here and now, what is definitive, obligatory, important, noble, valuable, and true. Work in this light is something "serious." What is not serious, on the other hand, is something not obligatory, something easy and light, and something bright. At times, it takes the form of a modification of the real, like a joke. We celebrate feasts (non-serious) after a serious event (achievement).

Time spent in leisure is not time where there is mere absence of work, having free time or time simply being entertained. Leisure is not being lazy or inactive. It is time lived actively because it requires learning (leisure in Greek is *schole* from which "school" comes). Living leisurely is a way of being before reality, of looking at it, and abandoning one's self in viewing it. It is living time in an attitude of receptive perception; it requires the attitude of listening, which requires in turn silence and serenity. This is the origin of liberal arts or humanities in so far as they require an attitude of listening and cultivating human excellence. Some activities proper to leisure are the viewing works of art, reading good books, creative activities, conversation, and crafts.

Past, present and future are not mere abstractions of time. We live them not simply cognitively, i.e., recalling, concentrating, and planning; we live them with affections, emotionally. One can live the past, present and future in poor or better ways. The past is lived poorly in resentment, in useless regrets, in bitterness. It is lived better in gratitude, even about negative past events, and in forgiveness, since these ways bring about happiness in the present. One can live the future poorly in anxiety, in agitation, in wanting to control what in fact cannot be subject to human foresight or foreknowledge, in impatience, which is to find the present moment meaningless. Instead, one can live the future better in hopeful planning and joyful expectation. This occurs when one realistically does something at present towards that which he hopes for. Finally, one can live the present poorly in dissipation, in "doing" without any direction, in not focusing on what is at hand, either going backward to the past or forward to the future leading the person to a state of uneasiness, restlessness, and even anger. It can be a present that is lived cut off from the past, especially a past that provides relevant information and perspective, or a present lived disconnectedly with the future, especially when there is a need for foresight.

The problem of the inculturation of the faith

One final element needs to be dealt with, namely, the so-called *inculturation* of the faith. The idea behind inculturation of the faith depends upon the area of application, be it in the liturgy, doctrines of the faith, or morality. Correctly understood, it means integrating the faith with the culture of a society or a people, without modifying what is essential, that is, whatever pertains to doctrinal or moral truth. Such an attempt deserves consideration since the truth and the good have to be grasped within a particular cultural context for them to be understood. Thus, for example, we see how Jesus Christ explained truths with parables drawing on different aspects of the culture of his period. However, inculturation does not mean adapting the faith to a culture to the point of sacrificing its truthfulness or morals to the extent of overlooking the good, which is what some attempts at inculturation have done.

Certain difficulties always appear in inculturation:

- 1) Establishing what practices really belong to the culture of a people or a society. It may occur that what is considered part of a culture is nothing more than the practice of a few or of one sector of society.
- 2) Distinguishing between what is a cultural tradition and what is merely a passing fad.
- 3) The need to purify a culture of certain practices that are clearly against the truth and the good of human nature or against revealed doctrine (which, in the final analysis, does not contradict human nature).
- 4) The faith transcends space and time. Its truths are perennial. Culture is always situated in a spatial-temporal dimension. Care must be exercised in order not to reduce what is valid for all time to something applicable only to a certain historical period.

Sources for Chapter 4:

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- Burke C., *Man and Values. A Personalist Anthropology*, Scepter, 2007.
- Yepes, R., *Fundamentos de Antropología: un ideal de la excelencia humana*, Pamplona 1996.

SUPPLEMENTARY READINGS ON CULTURE

- **Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation *Amoris Laetitia* on Love in the Family, Pope Francis, 19.3.16 (nn. 191-193)**

Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation *Amoris Laetitia* on Love in the Family, Pope Francis, 19.3.16, nn. 191-193

Life in the Wider Family.

The nuclear family needs to interact with the wider family made up of parents, aunts and uncles, cousins and even neighbours. This greater family may have members who require assistance, or at least companionship and affection, or consolation amid suffering. The individualism so prevalent today can lead to creating small nests of security, where others are perceived as bothersome or a threat. Such isolation, however, cannot offer greater peace or happiness; rather, it straitens the heart of a family and makes its life all the more narrow. ...

The elderly

“Do not cast me off in the time of old age; forsake me not when my strength is spent” (Ps 71:9). This is the plea of the elderly, who fear being forgotten and rejected. Just as God asks us to be his means of hearing the cry of the poor, so too he wants us to hear the cry of the elderly.²¹¹ This represents a challenge to families and communities, since “the Church cannot and does not want to conform to a mentality of impatience, and much less of indifference and contempt, towards old age. We must reawaken the collective sense of gratitude, of appreciation, of hospitality, which makes the elderly feel like a living part of the community. Our elderly are men and women, fathers and mothers, who came before us on our own road, in our own house, in our daily battle for a worthy life”.²¹² Indeed, “how I would like a Church that challenges the throw-away culture by the overflowing joy of a new embrace between young and old!”²¹³

Saint John Paul II asked us to be attentive to the role of the elderly in our families, because there are cultures which, “especially in the wake of disordered industrial and urban development, have both in the past and in the present set the elderly aside in unacceptable ways”.²¹⁴ The elderly help us to appreciate “the continuity of the generations”, by their “charism of bridging the gap”.²¹⁵ Very often it is grandparents who ensure that the most important values are passed down to their grandchildren, and “many people can testify that they owe their initiation into the Christian life to their grandparents”.²¹⁶ Their words, their affection or simply their presence help children to realize that history did not begin with them, that they are now part of an age-old pilgrimage and that they need to respect all that came before them. Those who would break all ties with the past will surely find it difficult to build stable relationships and to realize that reality is bigger than they are. “Attention to the elderly makes the difference in a society. Does a society show concern for the elderly? Does it make room for the elderly? Such a society will move forward if it respects the wisdom of the elderly”.

²¹⁷ The lack of historical memory is a serious shortcoming in our society. A mentality that can only say, “Then was then, now is now”, is ultimately immature. Knowing and judging past events is the only way to build a meaningful future. Memory is necessary for growth: “Recall the former days” (Heb 10:32). Listening to the elderly tell their stories is good for children and young people; it makes them feel connected to the living history of their families, their neighbourhoods and their country. A family that fails to respect and cherish its grandparents, who are its living memory, is already in decline, whereas a family that remembers has a future. “A society that has no room for the elderly or discards them because they create problems, has a deadly virus”;²¹⁸ “it is torn from its roots”.²¹⁹ Our contemporary experience of being orphans as a result of cultural discontinuity, uprootedness and the collapse of the certainties that shape our lives, challenges us to make our families places where children can sink roots in the rich soil of a collective history.

- 211 Cf. *Relatio Finalis*, 17-18.
- 212 Catechesis (4.3.2015): *L'Osservatore Romano*, 5.3.2015, p. 8.
- 213 Catechesis (11.3.2015): *L'Osservatore Romano*, 12.3.2015, p. 8.
- 214 John Paul II, Apostolic Exhortation *Familiaris Consortio* (22.11.1981), 27.
- 215 Id., *Address to Participants in the "International Forum on Active Aging"* (5.9.1980), 5.
- 216 *Relatio Finalis*, 18.
- 217 Catechesis (4.3.2015): *L'Osservatore Romano*, 5.3.2015, p. 8.
- 218 Ibid.
- 219 *Address at the Meeting with the Elderly* (28.9.2014): *L'Osservatore Romano*, 29-30.9.2014, p. 7.

CHAPTER 5. WORK AND REST

- 5.1 Introduction
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5.1 Introduction

“Work is a fundamental right and a good for mankind,¹²⁶ a useful good, worthy of man because it is an appropriate way for him to give expression to and enhance his human dignity. The Church teaches the value of work not only because it is always something that belongs to the person but also because of its nature as something necessary. Work is needed to form and maintain a family, to have a right to property, to contribute to the common good of the human family. In considering the moral implications that the question of work has for social life, the Church cannot fail to indicate unemployment as a “real social disaster”, above all with regard to the younger generations.”¹²⁷

The Book of Genesis points out that man was created “in the image of God” (Gen. 1:27) and that he was told to “be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth and subdue it”. (Gen. 1:28) Though work was not explicitly mentioned in Genesis, these words do indicate some activity through which man should exercise dominion over the earth. A fundamental dimension of man’s existence on earth is to work on all creation that is subject to him. Man thus confers new forms of existence on the natural creation of God. He continues the work of creation. This he is able to do because he possesses the image of God in himself, namely, his rational nature.

Work is the means by which man satisfies his necessities. It is primarily a bodily activity performed with human instruments to satisfy human needs. Work has the following ends:

1) Man obtains his needs through work. By needs, we refer not only to biological ones, but also cultural, educational, family, etc. Anything that man tries to achieve in carrying out his life project is transformed into a necessity.

¹²⁶ Cf. Second Vatican Ecumenical Council, Pastoral Constitution *Gaudium et Spes*, 26: AAS 58 (1966), 1046-1047; John Paul II, Encyclical Letter *Laborem Exercens*, 9, 18: AAS 73 (1981), 598-600, 622-625; John Paul II, Address to the Pontifical Academy of Social Sciences (25 April 1997), 3: *L'Osservatore Romano*, English edition, 14 May 1997, p. 5; John Paul II, Message for the 1999 World Day of Peace, 8: AAS 91 (1999), 382-383.

¹²⁷ *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church*, 287.

2) Human work transforms the environment in which man lives. Work improves the world provided he works ethically, taking into account the effects his work might have on nature.

3) Man perfects himself through work, through the acquisition of habits, knowledge, strengthening him, etc.

5.2 The subjective and objective dimensions of work¹²⁸

Human work has a twofold significance: objective and subjective.

The Objective Meaning of Work

In the *objective sense*, it is the sum of activities, resources, instruments and technologies used by men and women to produce goods and services.

Work in the objective sense is the changeable aspect of human activity, which constantly varies due to the technological, cultural, social and political conditions of any given time and place.

The Subjective Meaning of Work

In the *subjective sense*, work is about the person who performs the work. Work is important as it produces things and provides for our needs, however it is also valuable for another fundamental reason. Work corresponds to the personal vocation of each human being: “as the ‘image of God’ he is a person, that is to say, a subjective being capable of acting in a planned and rational way, capable of deciding about himself, and with a tendency to self-realization. As a person, man is therefore the subject of work”.

Work in the subjective sense represents its stable dimension, since it does not depend on what people produce or on the type of activity they undertake, but only and exclusively on their dignity as human beings. This distinction is critical both for understanding what the ultimate foundation of the value and dignity of work is, and with regard to the difficulties of organizing economic and social systems that respect human rights.

This subjectivity gives work its particular dignity, which does not allow that it be considered a simple commodity or an impersonal element in the processes of productivity. Work is an essential expression of the person, it is an “*actus personae*”. Any form of materialism or economic tenet that tries to reduce the worker to a mere instrument of production, a simple *labour force* with an exclusively material value, would end up hopelessly distorting the essence of work and stripping it of its most noble and basic human finality. The human person is the measure of the dignity of work: “In fact there is no doubt that human work has an ethical value of its own, which clearly and directly remains linked to the fact that the one who carries it out is a person”.¹²⁹

“Work is for man”, and not man “for work”.¹³⁰

¹²⁸ Cf. *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church*, 270-272.

¹²⁹ John Paul II, Encyclical Letter *Laborem Exercens*, 6: AAS 73 (1981), 590.

¹³⁰ *Laborem Exercens*, 6.

The subjective dimension of work takes precedence over the objective dimension. Human work not only proceeds from the person, but it is also essentially ordered to and has its final goal in the human person. Independently of its objective content, work must be oriented to the subject who performs it, because the end of work, any work whatsoever, always remains man.

Marxism: A materialistic view that reduces the human person to *homo faber*.

Karl Marx's view of man was exclusively that of man as worker, *homo faber* (man is essentially a worker). This can be seen in his philosophy. For Marx, man's individuality does not exist. Man forms part of the collectivity "man", which develops through *praxis* (action) and the consequent dialectical materialism. What is typical to man is action, especially work. When man works, the product of his work ends up outside of himself and he is therefore alienated, i.e., he loses himself. Man is nothing outside of work.

However, man is much more than this. When he works, he does not alienate himself because even though the product of his work may end up outside of him, work is also an immanent activity that perfects a person from within. The Marxist view of man is purely materialistic. Man is nothing more than a victim of forces beyond his control, dictated by the historical progression of matter.

5.3 The transformation of the world

One of the ends of work is the transformation of the world. Unlike animals, man needs to greatly modify the environment in order to fulfill even his basic necessities of nourishment, growth, and reproduction. For example, he has to work the soil in order for it to produce the food he needs. In most cases it is not enough to simply rely on what grows in the wild. To live on earth, he has to build a house and see to it that there is an adequate supply of food and water. Moreover, man can also manufacture other goods from nature which not only satisfy his basic needs, but which also improve his situation in life (like other instruments to help him increase his natural powers), or goods that simply reflect that he has culture (works of art).

All this is a consequence of his possessing a rational nature. He can use his intellect and will to open up many possibilities for himself and the persons around him.¹³¹

Women and the right to work

"The feminine genius is needed in all expressions in the life of society, therefore the presence of women in the workplace must also be guaranteed. The first indispensable step in this direction is the concrete possibility of access to professional formation. The recognition and defence of women's rights in the context of work generally depend on the organization of work, which must take into account the dignity and vocation of women, whose "true advancement ... requires that labour should be structured in such a way that women do not have to pay for their advancement by abandoning what is specific to

¹³¹ In order to modify the natural world, man makes use of instruments or, as it is termed in our modern times, technology. Technology is an artificial product of man working on the natural world. A computer does not exist in nature. It is made up of different elements that have been manufactured from natural materials based on natural processes. Likewise, technology helps man work much better, easier, and faster, and aids in the development of even newer and better technology. It acts as an extension of man's natural powers. For example, the brain's natural powers are enhanced by the use of a computer: one does not have to remember so much data and recall can be made easier and faster.

them".¹³² This issue is the measure of the *quality of society* and its *effective defence* of women's right to work."¹³³

5.4 The dignity of workers and the respect for their rights¹³⁴

The rights of workers, like all other rights, are based on the nature of the human person and on his transcendent dignity. The Church's social Magisterium has seen fit to list some of these rights, in the hope that they will be recognized in juridical systems: the right to a just wage; the right to rest; the right "to a working environment and to manufacturing processes which are not harmful to the workers' physical health or to their moral integrity"; the right that one's personality in the workplace should be safeguarded "without suffering any affront to one's conscience or personal dignity"; the right to appropriate subsidies that are necessary for the subsistence of unemployed workers and their families; the right to a pension and to insurance for old age, sickness, and in case of work-related accidents; the right to social security connected with maternity; the right to assemble and form associations. These rights are often infringed, as is confirmed by the sad fact of workers who are underpaid and without protection or adequate representation. It often happens that work conditions for men, women and children, especially in developing countries, are so inhumane that they are an offence to their dignity and compromise their health.

5.4.1 The right to fair remuneration and income distribution

"Remuneration is the most important means for achieving justice in work relationships.¹³⁵ The "just wage" is the legitimate fruit of work.

They commit grave injustice who refuse to pay a just wage or who do not give it in due time and in proportion to the work done."

The economic well-being of a country is not measured exclusively by the quantity of goods it produces but also by taking into account the *manner* in which they are produced and the level of equity in the distribution of income, which should allow everyone access to what is necessary for their personal development and perfection.

5.4.2 The right to strike

"The Church's social doctrine recognizes the legitimacy of striking "when it cannot be avoided, or at least when it is necessary to obtain a proportionate benefit",¹³⁶ when every other method for the resolution of disputes has been ineffectual."

5.5 The crisis in our relationship with the environment¹³⁷

The underlying cause of this problem can be seen in man's pretension of exercising unconditional dominion over things, heedless of any moral considerations which, on the contrary, must distinguish all human activity.

The tendency towards an "ill-considered" exploitation of the resources of creation is the result of a long historical and cultural process. "The modern era has witnessed man's growing capacity for transformative intervention. The aspect of the conquest and exploitation of

¹³² John Paul II, Encyclical Letter *Laborem Exercens*, 19: AAS 73 (1981), 628

¹³³ Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church, 295.

¹³⁴ Cf. Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church, 302-304

¹³⁵ Cf. John Paul II, Encyclical Letter *Laborem Exercens*, 19: AAS 73 (1981), 625-629.

¹³⁶ *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 2435.

¹³⁷ Cf. Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church, 461-486.

resources has become predominant and invasive, and today it has even reached the point of threatening the environment's hospitable aspect: the environment as *resource* risks threatening the environment as *home*. Because of the powerful means of transformation offered by technological civilization, it sometimes seems that the balance between man and the environment has reached a critical point”.

Nature appears as an *instrument* in the hands of man, a reality that he must constantly manipulate, especially by means of technology. A reductionistic conception quickly spread, starting from the presupposition — which was seen to be erroneous - that an infinite quantity of energy and resources are available, that it is possible to renew them quickly, and that the negative effects of the exploitation of the natural order can be easily absorbed. This reductionistic conception views the natural world in mechanistic terms and *sees development in terms of consumerism. Primacy is given to doing and having rather than to being*, and this causes serious forms of human alienation.¹³⁸

Such attitudes do not arise from scientific and technological research but from scientism and technocratic ideologies that tend to condition such research. The advances of science and technology do not eliminate the need for transcendence and are not of themselves the cause of the exasperated secularization that leads to nihilism. With the progress of science and technology, questions as to their meaning increase and give rise to an ever greater need to respect the transcendent dimension of the human person and creation itself.

A correct understanding of the environment prevents the utilitarian reduction of nature to a mere object to be manipulated and exploited. At the same time, it must not absolutize nature and place it above the dignity of the human person himself. In this latter case, one can go so far as to divinize nature or the earth, as can readily be seen in certain ecological movements that seek to gain an internationally guaranteed institutional status for their beliefs.

5.6 The environment, a shared good

Care for the environment represents a challenge for all of humanity. It is a matter of a common and universal duty, that of respecting a common good.

The authorities called to make decisions concerning health and environmental risks sometimes find themselves facing a situation in which available scientific data are contradictory or quantitatively scarce. It may then be appropriate to base evaluations on the “precautionary principle”, which does not mean applying rules but certain guidelines aimed at managing the situation of uncertainty.

Particular attention will have to be reserved for the complex issues surrounding energy resources. Non-renewable resources, which highly-industrialized and recently-industrialized countries draw from, must be put at the service of all humanity.

5.7 The environment and the sharing of goods

The environmental crisis and poverty are connected by a complex and dramatic set of causes that can be resolved by the principle of the universal destination of goods, which offers a fundamental moral and cultural orientation. The present environmental crisis affects those who are poorest in a particular way, whether they live in those lands subject to erosion and desertification, are involved in armed conflicts or subject to forced immigration, or because they do not have the economic and technological means to protect themselves from other calamities.

¹³⁸ Cf. John Paul II, Encyclical Letter *Sollicitudo Rei Socialis*, 28: AAS 80 (1988), 548-550.

5.8 The use of biotechnology

In recent years pressing questions have been raised with regard to the use of new forms of biotechnology in the areas of agriculture, animal farming, medicine and environmental protection. The new possibilities offered by current biological and biogenetic techniques are a source of hope and enthusiasm on the one hand, and of alarm and hostility on the other. The application of various types of biotechnology, their acceptability from a moral point of view, their consequences for human health and their impact on the environment and the economy are the subject of thorough study and heated debate. These are controversial questions that involve scientists and researchers, politicians and legislators, economists and environmentalists, as well as producers and consumers. Christians are not indifferent to these problems, for they are aware of the importance of the values at stake.

Modern biotechnologies have powerful social, economic and political impact locally, nationally and internationally. They need to be evaluated according to the ethical criteria that must always guide human activities and relations in the social, economic and political spheres. Above all the criteria of justice and solidarity must be taken into account.

5.9 New lifestyles

Serious ecological problems call for an effective change of mentality leading to the adoption of new lifestyles, “in which the quest for truth, beauty, goodness and communion with others for the sake of the common good are the factors that determine consumer choices, savings and investments”.¹³⁹ These lifestyles should be inspired by sobriety, temperance, and self-discipline at both the individual and social levels. There is a need to break with the logic of mere consumption.

5.10 The Recreational Dimension of Man and the Meaning of Festivity

Work is a serious and necessary human undertaking. As we have seen, man needs to work to achieve his fulfillment as a person and to provide for other persons around him. This brings us now to the notion of rest and entertainment.

Rest is an essential component of leisure which, in turn, is a necessary consequence of work. Through work, man achieves goods. When he does so, he is happy and looks forward to what follows after, namely, a period of leisure from regular activity. However, leisure should be understood in the classical sense, that is, a period of time when man can contemplate realities that do not imply utility, and thus enrich him further as a person. It is the moment when he can simply appreciate things, enjoy lighter activities, engage in forms of entertainment. Leisure is a period of re-creation: man renews himself physically and spiritually.

These activities accompany leisure and enrich the time spent. Entertainment should not be sought as an end in itself. Since its effect is to seek things outside of man which cannot be found in himself, one ends up engaging in external activism without any interior depth. Thus, one leads an empty and frivolous life, devoid of meaning since his inner life is not developed.

Sources for Chapter 5:

- Cenzone, M. A., *Introduction to Philosophical Anthropology*, provisional draft.
- *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church*, Chapters 6, 7, 10.
- Burke C., *Man and Values. A Personalist Anthropology*, Scepter, 2007.

¹³⁹ John Paul II, Encyclical Letter *Centesimus Annus*, 36: AAS 83 (1991), 839.

SUPPLEMENTARY READINGS ON WORK & REST

- John Paul II, Encyclical Letter *Laborem Exercens*, 19: AAS 73 (1981), 5-6.
- F. J. López Díaz, F.J., Ruiz Montoya, C., *Work and Rest*, 16.7.2009.
<http://www.opusdei.org/en-au/article/work-and-rest/>

**Encyclical LABOREM EXERCENS, on Human Work, Pope John Paul II,
14.9.1981 (nn. 5-6)**

5. Work in the Objective Sense: Technology

This universality and, at the same time, this multiplicity of the process of "subduing the earth" throw light upon human work, because man's dominion over the earth is achieved in and by means of work. There thus emerges the meaning of *work in an objective sense*, which finds expression in the various epochs of culture and civilization. Man dominates the earth by the very fact of domesticating animals, rearing them and obtaining from them the food and clothing he needs, and by the fact of being able to extract various natural resources from the earth and the seas. But man "subdues the earth" much more when he begins to cultivate it and then to transform its products, adapting them to his own use. Thus agriculture constitutes through human work a primary field of economic activity and an indispensable factor of production. Industry in its turn will always consist in linking the earth's riches-whether nature's living resources, or the products of agriculture, or the mineral or chemical resources-with man's work, whether physical or intellectual. This is also in a sense true in the sphere of what are called service industries, and also in the sphere of research, pure or applied.

In industry and agriculture man's work has today in many cases ceased to be mainly manual, for the toil of human hands and muscles is aided by *more and more highly perfected machinery*. Not only in industry but also in agriculture we are witnessing the transformations made possible by the gradual development of science and technology. Historically speaking, this, taken as a whole, has caused great changes in civilization, from the beginning of the "industrial era" to the successive phases of development through new technologies, such as the electronics and the microprocessor technology in recent years.

While it may seem that in the industrial process it is the machine that "works" and man merely supervises it, making it function and keeping it going in various ways, it is also true that for this very reason industrial development provides grounds for repropounding in new ways the question of human work. Both the original industrialization that gave rise to what is called the worker question and the subsequent industrial and post-industrial changes show in an eloquent manner that, even in the age of ever more mechanized "work", *the proper subject of work continues to be man*.

The development of industry and of the various sectors connected with it, even the most modern electronics technology, especially in the fields of miniaturization, communications and telecommunications and so forth, shows how vast is the role of technology, that ally of work that human thought has produced, in the interaction between the subject and object of work (in the widest sense of the word). Understood in this case not as a capacity or aptitude for work, but rather as a *whole set of instruments* which man uses in his work, technology is undoubtedly man's ally. It facilitates his work, perfects, accelerates and augments it. It leads to an increase in the quantity of things produced by work, and in many cases improves their quality. However, it is also a fact that, in some instances, technology can cease to be man's ally and become almost his enemy, as when the mechanization of work "supplants" him, taking away all personal satisfaction and the incentive to creativity and responsibility, when it deprives many workers of their previous employment, or when, through exalting the machine, it reduces man to the status of its slave.

If the biblical words "subdue the earth" addressed to man from the very beginning are understood in the context of the whole modern age, industrial and post-industrial, then they undoubtedly include also *a relationship with technology*, with the world of machinery which is the fruit of the work of the human intellect and a historical confirmation of man's dominion over nature.

The recent stage of human history, especially that of certain societies, brings a correct affirmation of technology as a basic coefficient of economic progress; but, at the same time, this affirmation has been accompanied by and continues to be accompanied by the raising of essential questions concerning human work in relationship to its subject, which is man. These questions are particularly charged with *content and tension of an ethical and an ethical and social character*. They therefore constitute a continual challenge for institutions of many kinds, for States and governments, for systems and international organizations; they also constitute a challenge for the Church.

6. Work in the Subjective Sense: Man as the Subject of Work

In order to continue our analysis of work, an analysis linked with the word of the Bible telling man that he is to subdue the earth, we must concentrate our attention on *work in the subjective sense*, much more than we did on the objective significance, barely touching upon the vast range of problems known intimately and in detail to scholars in various fields and also, according to their specializations, to those who work. If the words of the Book of Genesis to which we refer in this analysis of ours speak of work in the objective sense in an indirect way, they also speak only indirectly of the subject of work; but what they say is very eloquent and is full of great significance.

Man has to subdue the earth and dominate it, because as the "image of God" he is a person, that is to say, a subjective being capable of acting in a planned and rational way, capable of deciding about himself, and with a tendency to self-realization. *As a person, man is therefore the subject of work*. As a person he works, he performs various actions belonging to the work process; independently of their objective content, these actions must all serve to realize his humanity, to fulfil the calling to be a person that is his by reason of his very humanity. The principal truths concerning this theme were recently recalled by the Second Vatican Council in the Constitution *Gaudium et Spes*, especially in Chapter One, which is devoted to man's calling.

And so this "dominion" spoken of in the biblical text being meditated upon here refers not only to the objective dimension of work but at the same time introduces us to an understanding of its subjective dimension. Understood as a process whereby man and the human race subdue the earth, work corresponds to this basic biblical concept only when throughout the process man manifests himself and confirms himself *as the one who "dominates"*. This dominion, in a certain sense, refers to the subjective dimension even more than to the objective one: this dimension conditions *the very ethical nature* of work. In fact there is no doubt that human work has an ethical value of its own, which clearly and directly remain linked to the fact that the one who carries it out is a person, a conscious and free subject, that is to say a subject that decides about himself.

This truth, which in a sense constitutes the fundamental and perennial heart of Christian teaching on human work, has had and continues to have primary significance for the formulation of the important social problems characterizing whole ages.

The ancient world introduced its own typical differentiation of people into classes according to the type of work done. Work which demanded from the worker the exercise of physical strength, the work of muscles and hands, was considered unworthy of free men, and was therefore given to slaves. By broadening certain aspects that already belonged to the Old Testament, Christianity brought about a fundamental change of ideas in this field, taking the whole content of the Gospel message as its point of departure, especially the fact that the one who, while *being God*, became like us in all things (cf. Heb 2:17; Phil 2:5-8) devoted most of the years of his life on earth to *manual work* at the carpenter's bench. This circumstance constitutes in itself the most eloquent "Gospel of work", showing that the basis for determining

the value of human work is not primarily the kind of work being done but the fact that the one who is doing it is a person. The sources of the dignity of work are to be sought primarily in the subjective dimension, not in the objective one.

Such a concept practically does away with the very basis of the ancient differentiation of people into classes according to the kind of work done. This does not mean that, from the objective point of view, human work cannot and must not be rated and qualified in any way. It only means that *the primary basis of the value of work is man himself*, who is its subject. This leads immediately to a very important conclusion of an ethical nature: however true it may be that man is destined for work and called to it, in the first place work is "for man" and not man "for work". Through this conclusion one rightly comes to recognize the pre-eminence of the subjective meaning of work over the objective one. Given this way of understanding things, and presupposing that different sorts of work that people do can have greater or lesser objective value, let us try nevertheless to show that each sort is judged above all by *the measure of the dignity* of the subject of work, that is to say the person, *the individual who carries it out*. On the other hand: independently of the work that every man does, and presupposing that this work constitutes a purpose-at times a very demanding one-of his activity, this purpose does not possess a definitive meaning in itself. In fact, in the final analysis it is always man who is *the purpose of the work*, whatever work it is that is done by man-even if the common scale of values rates it as the merest "service", as the most monotonous even the most alienating work.

Work and Rest

F. J. López Díaz – C. Ruiz Montoya, 16.7.2009.

<http://www.opusdei.org/en-au/article/work-and-rest/>

God wants us to work hard to help build up his creation, but also to rest. We offer an article that draws on the teachings of John Paul II and St. Josemaria on this topic.

"Man ought to imitate God both in working and also in resting, since God himself wished to present his own creative activity under the form of work and rest." [1]

These words of John Paul II refer to the Creation account, the first "gospel of work." [2] The sacred author, after describing how over the course of six days God gave existence to the heavens, to the earth and all that was in it, concludes: *And on the seventh day God finished his work which he had done, and he rested on the seventh day from all his work which he had done. So God blessed the seventh day and hallowed it, because on it God rested from all his work which he had done in creation.* [3]

From then on men and women are called to perfect this divine work through their own work, [4] not forgetting that they too are creatures, the fruit of God's love and called to a definitive union with him. Resting on the seventh day, hallowed by God, takes on a deep human significance. As well as a need, it is the appropriate time to acknowledge God as the author and Lord of all creation, and an anticipation of the definitive rest and joy of the Resurrection. The family, a spiritual space, is a school for learning how to rest while thinking of others.

A life that is lived under the constant pressure of work, without time to consider the source from which all things come and to which all things tend as their final goal, could lead people "to forget that God is the Creator upon whom everything depends" [5] and to whom everything is directed.

Doing everything for the glory of God, unity of life, means living with a solid foundation and a supernatural meaning and goal. It means resting on our divine filiation as we work and converting our rest into a service to God and others.

"In the Work, everything is a means of holiness: work and rest; life of piety and the joys of living together; happiness and pain. In a word, every moment in our life contains a possibility for sanctification: in all things we ought to love and fulfil God's will." [6]

Place of work and rest

Work is a gift of God and creation itself is already a call. [7] The fact that God calls a free creature into existence out of love implies a vocation that asks for a reply.

Work is the place of encounter between God's creative freedom and human freedom, the place for our response, and therefore for prayer and contemplation, expressed in deeds. When a person sees God's hand in all created realities, especially in others and in himself, he strives to do everything with the perfection willed by God, seeking in this way his own fulfillment.

The divine invitation to work comes from the heart of a Father who wishes to count on the cooperation of his children. Our response has to be a humble and child-like response, undertaken out of love, not an autonomous initiative that seeks our own glory.

St. Josemaría used a graphic image that can be applied to our work. A little boy goes to help a group of fishermen as they haul in a net. He grabbed hold of the net "with his tiny hands and began to tug away with evident clumsiness. The tough, unsophisticated fishermen must have

felt their hearts soften, for they allowed the child to join in, without chasing him away, even though he was more of a hindrance than a help."[8]

God knows his creatures well. While inviting us to collaborate with him, he knows that our nature is fragile and vulnerable. The divine calling to work includes the need to rest. As we see in the creation account, "the alternation between work and rest, built into human nature, is willed by God himself."[9]

Knowing that we belong to God and not to ourselves, we have the responsibility to look after our health, in order to be able to give all the glory to God.

This need is due in the first place to our physical limitations. If we were to overestimate our own strength, or misunderstand the true meaning of a spirit of sacrifice, we could cause damage to our own health that is not willed by God and that could end up limiting our ability to serve him.

There are times, certainly, when our Lord may ask us for more of an effort or place us in situations that require a heroic detachment even from our health in order to carry out his will. Don Álvaro, who rose from his sick bed with a very high fever to go looking for money when Villa Tevere was being built, is an example of this unconditional love.

At the same time, however, and for the same reason, in order to serve God, we need time to relax, as our Father indicated on numerous occasions: "I think it is appropriate to remind you about the need for rest. If sickness comes, we receive it joyfully as coming from the hand of God. But we cannot provoke it by our own imprudence. We are human and we need to restore our strength."[10]

It would be a pity if, despite the opportunity to rest, our strength were to be undermined because we failed to make use of this opportunity. Knowing that we belong to God and not to ourselves, we have the responsibility to look after our health, in order to be able to give all the glory to God.

Rest is also a spiritual need, "something *sacred*, because it is man's way of withdrawing from the sometimes excessively demanding cycle of earthly tasks in order to renew his awareness that everything is the work of God."[11]

Time spent away from the demands of work, with its deadlines, goals, risks and uncertainties, facilitates the serenity required to get a broader perspective on life.

Discerning when to disconnect ourselves periodically from these demands can sometimes require an act of abandonment in our Lord. It also helps us to see our job in the right perspective, "convinced that the triumphs of the human race are a sign of God's greatness and the flowering of his own mysterious design."[12]

We work out of fidelity, out of love, so that God can use our self-giving as he wishes, never attributing any results to ourselves: *So neither he who plants nor he who waters is anything, but only God who gives the growth.*[13] Taking a break from our usual work helps us to value the disproportion between our personal contribution and the fruits of holiness and apostolate it produces.

If we are objective, with the objectivity that comes from faith and from being close to our Lord, we will see that even the effort we put into our work is a gift of God, who sustains, guides and encourages us. Professional work, whether in the laboratory, factory, workshop, field or family home, is the hinge of our holiness and the framework for our existence. But it should never absorb other aspects of our life that are equally important.

"If after six days of work...people look for time to relax and to pay more attention to other aspects of their lives, this corresponds to an authentic need which is in full harmony with the vision of the Gospel message."[14]



Time spent with family and friends, or to improve one's formation and culture, or to talk more calmly with our Lord, are wonderful opportunities to seek holiness, where "daily concerns and tasks can find their proper perspective: the material things about which we worry give way to spiritual values; in a moment of encounter and less pressured exchange, we see the true face of the people with whom we live."[15]

Leisure thus also responds to the need to be vigilant, to slow down sufficiently to correct our direction so as to place God at the center and discover him in those around us. Workshops, a walk with one's family, times of prayer, get-togethers, retreats, are all examples of activities which, in their own way, meet this need to be vigilant.

They also have the essential elements of meaningful rest: restoring bodily and spiritual strength through a change of activity (because to rest does not mean to be idle), which helps us set aside daily concerns and put them in their proper place.

This is particularly important in spheres where excessive competitiveness motivated by the quest for success tends to absorb so much time and energy that it is hard to meet other obligations. God's way of working is the model for our own work. If God "rested and was refreshed" on the seventh day, we too should rest and ensure that those around us, especially those in need, "are refreshed."[16]

"Sunday rest then becomes 'prophetic,' affirming not only the absolute primacy of God, but also the primacy and dignity of the person with respect to the demands of social and economic life, and anticipating in a certain sense the 'new heavens' and the 'new earth,' in which liberation from slavery to needs will be final and complete. In short, the Lord's Day thus becomes in the truest sense *the day of man* as well."[17]



Foretaste of the Resurrection

In Christ, with the fullness of Revelation, work and rest are ennobled, inserted into the plan of salvation. As a foretaste of the Resurrection, rest illuminates the weariness of work and reveals it as union with the Cross of Christ.

"My Father is working still" (Jn 5:17)...He works with creative power by sustaining in existence the world that he called into being from nothing, and he works with salvific power in the hearts of those whom from the beginning he has destined for 'rest' (Heb 4:1.9-16) in union with himself in his 'Father's house' (Jn 14:2)."[18]

Just as Christ's Cross and Resurrection are inseparably united, although one occurs after the other in time, so too should work and rest constitute a living unity in our own life. Therefore,

above any temporal events or change of occupation as we take a break from our work, we rest *in our Lord*, we find repose *in our divine filiation*.

This new perspective places rest alongside work as a filial task, even though it does not rid work of the effort and tiredness it involves. But what is eliminated is the tiredness that stems from working out of pride and self-affirmation, or solely for human motives. God doesn't want this kind of tiredness: *It is in vain that you rise up early and go late to rest, eating the bread of anxious toil.*[19]

"Rest, my children, in your divine filiation. God is a Father, full of tenderness and infinite love. Call him Father often, and tell him, when you are alone with him, that you love him, that you love him greatly, that you feel the pride and strength of being his children."[20]

The *strength of being God's children* leads us to work with more sacrifice and abnegation, embracing the daily Cross with the strength of the Holy Spirit, so as to fulfill God's will faithfully. It enables us "to work without rest," because the tiredness produced by work becomes redemptive. It is worthwhile, then, expending all our energies in our work, not only for the material reward we can expect, but because we are bringing the world to Christ.

When we work with this goal, we experience the supernatural reward of peace and joy: *Well done, good and faithful servant; you have been faithful over a little, I will set you over much. Enter into the joy of your master.*[21] And our work yields apostolic fruit: *Well done, good servant! Because you have been faithful in a very little, you shall have authority over ten cities.*[22]



Therefore, work "cannot consist in the mere exercise of human strength in external action; it must leave room for man to prepare himself, by becoming more and more what in the will of God he ought to be, for the 'rest' that the Lord reserves for his servants and friends."[23]

In the account of the Transfiguration, we are told that *six days after announcing his passion and death, Jesus took with him Peter and James and John his brother, and led them up a high mountain apart. And he was transfigured before them.*[24] St. Thomas, in commenting on this passage, relates the seventh day when God rested from his work of creation to the seventh day (*six days after announcing...*) when our Lord revealed himself to his disciples to give them an anticipation of his glorious Resurrection, so that they would raise their sights and not settle for purely earthly goals.[25] The three disciples, overcome by the contemplation of the glory to which they have been called, express the joy of resting in the Lord and with the Lord: *Lord, it is well that we are here; if you wish, I will make three booths here,*[26] Peter exclaims, anticipating the joy and peace of heaven.

This moment would not yet last forever. Nevertheless, the light and peace of Tabor will be the source of strength to continue on the path that passes through the Cross and leads to the Resurrection. We too find rest in our filial abandonment, the peace and serenity of knowing that behind the tiredness, difficulties and concerns that life here on earth brings, we have an eternal and all-powerful Father who upholds us.

Working with a vision of eternity prevents useless worries and sterile anxieties.

Working with a vision of eternity prevents useless worries and sterile anxieties, and infuses every task with the desire to see the face of Christ definitively. Sanctifying rest, and especially Sunday, which is the paradigm of Christian rest and a celebration of our Lord's Resurrection, helps us to discover the sense of eternity and to renew our hope.

"Sunday symbolises that truly singular day which will follow the present time, the day without end which will know neither evening nor morning, the imperishable age which will never grow old; Sunday is the ceaseless foretelling of life without end which renews the hope of Christians and encourages them on their way."[27]

Sanctifying rest and relaxation

The first Christians lived their faith in a pagan and hedonistic environment. From the beginning, they realized that following Christ was incompatible with forms of rest or relaxation that corrupt and dehumanize people. St. Augustine, referring to this type of entertainment, said in a homily: "Refuse to go; assert control over the concupiscence of your heart and be strong and persevering."[28]

We shouldn't be surprised to see once again today, in "neo-pagan" environments around us, blatant expressions of this spiritual poverty. "Therefore, among the forms of culture and entertainment which society offers, the faithful should choose those which are most in keeping with a life lived in obedience to the precepts of the Gospel."[29]



It is not a question of shutting ourselves up in a hermetically sealed environment. Each of us, with initiative and daring, and with genuine love for souls, needs to strive to transmit the Christian meaning and joy of rest to the society around us. As Don Alvaro reminded us, each of us is called to strive to foster "a Christian tone in social life, in entertainment, in the way free time is spent."[30]

Jesus, Mary and Joseph show us that family life can allow time for rest and celebration: *Now his parents went to Jerusalem every year at the feast of the Passover.*[31] The family, a spiritual space, is a school for learning how to rest while thinking of others. Therefore it is important to plan holidays well, to spend leisure time with one's children, in order to get to know them well and converse with them, and play with the younger ones.... We need to learn how to make family life pleasant, and not fall back on the easy option of leaving the younger children in front of the television or surfing the Internet.

We need to learn how to make family life pleasant, and not fall back on the easy option of leaving the younger children in front of the television or surfing the Internet.

Today it is more important than ever to select interesting programs on television and watch them with the children, to teach them temperance in the use of the computer, so that they learn to use it above all as work tool and always with a specific goal in mind.

St. Luke's Gospel also shows us how the boy Jesus, moved by the Holy Spirit, took advantage of the Passover journey to Jerusalem to bring light to those around him: *and all who heard him were amazed at his understanding and his answers.*[32]

The need to rest is not an interruption in our apostolic efforts. On the contrary, it opens new possibilities, new occasions to deepen in our friendship and to get to know people and environments where we can bring the light of Christ.

The Second Vatican Council encouraged all Christians to take on the challenging effort "to animate the cultural expressions and group activities characteristic of our times with a human and a Christian spirit."[33]

The Church needs people with a *lay mentality* to help implement this aspect of the *new evangelisation*. "It is urgent that we strive to re-christianise popular celebrations and customs. It is urgent that public amusements should no longer be left to face the dilemma of being either 'soppy' or pagan. Ask God to provide laborers for this much-needed work, which could be called the 'entertainment apostolate'." [34]

Endnotes

- [1] John Paul II, Encyclical *Laborem exercens* (14 September 1981), 25
- [2] Ibid.
- [3] Gen 2:1-3
- [4] Cf. *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 307
- [5] John Paul II, Apostolic Letter *Dies Domini* (31 May 1998), 65
- [6] *Alone with God*, 29
- [7] Cf. *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 2566
- [8] *Friends of God*, 14
- [9] John Paul II, Apostolic Letter *Dies Domini* (31 May 1998), 65
- [10] St. Josemaria, *Letter* 15 October 1948, 14
- [11] John Paul II, Apostolic Letter *Dies Domini* (31 May 1998), 65
- [12] John Paul II, Encyclical *Laborem exercens* (14 September 1981), 25
- [13] 1 Cor 3:7
- [14] John Paul II, Apostolic Letter, *Dies Domini* (31 May 1998), 67
- [15] Ibid.
- [16] Cf. *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 2172
- [17] John Paul II, Apostolic Letter, *Dies Domini* (31 May 1998), 68
- [18] John Paul II, Encyclical *Laborem exercens* (14 September 1981), 25
- [19] Psalm 127 [126]:2
- [20] *Alone with God*, 221
- [21] Mt 25:21 and 23
- [22] Lk. 19:17
- [23] John Paul II, Encyclical *Laborem exercens* (14 September 1981), 25
- [24] Mt 17:1-4
- [25] Cf. St. Thomas, *In Matth. Ev.*, XXVII, 1
- [26] Mt 17:4
- [27] John Paul II, Apostolic Letter, *Dies Domini* (31 May 1998), 26
- [28] St. Augustine, *Sermo* 88, 17
- [29] John Paul II, Apostolic Letter, *Dies Domini* (31 May 1998), 68
- [30] Don Alvaro del Portillo, *Family Letters (I)*, 386
- [31] Lk 2:41
- [32] Lk 2:47
- [33] Second Vatican Council, Pastoral Constitution *Gaudium et spes*, 61
- [34] *The Way*, 975

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Abstraction. A process in which the mind fixes its attention upon one or the other characteristic of a thing or upon one element common to many things, excluding others which are joined to it in the real order.

Abstractive Idea. An idea which is formed of objects by some means other than their immediate perception.

Accident. A being whose nature it is to exist in another as in a subject.

Action. The exercise or operation of an operative potency. The production of an effect.

Activity, Immanent. The activity through which a living being perfects itself and makes itself the goal for the acquired actuality or perfection.

Activity, Transient (Transeunt, Transitive). The activity which tends to change another object.

Affection. A relatively transient quality which produces, or results from, some accidental sensible alteration.

Appetency, Concupiscible. The tendency towards a pleasurable good.

Appetency, Irascible. The propensity to fight an evil. Refers to the second basic human tendency towards a "difficult good".

Appetency, Rational. The will.

Appetency, Sensuous. The power in virtue of which a sentient being tends toward a consciously apprehended sensuous good and away from a consciously apprehended sensuous evil.

Being (as ens) is the metaphysical concept that refers to "that which is", i.e., to the subject that has the "act of being".

Being (as esse) is the metaphysical principle that refers to the "act of being", i.e., to the verb "to be" (esse).

Causality, Principle of. The principle which states that whatever passes from a state of non-existence into a state of existence must have an efficient cause for its existence.

Cause, Efficient. That by which something is produced.

Cause, Equivocal. A cause which produces an effect dissimilar to itself in nature.

Cause, Final. That for the sake of which an efficient cause acts.

Cause, First. A cause whose causality is absolutely independent of any other cause or being, and on which all other causality depends.

Cause, Formal. That through which a thing is made to be what it is. Form.

Cause, Instrumental. An efficient cause which produces an effect in virtue of the power of another cause.

Cause, Material. That out of which something becomes or is made. Matter.

Cause, Moral. A cause which inclines a free agent to act.

Cause, Necessary. A cause which is determined by its nature to produce a certain effect, provided the requisite conditions are present.

Cause, Second. A cause whose causality is dependent on some other cause or being.

Cause. That which in any way whatever exerts a positive influence in the production of a thing.

Deliberation is an act of the practical intellect. It consists of weighing available options to obtain what we want to achieve.

Desire. The longing aroused by the conscious representation of an absent good.

Emotion. An affective mental state of the animal organism, following the cognition of an object or situation, characterized by strong feeling, by an impulse to action, and by physiological changes in bodily function.

End (Purpose). That for the sake of which an agent or efficient cause acts. See Cause, Final.

End of the Act. The purpose which is present in the act itself and which the act tends to realize because it is this particular kind of act.

End of the Agent. The purpose which the agent itself (himself) has in performing this particular act.

End, Natural. An end which lies within the tendencies and powers of the nature of the agent to strive for.

End, Supernatural. An end which lies beyond the tendencies and powers of the nature of an agent to strive for.

End, Ultimate. An end which has one or more ends referred to itself, while it is not itself referred to any other end.

Ens is the Latin word for "being" or for "a reality that is". The English "entity" derives from ens.

Epistemology. The science of the validity, or truth-value, of knowledge.

Esse the metaphysical principle that accounts for the being of a reality. It is the principle "that makes a thing be".

Essence, Metaphysical. The sum of the various grades of being which constitute a thing in the abstract concepts of the mind.

Essence, Physical. An essence as it exists concretely in nature, independent of the mind's thinking.

Essence. The act of actuality which perfects and determines a thing in its species; that which makes a thing to be what it is.

Evil, Absolute. The privation of an absolute good.

Evil, Moral. The privation of the proper relation between an action or its omission and the moral law.

Evil. Something that is unsuitable for a natural tendency or appetency. The privation of a required good.

Faculty. The quality in an entity which makes it capable of performing certain acts even when these acts are not actually performed.

Freedom of Contrariety. The freedom of the will to choose between a moral good and a moral evil.

Freedom of Exercise. The freedom of the will between acting and not acting; freedom of contradiction.

Freedom of Indifference. The freedom of the will in so far as it is subjectively indifferent in the presence of conflicting motives; freedom of choice.

Freedom of Specification. The freedom of the will to choose between one object and another object and therefore also between one act of the will and another act of the will.

Freedom. In the widest sense, the absence of external coercion or restraint which hinders an appetency from expressing itself in external action; in the strict sense, the absence of intrinsic necessity or determination in the performance of an act.

Good, Absolute. Anything which is suitable to a being itself, irrespective of other beings.

Good, Apparent. Something that is judged to be good for a being, but is actually not good for it.

Good, Delectable. A relative good which gives pleasure and enjoyment to another.

Good, Moral. A good which has everything demanded of it by the moral law.

Good. Any reality which suits the nature of the being which strives for it.

Habit, Objective. A stable quality disposing a being ill or well in the operations of its faculties.

Habit. As a quality, it is a comparatively permanent accident disposing a thing well or ill in its being. A stable quality in a person.

Idea. The intellectual image or representation of a thing. *Synonyms:* Concept, notion.

Image, Expressed Intelligible. The essential elements of a thing, abstracted from the phantasm by the agent intellect, gathered together by the potential intellect into a definition or abstract representation; the "idea" or "concept" of a thing.

Image, Expressed Sensible. The completed sensory cognitional image representing the sensed thing in the sentient subject; phantasm, formed by the synthetic sense.

Imagination. The power to form mental images or phantasms of perceived objects, together with the ability to reproduce these images or phantasms even in the absence of the perceived objects.

Intellect refers to a human spiritual power whose nature is to be an intentional assimilation of what is known.

Intellect, Agent. The power or capability which actively modifies itself so as to represent within itself in an abstract manner what is concretely represented in the phantasm.

Intellect, Potential. The power or capacity to express the essence of the represented thing in an "idea" or "concept."

Intellection. Rational cognition.

Judgment. An act of the mind pronouncing the agreement or disagreement of ideas among themselves.

Knowledge. The act by which one being may unite itself with another being from which it is materially or existentially distinct.

Law. The rational ordering of means to the common good of a community.

Memory. The power to recall past objects and states of consciousness and recognize them as having been present in former experiences.

Natural Law. The universal pattern of action required by human nature in general (not in the concrete) for its completion or perfection.

Nature. The essence of a being considered as the ultimate principle of its operations.

Objectivism. The doctrine that things are, when not experienced by us, just what they seem when experienced by us.

Passion (Reaction). The reception of an effect from another.

Perception. The cognizing of the object which produces sensation. It is a sensorial grasp of the totality of an external reality.

Perfection. A thing is "perfect" so far as it has emerged from the incompleteness of potency, in which all finite entities begin, and possesses the complete activity required by its nature for its proper perfection. Only the "perfect" is desirable or "good."

Person. An intellectual hypostasis, i.e., an individual, complete, subsistent, intellectual substance.

Potency. The capacity or aptitude for something.

Reason. The power of the mind which perceives the truth and validity of derived ideas, judgments, and principles on the basis of indirect and mediate evidence.

Relativism. In epistemology, the doctrine that every known object is relative (in relation) to the knowing subject and as such is dependent in its being upon the knowing subject and incapable of existing apart from consciousness; the doctrine of the immanence of relations as constitutive of their being.

Sensation. A conscious experience aroused by the stimulation of an organ of sense.

Scepticism. The reasoning of one who doubts the possibility of knowledge of reality; the systematic doubt which characterizes a philosophic sceptic.

Soul. The principle of life, feeling, thought, and action in humans, regarded as a distinct entity separate from the body. The spiritual part of humans as distinct from the physical part. It is the unifying and organizing principle of an organism.

Subject. In epistemology, that which possesses knowledge, perception, thought, consciousness; the mind, in so far as it possesses internal states of knowledge; the knower.

Subjectivism. The doctrine which holds that we can immediately know only what is present in consciousness.

Subsistence. That mode of existence in virtue of which a thing is self-contained and autonomous in its operations.

Substance. A being whose nature it is to exist in and for itself and not in another as in a subject. Is the metaphysical principle that supports perfections called "accidents"

Temperament refers to the person inherited physiological make-up as the source of certain tendencies and sentiments.

Understanding. The power of the mind which perceives the truth and validity of ideas and principles on the basis of direct and immediate evidence.

Volition, Deliberate. Volition which results in consequence of a deliberation over the respective merits of particular values.

Volition, Natural. Volition which must follow the apprehension of a perfect good.

Volition. Rational appetition.

Will. The rational appetency or the power to strive for an intellectually perceived good and to shun an intellectually perceived evil. It is a rational desiring instance.