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Theology and Ministry for Mission: Some Orientations after Veritatis Gaudium
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EDITOR'S PREFACE

The recent appointment of Rev. Enrico C. Eusebio, Jr., S.J., as 10th President of Loyola School of Theology (LST) is an auspicious time to celebrate the achievements of LST and map out its plans and direction for the future.

In his inaugural address on August 28, 2019, the new President reported on the increasing number of students in LST and the initiative taken by the school to address the needs of its clientele. The First Semester of SY 2019 registered a total of 463 students enrolled in various programs; of these, 56 are laymen, 53 are laywomen, 38 are religious sisters, and the rest are seminarians studying for the priesthood and priests taking up doctoral studies. To encourage more lay people to study theology, LST has also established a Scholarship Fund for the Laity and Religious Sisters.

The school has also attracted many international students who now comprise 40% (187) of the total student population. This trend has given impetus for LST to offer programs and courses that cater to their needs and interests. The Asian Theological Program, for example, endeavours to theologize in the Asian context and from an Asian perspective without losing sight of the catholicity of the Christian faith. Interfaith dialogue, theology of inculturation, Asian religions, history of the Church in Asia, theological issues on migration and ecology, and theological reflections of the Federation of Asian Bishops' Conferences (FABC) are just some of the themes in the courses LST offers to those preparing for mission work in Asia.

LST is also blessed with its links to various institutions inside the Ateneo de Manila University campus such as the ADMU Graduate School, East Asian Pastoral Institute, Center for Family Ministries, Center for Ignatian Spirituality, Emmaus Center for Psycho-Spiritual Formation, and Jesuit Communications Philippines. Networking with them has made it possible for LST to offer interdisciplinary studies and courses geared toward various specializations. For instance, the school now offers DMin programs in Spirituality, Pastoral Counseling, and Religious Education.

As a theological institution preparing individuals for priestly and lay ministry in the Catholic Church, LST has also taken steps to align its programs and pedagogy with the new *Ratio Fundamentalis Institutionis Sacerdotalis (The Gift of Priestly Vocation)* issued by the Congregation of the Clergy on December 8, 2016; Pope Francis's apostolic constitution *Veritatis Gaudium* on Ecclesiastical Universities and Faculties (January 29, 2018); and the Universal Apostolic Preferences (UAP) of the Society of Jesus.

To commemorate the inauguration of the new LST President, this issue of *Landas* carries the full text of his address to the academic community, together with a number of scholarly essays.

Felipe Fruto Ll. Ramirez, S.J.

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THEOLOGY AND MINISTRY FOR MISSION*

Some Orientations after *Veritatis Gaudium*

Enrico C. Eusebio, Jr., S.J.

I. Loyola School of Theology (LST) Through the Lens of Our Alumni

Over a month ago, I wrote to some LST alumni requesting them for some information regarding their current ministry and a few thoughts about their experience in LST. I thought of introducing some of them to you today. We hope to come, through our alumni perhaps, to a lived appreciation of our mission today at LST even as we also try to reflect on LST's future directions.

A. Alumni from Africa and Europe

Martin Waweru Kamau, S.J. (Kenya), STL 2017. Fr. Martin is the Headmaster at the Loyola Secondary School in Wau, South Sudan. A school at the frontier, LSS forms students many of whom are displaced, together with their relatives, and live in camps where they took refuge after the civil wars. Fr. Martin, who studied Migration Theology, wrote: "LST empowered me to develop resilience and pliability to work with

*Inaugural Address of the 10th President of Loyola School of Theology (August 28, 2019).

displaced and forcibly uprooted people who, in many cases, remain in a state of despair."

Christian Schenker (Switzerland), MA 2017. Christian works at the Student Chaplaincy under the supervision of the Jesuits at the University of Zurich. He said:

> LST prepared me well for this ministry by letting me imbibe both the aura of Jesuit intellectuality as well as Ignatian spirituality. Some of the challenges I face in my work are obviously greatly influenced by my particular context here in Switzerland: secularization, individualism, relativism of truth, challenges that make us rethink what it means to *be* Church and *belong* to the Church.

Pablo Munoz, F.M.V.D. (Spain), STL 2013. Pablo has been ministering to many Verbum Dei groups in and near Rome since he graduated from LST in 2013. He wrote: "I always remember LST as a great experience, a very wonderful family that I will always treasure in my heart."

B. Alumni from Latin America

Walter Diaz, C.S. (Mexico), STB 2014. After his studies at LST and ordination, Walter was sent to the Scalabrinian-run Holy Redeemer Parish in London. In particular, he was blessed to share with the Filipino community in London his own experience as a migrant in the Philippines during his theological studies in LST. "With great honor and gratitude," Walter wrote, "I gave these people back a small portion of the human and academic formation that I've gained from the Philippines … I'm very thankful to my former classmates, professors and to all the beautiful people of LST."

C. Alumni from Asia and the Philippines

Francis Xavier Nguyen Hai Tinh, S.J. (Vietnam), STB 2003. Tinh is the Formation Delegate of the Vietnamese Province and teaches theology full-time at St. Joseph Jesuit Scholasticate in Ho Chi Minh City. Fr. Tinh wrote:

> At LST my mind was widely opened to new knowledge and experiences that challenged and renewed me, making me into what I am now. Much of what I'm teaching and the way I'm thinking [are] from what I learned and experienced during my time at LST and Arrupe International Residence.

Gerald Kong Teck Wee (Singapore), STL-MA 2012. Gerald is the Executive Secretary of both the Archdiocesan Catholic Council for Interreligious Dialogue and the Archdiocesan Catholic Council for Ecumenical Dialogue in the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Singapore. He strives to build bonds of friendship, understanding, and respect among believers of different religions that bring Catholics and the interfaith community together.

Antonetta Pereira, F.M.M. (India), STL 2015. Sr. Antonetta is a professor of theology at a women's theologate in India. She is Tertian Instructor and in-charge of Junior sisters in her congregation, the Franciscan Missionaries of Mary.

Lee Jeihui, S.O.L.P.H. (Korea), STB 2016. Sr. Teresa is Editor-in-Chief at a publishing company in Korea called "Living with Scripture" that is run by their Congregation, the Sisters [of] Our Lady of Perpetual Help. She also lectures on theology and Scripture to lay people and sisters in formation, frequently using her LST class notes on Revelation and Faith, Christology, Ecclesiology, and others. She wrote: "Everything I experienced in LST is a priceless treasure: the knowledge, experience, and friendships with classmates from many countries."

Christina Elias, M.A. (Caroline Islands), MA 2011. Sr. Christina currently works in the Vicariate of Pohnpei-Kosrae, a vicariate in the Caroline Islands, located on the island of Pohnpei. She is the youth and catechesis coordinator, accompanying the youth in their faith formation and training. She also gives retreats to the youth and catechists.

Ferry Susanto (Indonesia), STD 2017. Fr. Ferry is the head of the Biblical Commission of the Archdiocese of Jakarta and is formator at the major seminary of the Archdiocese. He teaches Scripture courses with a focus on the Old Testament at the Driyarkara School of Philosophy in Jakarta. Fr. Ferry wrote:

> LST gave me wonderful experiences in studying the Sacred Scriptures using some contextual approaches, including the point of view of the Asian Church. In my teaching, I share with my students some biblical approaches that I learned in LST such as feminism and post-colonial criticism. Thanks to all my professors who helped me in my doctorate program.

Also among our many graduates from the Philippines are recently-appointed bishops. Five have been appointed by Pope Francis just this year 2019 to serve the People of God in the Philippines. They are:

- Most Rev. Cosme Damian R. Almedilla, D.D. (Seminary Program 1987) as Bishop of Butuan
- Most Rev. Midyphil B. Billones, D.D. (STB 1994; Seminary Program 1995) as Auxiliary Bishop of Cebu
- Most Rev. Marvyn A. Maceda, D.D. (STB 1995; Seminary Program 1996) as Bishop of San Jose de Antique
- Most Rev. Leo M. Dalmao, C.M.F., D.D. (STB 1996; Seminary Program 1997) as Bishop of the Prelature of Isabela, Basilan
- Most Rev. Jose R. Rapadas III, D.D. (STL 2007) as Bishop of Iligan

We also have so many other lay alumni like our amazing theology professors here in the University, family counselors, and retreat directors. Just seeing how much service our alumni provide to the various churches around the world brings a lot of consolation and pride to my heart and to our faculty. We at LST are doing something worthwhile; we are carrying out an important mission in this part of the world.

II. The Mission of LST

LST's mission of formation is threefold: as an ecclesiastical faculty of theology, as Asian and international, and as Jesuit.

A. As an Ecclesiastical Faculty of Theology

As an ecclesiastical faculty directly under the supervision of the Holy See, LST serves the particular churches of the Philippines, Asia, and even beyond in the preaching of the Gospel. Connected with but definitely not the same as catechesis or religious education, which is an initiatory and a continuing way of formation in the basic tenets of the faith, theology helps believers "to understand ever more fully that which they believe … to assimilate the intelligible content of the Word of God, so that it may become light and nourishment for their faith.… This is the way of the understanding of faith (*intellectus fidei*)."[1] Indeed, theology is faith seeking understanding, *fides quaerens intellectum,* but also faith seeking deeper and creative understanding.

Hence the mission of our faculty is not so much to catechize our students but to theologize with them in a way that is profound, creative, beautiful, attractive, inspiring, and even disturbing. Together, professors and students "seek to understand better, further develop and more effectively communicate the meaning of Christian Revelation.… They investigate the ways in which theology can shed light on specific questions raised by contemporary culture,"[2] many of which are so complex, difficult, and at times disconcerting. At LST and in any ecclesiastical faculty of theology, these questions deserve carefully-nuanced answers and not memorized lines from the text of the catechism, and not even carefully memorized paragraphs from the class notes of your professors.

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[1]International Theological Commission, *Theology Today: Perspectives, Principles, and Criteria* (November 29, 2011), no. 17.

[2]John Paul II, Apostolic Constitution *Ex Corde Ecclesiae* (August 15, 1990), no. 29.

As an ecclesiastical faculty, LST commits itself to this mission of theologizing in communion always and intensely with the hierarchy and with the local, particular, and the universal Church in the whole work of evangelization.[3] In fact, the Fathers of the 35th General Congregation of the Society of Jesus held in 2008, in its Decree 1, quote Pope Benedict XVI when he said in his allocution that "the Church's evangelizing work … relies heavily on the Society's responsibility for formation in the fields of theology, spirituality and mission."[4] "In an era of complex social, cultural and religious challenges," the decree states, "the Pope asks us to faithfully help the Church.… What the Church expects from us is sincere collaboration in the search for the full truth to which the Spirit leads us, in full adherence to the faith and the teaching of the Church."[5]

Indeed, as an ecclesiastical faculty of theology and ministry, LST was originally established primarily for the formation of future priests. Nevertheless, through these past 50 years, LST has intensely committed itself as well to the professional and ministerial formation of the laity and religious sisters, who are companions of the clergy in mission.

Out of our current student population of 463, we currently have 56 laymen, 53 laywomen, and 39 religious sisters in our various degree and non-degree programs. In fact, as expressed by one of our professors, Fr. Arnel Aquino,

> our day-to-day classes in Loyola School of Theology have become all the richer because of what laypeople and women-religious bring: feet-on-the-earth, deeply pastoral, and refreshing narratives and experiences … more appropriated to the real-time needs of today's people, closer to the sheep.[6]

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[3]Francis, Apostolic Constitution *Veritatis Gaudium* (January 29, 2019), no. 3.

[4]Benedict XVI, Allocution to the 35th General Congregation of the Society of Jesus (February 21, 2008), no. 6.

[5]Society of Jesus, *General Congregation 35* (2008), Decree 1, no. 7.

[6]Arnel Aquino, in the brochure for the LST Scholarship Fund for the Laity and Religious Sisters. Text available at https://www.facebook.com/loyolaschooloftheology/.

Pope Francis in fact tells us that theological centers should

> encourage as much as possible in addition to seminarians and religious, the participation … of lay people and women both lay and religious. In particular, the contribution that women are making and can make to theology is indispensable and their participation should therefore be supported.[7]

In this regard, we are launching today our fundraising project, the LST Scholarship Fund for the Laity and Religious Sisters, that will help our prospective students in the masters and doctoral programs to respond to the inspiration and challenge of Pope Francis. With the generous assistance of those who support our cause, LST hopes to bring in twenty-million pesos (PhP 20,000,000.00) as capital for this scholarship fund. Please pray for the success of this campaign.

B. As an Asian and International Faculty of Theology

LST is and will always be a Filipino school of theology. The Philippines serves as the immediate context or the precise formative-educative backdrop of theological and ministerial formation at LST:

- our rich and complex Filipino cultural heritage that many observe is altogether "Asian" and "Western";
- those varied expressions of lived faith and popular religiosity by Filipinos—Quiapo's *Jesus Nazareno*, the 9-day *Simbanggabi*, the novena to Our Mother of Perpetual Help;
- the complex socio-political and economic landscape during this time of Duterte and its lights and shadows;
- *baha*, *bagyo*, *habagat*, traffic, and Chicken Joy and Jollibee.

[7]Francis, Address at the Meeting on the Theme "Theology After *Veritatis Gaudium* in the Context of the Mediterranean" (Naples: June 21, 2019).

However, LST is and has always been international as well because of the global character of Jesuit mission. "From its very beginning, Jesuit mission has considered 'the entire world' as 'the object of our interest and concern'" *ad maiorem Dei gloriam*.[8] One of the early Jesuits, Jerome Nadal, used to say, "For the Society, the whole world is our home."[9]

Here in LST in 2009, through the efforts of our former President Fr. Jose Mario Francisco, S.J., we institutionalized a program called the Asian Theological Program. Its goal is to ensure that preparation for ministry in Asian contexts, including the Philippines, remains an integral part of LST. This formation requires "enabling our students to understand and communicate the Gospel within their contexts, to reflect critically on these contexts in the light of the Gospel and to enrich the Catholic tradition with concerns arising from these contexts."[10] For the majority of our students who are from the Philippines, this Asian and global perspective in theologizing can serve as a powerful experience of the Church as both "particular" and as "universal" as they reflect on the Gospel of Jesus *locally* in the context of their parish or city or the entire country but always with an *Asian and global perspective*, never narrow nor parochial.

Just to share some statistics with you: from 65 international students out of 350 students in Academic Year 2008–2009 (18.6%), the number of international students has swelled to 187 out of 463 students this current First Semester (40.39%). As LST has been experiencing not just growth in enrollment in general but more significantly the increasing internationalization of the academic community over the last 9 or 10 years, so has LST thereby responded by updating its curriculum, course offerings, and pedagogy in accord with our Asian Theological Program.

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[8]Jose Mario C. Francisco, *Summary Brief on the Asian Theological Program of Loyola School of Theology* (Loyola School of Theology: November 23–25, 2009), here quoting *General Congregation 35*, Decree 2, nos. 23–24.

[9]Francis, Allocution to the 36th General Congregation of the Society of Jesus (October 24, 2016).

[10]Asian Theological Program of LST.

Since most of our graduates, when back in their field of mission, will be working with and ministering to peoples of Asia and its various cultural and religious traditions, so also do we strive to prepare them for mission in such a context through various ways, among which are:

- offering courses that have explicit Asian content like Asian Church history and Asian religions,
- offering courses that discuss issues common to Asian contexts like migration and care for our common home, and
- offering courses like "Contextual Theology" and "Liturgical Inculturation" that highlight the importance of context in understanding Christian doctrine and practice.

Two years ago, LST took a step further in our commitment to our international students and to contextual theologizing by instituting what we call "Theology in an Asian Language Series." We have offered theology and psycho-spirituality courses in the Vietnamese, Bahasa Indonesian, and Korean languages through the assistance of our visiting professors from abroad. Fr. Luigino Marchioron of the Xaverian Missionaries is currently offering a course in Mandarin on "Reading the Scriptures from the Chinese Perspective." Next semester, not one but three professors from Vietnam will offer a course on "Psycho-Spiritual Growth in Religious Formation." Pending student interest, we will offer similar native language courses in the future, including Filipino- and English-based courses that address questions that are being asked by our international students from Africa and Latin America.

LST's Asian Theological Program is definitely still a work in progress. It would be a good step forward if our international students can participate more in organizing our bi-monthly Theological Hour sessions and bring faith and life issues arising from their own cultures and contexts so that, with the help of experts from their respective countries, we can reflect on these concerns together.

I thank the members of our faculty who, according to the nature of their respective courses, continually strive to commit themselves to our Asian mandate by way of their instruction and research. I am also especially grateful to many of our professors who have patiently and competently guided student research that has produced theses and dissertations with topics that promote creative dialogue between the Christian faith and local cultures. Congratulations to our 20 student researchers who successfully defended their masters, licentiate, and doctoral theses and dissertations last Academic Year: 6 from the Philippines, 3 from Indonesia, 2 each from Vietnam, India, and Zimbabwe, and 1 each from the Benin Republic, Singapore, Myanmar, Korea, and Bangladesh.

C. As a Jesuit Faculty of Theology

As one of the key ministries of the Society of Jesus in the Philippines, it is incumbent upon LST to take an active part in the reflection of the Society on our Universal Apostolic Preferences (UAP) from 2019–2029. The UAP are the fruit of a process of discernment led by Fr. General Arturo Sosa, S.J. that serve as the road map of the Society of Jesus in our mission:

1. *To show the way to God through the Spiritual Exercises and discernment.* "The Spiritual Exercises of Saint Ignatius of Loyola are a privileged instrument for making the life and action of the Lord Jesus present in diverse social contexts of today's world."[11] The Society of Jesus commits itself to share our spirituality with others, namely discernment and the Spiritual Exercises, as a means to lead others to God.

2. *To walk with the poor, the outcasts of the world, those whose dignity has been violated, in a mission of reconciliation and justice.* "Sent as *companions in a mission of reconciliation and justice*, we resolve to walk with individuals and communities

[11]Arturo Sosa, *Universal Apostolic Preferences of the Society of Jesus, 2019–2029* (June 2019).

that are vulnerable, excluded, marginalized, and humanly impoverished.… [the abused] … The path we seek to follow with the poor is one that promotes social justice and the change of economic, political, and social structures that generate injustice.…"[12]

3. *To accompany [the young] in the creation of a hope-filled future.* "Youth is the stage of human life when individuals make the fundamental decisions by which they insert themselves into society, seek to give meaning to their existence, and realize their dreams. By accompanying the young in this process, teaching them discernment and sharing with them the Good News of Jesus Christ, we can show them the way to God.…"[13]

4. *To collaborate in the care of our Common Home.* "We resolve … to collaborate with others in the construction of alternative models of life that are based on respect for creation and on a sustainable development capable of producing goods that, when justly distributed, ensure a decent life for all human beings on our planet."[14]

The process of assimilation and implementation of the UAP which Fr. General enjoins all Jesuits to do also pertains to all of us at LST—faculty, students, and staff—who are, in the words of Fr. General, "our partners in mission … who also share our mission and hopes."[15] It will make LST even "more Jesuit" in practice if we strive to align our course offerings, the topics of our bi-monthly Theological Hour sessions, the activities of the Student Council, our students' personal choice of courses and electives, etc. with the Society's Universal Apostolic Preferences.

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[12]Sosa, *Universal Apostolic Preferences of the Society of Jesus, 2019–2029*.

[13]Sosa, *Universal Apostolic Preferences of the Society of Jesus, 2019–2029*.

[14]Sosa, *Universal Apostolic Preferences of the Society of Jesus, 2019–2029*.

[15]Sosa, *Universal Apostolic Preferences of the Society of Jesus, 2019–2029*.

III. The Missionary Renewal of Theological Studies After *Veritatis Gaudium*

We have reflected on the mission of LST according to its identity as an ecclesiastical faculty of theology, as Asian and international, and as Jesuit. I propose for our consideration at this point the missionary vision of Pope Francis for the renewal of ecclesiastical studies in his 2018 Apostolic Constitution *Veritatis Gaudium* (The Joy of Truth) on ecclesiastical universities and faculties. The path he laid out in *Veritatis Gaudium* is the path that LST is called to take if we are to be "always and intensely" in close communion with the Holy Father, the hierarchy, and with the local and universal Church in the whole work of evangelization.[16]

Pope Francis points out three fundamental criteria or requirements for the renewal of ecclesiastical studies in its service of a missionary Church.

A. Contemplation on the Kerygma, the Gospel of Mercy

First is contemplation on the very heart of the *kerygma*, or the core Gospel proclamation of salvation in Christ, and to discern how it "continues to take flesh in the life of the Church and of humanity."[17] Renewal begins with the theologian's encounter with the mercy of God, grounded on the initial proclamation made by Jesus himself. From there, Pope Francis encourages us on

> to study how the various disciplines—dogma, morality, spirituality, law, and so on—may reflect the centrality of mercy [in the Gospel.] Without mercy our theology, our law, our pastoral care run the risk of collapsing into bureaucratic narrow-mindedness or ideology, which by their nature seek to domesticate the mystery.[18]

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[16]Francis, *Veritatis Gaudium*, no. 3.

[17]Francis, *Veritatis Gaudium*, Foreword no. 4.

[18]Cf. Letter of His Holiness Pope Francis to the Grand Chancellor of the "Pontificia Universidad Católica Argentina" for the 100th Anniversary of the

Indeed, for Pope Francis, compassion especially with those who are suffering is an indispensable component of authentic theologizing: "Without compassion constantly nourished by prayer … theology not only loses its soul, but also its intelligence and [the] ability to interpret reality in a Christian way." Moreover, theologians who "prudently place themselves outside the world and share nothing risky with the majority of humanity" are merely engaging themselves in "a laboratory theology, a pure theology," like distilled water "which understands nothing."[19]

When theologians grapple especially with difficult, non-"black or white" questions facing humanity today in the light of the Gospel, Pope Francis acknowledges the need for them to enjoy theological freedom because "without the possibility of experimenting with new paths, nothing new is created, and there is no room for the newness of the Spirit of the Risen One."[20] At the same time, Pope Francis clarifies that true freedom in teaching and research is necessarily based upon the firm adherence to God's Word and deference to the Magisterium. Such fidelity to church teachings is guided by the hierarchy of truths in the Catholic Church[21] and the various degrees of authority with which these truths are taught by the Magisterium.[22]

Nevertheless, Pope Francis says that in their exercise of creative fidelity, in harmonizing theology with the pastoral needs of the People of God, theologians should proceed "with trust, and without suspicion, but [at] the same time with prudence and without rashness, especially in teaching.…"[23]

Founding of the Faculty of Theology (Vatican City: March 3, 2015).

[19]Francis, Address in Naples (June 21, 2019).

[20]Francis, Address in Naples (June 21, 2019).

[21]Vatican II, Decree on Ecumenism *Unitatis Redintegratio* (November 21, 1964), no. 11c.

[22]Cf. John Paul II, *Ex Corde Ecclesiae*, no. 29.

[23]Francis, *Veritatis Gaudium*, Art. 38.

B. A Culture of Dialogue

The second fundamental criterion in the renewal of theological studies is the cultivation of an authentic culture of dialogue among believers and non-believers. Dialogue for Pope Francis is not a tactical approach but is a method of discernment. We are able to discern by dialogue when we are able to experience the God of Mercy in the context of communion and are able to appreciate more fully the meaning of such an encounter and its practical implications. Through dialogue, theologians are able to discern "new ways of relating to God, to others and to the world around us … [and they] … reach the places where new narratives and paradigms are being formed.…"[24]

C. Interdisciplinarity, Cross-Disciplinarity, and Networking

The third impetus for the renewal of theology is interdisciplinarity and cross-disciplinarity carried out with wisdom and creativity in the light of Revelation and assisted by networking. This criterion is still connected with dialogue. A theology that dialogues and adopts discernment requires theologians who are rooted in the heart of the Church and, at the same time, "open to the inexhaustible novelties of the Spirit"[25] that can be present in various sources and ways of understanding and transmitting the truth. Pope Francis thus encourages interdisciplinarity either in what he calls its "weak" form—as a simple multidisciplinary approach wherein an object is studied from the viewpoint of different disciplines—or its "strong" form—as cross-disciplinarity, viewing all disciplines from the perspective or against the backdrop of the Gospel.[26]

Networking and cooperation not just among ecclesiastical faculties and schools of theology worldwide but also with other secular academic

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[24]Francis, *Evangelii Gaudium* (Nov. 24, 2013), no. 74; Francis, *Veritatis Gaudium*, Foreword no. 4.

[25]Francis, Address in Naples (June 21, 2019).

[26]Francis, *Veritatis Gaudium*, Foreword no. 4.

and non-academic institutions will serve the push towards inter- and cross-disciplinarity of our ecclesiastical faculties.

In summary, theology after *Veritatis Gaudium* for Pope Francis is a kerygmatic, mission-oriented theology that never tires in proclaiming the Gospel of love and mercy. It is a theology that leads the Church to always "go forth," constantly finding opportunities *to serve instead of being preoccupied with preserving itself in its past glories.* It is a theology of discernment that inspires us to be compassionate, to be welcoming, and to be always in dialogue with society, cultures, and religions and shunning isolationism so that together we may realize the peaceful coexistence of individuals and peoples.[27]

Conclusion

As I begin my own mission as President of Loyola School of Theology, I ask for your prayers not just for myself but for all of us here at LST—faculty, administrators, staff, and students. We need your prayers as we set about this journey of renewal to which Pope Francis beckons us.

Before I conclude, I would like to express LST's deep gratitude to the many bishops of the Philippines and Asia, and to superiors of religious congregations and administrative superiors of our lay students, for their trust and confidence in LST and in the Society of Jesus in sending their men and women to study with us.

Finally, thank you, Fr. Joe Quilongquilong, for the past six years of exemplary service you have rendered to LST. You have left an indelible mark on LST. Your contribution to LST will always be remembered!

[27]Francis, Address in Naples (June 21, 2019).

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MELCHIZEDEK

A Minor Character of Great Importance to Biblical Theology

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Gaps in narratives arouse the curiosity of readers. Those perusing the Gospels, for example, may wonder: what happened to Jesus after the stories of his infancy? What did he do for a good part of his adolescent and young adult life? The lacuna in the canonical Gospels has provoked fertile imaginations to create stories about the so-called "hidden life" of Jesus, with some of the more fantastic ones having been preserved in the apocryphal gospels that were widely circulated up until the medieval period.

The sudden appearance of the mysterious character of Melchizedek in Gen. 14:18–20 has likewise elicited a lot of questions about his origin, identity, role in the Abram saga, and the enigmatic mention of his name in one of the royal psalms. The search for answers to these inquiries even resulted in the creation of a number of Melchizedek myths, legends, typologies, and *midrashim* during the Second Temple period (516 BCE–70 CE) and beyond, of which some may have contributed to the understanding of the priesthood of Jesus Christ in the Letter to the Hebrews.

This article thus aims to retrace the development of the Melchizedek traditions in order to understand how this minor character in the Bible gradually attained prominence in the articulation of the theology of the

priesthood of Jesus Christ. Given the limits of a journal essay, however, it would not be possible to present a comprehensive survey of the scholarly works that have been done on this subject. What we intend to do, rather, is focus mainly on some of the influential works of the past as well as on major researches that have been done in recent years.

1. Genesis 14

Genesis 14 is so atypical and different from the rest of the patriarchal narratives that it is generally regarded as a scribal insertion within the Abraham cycle of stories. A plethora of opinions has arisen, however, regarding the origin and purpose of the traditions that are embedded in the chapter.

The tradition of Abram as a warrior (Gen. 14:1–17, 21–24). An alliance of four kings—Amraphel of Shinar, Arioch of Ellasar, Chedorlaomer of Elam, and Tidal of Goiim—defeated the rulers of the Jordan plain who had rebelled against their overlord. The allied forces captured the inhabitants of Sodom and Gomorrah, including Abram's nephew Lot, and plundered the goods and provisions of the cities. When word reached Abram, however, he led forth a rescue operation with 318 of his trained servants and routed King Chedorlaomer and his forces. Abram thus rescued his nephew and the captives and recovered all the plundered goods. On his return from battle, moreover, the king of Sodom went out to meet him in the Valley of Shaveh and told him that he could keep the booty but that the rescued people should be allowed return to their city. Abram, however, restored to the king all the goods that belonged to his city, save for some shares of those who joined Abram in battle.

Various scholars in the 19th century tried to identify the four kings mentioned in v. 1 with rulers in the Assyrian and Babylonian annals of the second millennium BCE.[1] In 1887, E. Schrader proposed that

[1]In 1871, J. Oppert ("Über Kedorlaomer," *Theologische Studien und Kritiken* 24:2 [1871]: 509–512) suggested that Chedorlaomer's name in the Septuagint, Χοδολλογομορ, was a transliteration of the Elamite name Kudur-Lagamar

Amraphel was the Babylonian king Hammurabi (= Ammurapi).[2] T. G. Pinches, who deciphered some cuneiform inscriptions of the so-called *Spartoli Tablets* in the British Museum, thought they contained the names of the other three kings: Arioch of Ellasar, Chedorlaomer of Elam, and Tidal of Goiim.[3] Other scholars (e.g., F. Hommel, A. Jeremias, W. F. Albright, M. C. Astour) took up Pinches's discoveries and developed them.[4] Subsequent researches,

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("servant of Lagamaru"). No such name, however, has been found in historical records.

[2]E. Schrader, *The Cuneiform Inscriptions and the Old Testament* Vol. 2, trans. O. Whitehouse (London: Williams & Norgate, 1888), 299–300. J.-V. Scheil ("Chodorlahomor dans les Inscriptions Chaldéennes," *Revue Biblique* 5:4 [1896]: 600–601) also claimed to have found a tablet in the Istanbul Museum on which the name Kodorlahomer (= *Chedorlaomer*) appears in Hammurabi's missive to Sin Idinnam, the king of Larsa. Kodorlahomer is the Prince of Emutbal (West Elam). The claims of both Schrader and Scheil, however, have now been discredited.

[3]The Spartoli tablets have been dated variously from as early as the second millennium BCE to as late as the second century BCE. T. Pinches claimed to have found the names Kudur-laḫgumal, king of Elam; Tudḫula, king of Gutium; and Êri-Aaku, king of Larsa ("Certain Inscriptions and Records Referring to Babylonia and Elam and Their Rulers, and Other Matters," *Journal of the Transactions of the Victoria Institute* 29 [1897]: 43–89; also T. Pinches, *The Old Testament in the Light of the Historical Records and Legends of Assyria and Babylonia* [New York: E. & J. B. Young & Co., 1902], 223–232).

[4]F. Hommel popularized Pinches's work in his book, *Die altisraelitische Überlieferung in inschriftlicher Beleuchtung: Ein Einspruch gegen die Aufstellung der modernen Pentateuchkritik* (München: G. Franz'sche Hofbuchhandlung, 1897), 180–190. A. Jeremias ("Die sogenannten Kedorlaomer-Texte," in *Orientalistische Studien: Fritz Hommel zum sechzigsten Geburstag am 31 Juli 1914* [Leipzig: J. C. Hinrichs'sche Buchhandlung, 1917], 69–97) made some refinements in Pinches's transliterations and translations of the texts. See also W. Albright, "The Historical Background of Genesis XIV," *Journal of the Society of Oriental Research* 10 (1926): 231–269; M. Astour, "Political and Cosmic Symbolism in Genesis 14 and in Its Babylonian Sources," in A. Altmann, ed., *Biblical Motifs: Origins and Transformations* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1966), 65–112; and *s.v.* "Chedorlaomer," in D. Freedman et al., eds., *Anchor Bible Dictionary* Vol. 1 (New York: Doubleday, 1992), 893–895.

however, have discredited Pinches's findings; as G. J. Wenham points out, "though the names seem authentic … no extrabiblical sources attest that these kings [identified by Pinches] reigned simultaneously, let alone campaigned together in the West."[5]

Other scholars, like J. A. Emerton, W. Schatz, C. Westermann, and J. Doré, consider Genesis 14 to be a composite chapter consisting of three sections that originated from various periods.[6] The story of Abram as a warrior who liberated his nephew Lot in vv. 12–24 (omitting vv. 18–20) comes from the period of the judges. Emerton considers the story of Abram's victory over Chedorlaomer as "hero narrative" like the story of Gideon.[7] The purpose for inserting it in the patriarchal narratives, according to Westermann, is to give Abraham "a significance on the stage of world history by making him victor over four kings of powerful eastern empires."[8] The Melchizedek episode (vv. 18–20) was a later insertion within vv. 12–24, and the campaign of the four kings (vv. 1–11) was the last section to be added to the narrative.

G. Granerød treats Genesis 14 as a scribal insertion from the Second Temple period that serves to fill the gap in the narrative left by the statement in 13:17— "Rise up, walk through the length and the breadth of the land, for I will give it to you"—which did not provide specific details about the extent of the land promised

[5]G. Wenham, *Genesis 1–15*, Word Biblical Commentary Vol. 1 (Waco, TX: Word Books, 1987), 307.

[6]J. Emerton, "The Riddle of Genesis XIV," *Vetus Testamentum* 21 (1971): 403–439; J. Emerton, "Some False Clues in the Study of Genesis XIV," *Vetus Testamentum* 21 (1971): 24–47; W. Schatz, *Genesis 14: Eine Untersuchung*, EHS (Bern: Herbert Lang, 1972); C. Westermann, *Genesis 12–36* (London: SPCK, 1985), 191–192; J. Doré, "La rencontre Abraham-Melchisédech et le problème de l'unité littéraire de Genèse 14," in M. Carrez, J. Doré, & P. Grelot, eds., *De la Tôrah au Messie* (Paris: Desclée, 1981), 75–95.

[7]Emerton, "The Riddle of Genesis XIV," 431–433.

[8]Westermann, *Genesis 12–36*, 207.

to Abram.[9] To compose the story of Abram as a warrior, the scribe borrowed from 1 Samuel 30 (for words and ideas), Gen. 10:19 and Dt. 29:22 (concerning the alliance of five cities in the Jordan plain), and Genesis 10 (for geographical information). He also utilized names of foreigners living in the diaspora.[10] According to Granerød, the scribe may have been a nationalist militant of sorts who desired to instill religious fervor among the people by holding up Abram as a model-liberator who defended his people from foreign domination.[11]

This variety of scholarly opinions as shown above suffices to show the complexity of determining the period wherein the various traditions were incorporated into Genesis 14.

The Melchizedek tradition (Gen. 14:18–20). Behind vv. 18–20 lies another ancient tradition, one which is different from that of Abram as a warrior. The language here is cultic—Melchizedek, king of Shalem (Jerusalem) and priest of God Most High (*ʾēl ʿelyôn*), appears abruptly in the narrative and brings out bread and wine to bless Abram. The latter accepts the blessing and gives a tenth of what he had to Melchizedek.

There are diverse opinions as well regarding the origin of this Melchizedek tradition. For Granerød, it developed in several stages, beginning with the application of Psalm 110, which was originally meant for the Davidic king, to Abraham as part of the elevation of the position of the patriarch in the Second Temple Period. It was now Abraham instead of the king whom YHWH addressed in Ps 110:1. Melchizedek in Ps. 110:4b, moreover, was not originally a personal name but a description of the king: "for my sake my king is loyal" (*ʿal-diḇrāṯî malkî-ṣeḏeq*).[12] The Abrahamic reinterpretation of Psalm 110 thus "functioned as a catalyst for an additional assimilation"—the

[9]G. Granerød, *Abraham and Melchizedek: Scribal Activity of Second Temple Times in Genesis 14 and Psalm 110*, BZAW 406 (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2010), 79–98.

[10]Granerød, *Abraham and Melchizedek*, 99–128.

[11]Granerød, *Abraham and Melchizedek*, 129–152.

[12]Granerød, *Abraham and Melchizedek*, 213–214.

personification of Melchizedek.[13] The Melchizedek tradition, which developed from the intertextual (Abrahamic) reading of Psalm 110 and Genesis 14, was therefore eventually assimilated into the story of Abram's war exploit.

Yet, since the only evidence Granerød offers for the Abrahamic reading of Psalm 110 is from later rabbinic interpretation in the Babylonian Talmud and the 11th century Jewish commentator Rashi, his theory regarding the literary assimilation between Psalm 110 and Genesis 14 in the Second Temple Period appears to be built on a shaky foundation.

R. Cargill recently argued that the text of Gen. 14:18 originally read ***malkî-ṣeḏeq meleḵ səḏōm*** (Melchizedek king of Sodom) but that later scribes changed ***səḏōm*** (Sodom) to ***šālēm*** (Shalem) to avoid portraying Abram as being blessed by the priest of Sodom, a totally depraved city that was bound to be annihilated (Genesis 18–19).[14] This emendation thus produced a disjointed narrative in vv. 18–20.

Restoring the original reading, Cargill claims, would make a seamless narrative in Genesis 14. He supports this theory with the following arguments: Melchizedek succeeded his father Bera who died in battle (v. 10);[15] Shalem, a name invented by the scribes, was associated with Jerusalem only at a later time in the course of the sectarian debate between Jews and the Samaritans regarding the preeminence of their respective temples;[16] and Melchizedek offered to pay Abram some amount (not a tithe) for his effort in retrieving the people and goods of the city, although Abram refused the offer of payment.[17]

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[13]Granerød, *Abraham and Melchizedek*, 19, 232–238.

[14]R. Cargill, *Melchizedek, King of Sodom: How Scribes Invented the Biblical Priest-King* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2019), 19–36.

[15]Cargill, *Melchizedek, King of Sodom*, 24–27.

[16]Cargill, *Melchizedek, King of Sodom*, 55–71.

[17]Cargill, *Melchizedek, King of Sodom*, 73–79.

Cargill's proposal is not really new. In 1903, C. E. Anderson already suggested that Shalem was substituted for Sodom in v. 18 by a scribe who might have found it inappropriate that Abram "the father of the faithful took part with the king of Sodom in the worship of his god.…" Anderson, moreover, argues that the change might have also been motivated by a desire "to connect Abram with Jerusalem … then have Abram paying tax to the priest-king of Jerusalem." This would, in effect, provide an etiological justification for the tithing system in the Jerusalem Temple.[18]

The downside of Cargill's and Anderson's theory is that there is no attestation whatsoever in any of the ancient manuscripts of the Hebrew Scripture of a variant reading which has Sodom instead of Shalem in Gen. 14:18. Furthermore, Cargill's interpretation of the statement in Ps. 76:3 as antithetical—"His tent/tabernacle was in Shalem, *but* his residence is in Zion"[19]—is forced and unconvincing, and so his attempt to dissociate Jerusalem from Shalem fails.

It is more likely that the Melchizedek episode reflects the *modus vivendi* that existed between the cult of YHWH and that of the Canaanite god *ʾēl ʿelyôn* during the early monarchy period. When David captured Jerusalem and made it his capital, he brought the Ark into it, and so the worship of YHWH co-existed for a time with the worship of *ʾēl ʿelyôn*, the patron god of the former Jebusite city. David had two priests in his royal court to serve the mixed population of Jerusalem: Abiathar, a Levite, for the Israelite worshippers of YHWH and Zadok for the Jebusite worshippers of *ʾēl ʿelyôn*.[20] Thus, at a time when YHWH

[18]C. E. Anderson, "Who Was Melchizedek? A Suggested Emendation of Gen. 14:18," *The American Journal of Semitic Languages and Literatures* 19:3 (1903): 176–177.

[19]Cargill, *Melchizedek, King of Sodom*, 59.

[20]R. Albertz, *A History of Israelite Religion in the Old Testament Period* Vol. 1 (London: SCM Press, 1994), 129; see also C. Hauer, "Who Was Zadok?" *Journal of Biblical Literature* 82:1 (1963): 89–94 and H. Rowley, "Melchizedek and Zadok (Gen 14 and Ps 110)," in W. Baumgartner, O. Eissfeldt, K. Elliger, & L. Rost, eds., *Festschrift für Alfred Bertholet zum 80. Geburtstag* (Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr, 1950), 468–469.

religion was not yet strictly monotheistic, the YHWH worshippers might have also venerated *ʾēl ʿelyôn* and given tithes to his priests.

> Abraham is blessed by the priest of this god, accepts the blessing, and gives the priest the tithe in return. An exchange such as this was possible only in the early monarchy, a period of transition, when David and Solomon were kings of a territory in which Israelites lived peacefully with Canaanites.[21]

YHWH, however, assimilated the attributes of *ʾēl ʿelyôn* over the course of time to the extent that the latter became simply a title or another name for the God of Israel. Note that Abram himself identifies *ʾēl ʿelyôn* with YHWH in v. 22, even if this is anachronistic from the perspective of the history of Israelite religion—"through a syntagmatic study, clearly אל עליון is not any local deity but is Yahweh himself (v. 22); furthermore, he is identified as 'creator of heavens and earth.'"[22] It was upon YHWH that Abram swore not to receive anything from the king of Sodom. This identification of *ʾēl ʿelyôn* with YHWH, therefore, made it possible for later scribes and Bible readers to regard Melchizedek as a priest of the God of Israel before Moses, the founder of the YHWH religion, designated the Levites to serve YHWH (Exodus 32:25–29; see also Dt. 33:8–11).

J. A. Emerton suggests that "the story helped to legitimate Jerusalem as a site of a holy place for Israelites, and the friendship between Abram and Melchizedek was intended to help to make David's occupying the throne of the Jebusite city acceptable to both Israelites and Jebusites."[23] Moreover, according to G. von Rad,

> we know about the rift between Jerusalem … and the patriarchally faithful country population with whom the anointed in Jerusalem did

[21]Westermann, *Genesis 12–36*, 207.

[22]A. Chan, *Melchizedek Passages in the Bible: A Case Study for Inner-Biblical and Inter-Biblical Interpretation* (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2016), 49.

[23]J. Emerton, "Some Problems in Genesis XIV," in G. Davies & R. Gordon, eds., *Studies on the Language and Literature of the Bible* (Leiden: Brill, 2015), 535.

> not ingratiate himself, and who were, moreover, reserved because of the material burdens and taxes that originated from him (cf. 1 Sam 8:11f).[24]

It is probable, therefore, that the story of Abram's submission and giving of tithes to Melchizedek provided these wary Judahites with a valid reason to submit to the Davidic king and pay him the tax.

When King Solomon banished Abiathar from Jerusalem for having supported his rival to the throne (Adonijah), the Levites were disenfranchised from serving in the Temple of Jerusalem. They were replaced by the Zadokites who might have traced their priestly lineage *at first* to Melchizedek and then *later on* to Aaron (1 Chr. 6:50–53). Zadok's and Melchizedek's names, which bear the term "zedek" (righteousness) either as a title of *ʾēl ʿelyôn* or as the name of another Canaanite god, may perhaps indicate their Jebusite origin.

During the period of the monarchy, it seems that various priestly families officiated in the YHWH shrines: the Zadokites in Jerusalem, the Aaronids in Bethel, the Mushite in Shechem, etc.[25] However, after the destruction of the northern kingdom of Israel and the centralization of worship in Jerusalem undertaken by King Josiah, the Zadokites gained monopoly of the priesthood.

The Deuteronomic group who may have supported Josiah's reform program of centralizing worship in Jerusalem and who insisted on the ancient Mosaic tradition that priests who serve YHWH must be "sons of Levi" (Exod. 32:25–29; Dt. 33:8–11) looked down on the priests who were not Levites (cf. 1 Kgs. 12:31). The Zadokites' lineage, therefore, may have been rectified to show that they are descended from Aaron (1 Chr. 5:27–34; 6:35–38 [=NRSV 1 Chr. 6:1–8, 50–53])—"a pious fabrication at a later age," according to H. H. Rowley.

> That he [Zadok] should be given a full genealogy by the Chronicler is not surprising. For owing to the respective parts played by Abiathar and Zadok in the intrigue that preceded the accession of Solomon, the one

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[24]G. von Rad, *Genesis* (London: SCM Press, 1972), 181.

[25]F. Cross, *Canaanite Myth and Hebrew Epic: Essays in the History of the Religion of Israel* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University, 1973), 195–215.

> was dismissed from Jerusalem, and the other left without rival in the Jerusalem priesthood (1 Kgs 2:26f), with the result that his successors continued to monopolize the priestly offices of Jerusalem down to the Exile, and even the reform of Josiah failed to interfere with their privileges (2 Kgs 23:9), despite the provisions of Deuteronomy (18:6–8). Ezekiel rationalized this position of privilege, and laid it down that in the future community priestly functions should be reserved for the family of Zadok (Ezk 44:15), while the country priests who had failed to secure what the Deuteronomic reformers had proposed for them should be reduced to a sub-priestly status (Ezk 44:10ff). But by the time of the Chronicler the Priestly Code was already established, and while it accepted Ezekiel's principle of two grades of Temple attendants, it adopted a wider basis than Ezekiel's for the limits of the priesthood, which it assigned to the descendants of Aaron. It was therefore necessary to legitimate the family of Zadok within the family of Aaron, and the creation of the genealogy set out in Chronicles is the natural result.[26]

The priestly writers took it for granted in the post-exilic period that all who officiated in the Temple of Jerusalem were "sons of Aaron" or Levites. The Zadokites' superiority over the various Levitic groups was institutionalized in the three-tiered hierarchy of the Jewish priesthood that developed during this period: the *kōhēn gāḏōl* (high priest), the *kōhănîm* (priests), and the *ləwiyyim* (Levites).

2. Psalm 110

Psalm 110 is generally regarded as a royal psalm that describes the enthronement of the king of Jerusalem[27] and which may have been sung during the enthronement ceremony along with other royal

[26]H. Rowley, "Zadok and Nehushtan," *Journal of Biblical Literature* 58:2 (1939): 113–141. Zadok's Jebusite origin is disputed by S. Olyan ("Zadok's Origins and the Tribal Politics of David," *Journal of Biblical Literature* 101:2 [1982]: 177–193). Olyan's suggestion that Zadok is an authentic Aaronid from Judah (pp. 183ff), however, is less convincing compared to Rowley's thesis.

[27]H.-J. Kraus, *Psalms 60–150* (Minneapolis: Augsburg-Fortress, 1989), 347–348. For a reconstruction of the enthronement ceremony of the Davidic king, see J. Corley, "Psalm 110 (109) and Israelite Royal Ritual," *Salmanticensis* 64:1 (2017): 41–71.

psalms (e.g., Psalm 2 and 72). According to G. Ravasi, it "deserves to be placed among the glorious texts of the ancient Hebrew poetry … with a strong imprint of an ancient monarchical psalm, perhaps from the same epoch as David."[28] This psalm was then reinterpreted at a later time as referring to the Messiah.[29]

During the enthronement ritual, the king sits on the throne after being anointed (1 Kgs. 1:46; also 2 Kgs. 11:19). "YHWH says to my lord [the king], 'Sit at my right hand until I make your enemies your footstool.' YHWH sends out from Zion your mighty scepter; rule in the midst of your foes" (Ps. 110:1–2). The new king wields a mighty scepter (*maṭṭēh-ʿoz*) as a symbol of royal authority (cf. Ps. 2:9; 45:7).

In accord with the concept of sacral monarchy, the king was regarded as the ultimate authority in both civil and religious spheres, and so exercised some priestly roles. When David brought the Ark to Jerusalem, for example, he sacrificed oxen and danced in the procession (2 Sam. 6:13–15). His sons were called priests (2 Sam. 8:18). The Davidic king administered the maintenance of the temple buildings and supported the sacrificial worship (2 Kgs. 12:5ff); he also supervised the temple finances (2 Kgs. 22:4ff). "Like the Babylonian kings, the descendants of David, too, were 'keepers of the sanctuary' (*zāninu*). So prayer was offered for the king in the cult (Pss. 20; 72)."[30]

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[28]According to G. Ravasi, "salmo monarchico antico, forse dell'epoca stessa di Davide, il Sal 110 merita quindi di essere collocate nella linea testi gloriosi dell'antica poesia ebraica dal Sal 18 al 76, da Gn 49:8–11 a Nm 24:17–19, di spiccata impronta moncarchica" (*Il Libro dei Salmi: Commento e Attualizzazione* Vol. III, Salmi 101–150 [Bologna: Edizione Dehoniane, 1985], 266).

[29]L. Alonso Schökel and C. Carniti regard the statement in Ps. 110:4b as an anomaly that "remains unexplained, unless the term *kohen* is taken in a metaphoric sense, equivalent to 'anointed' or restricted to the function of 'blessing', like what Melchizedek did." Given such difficulties, they propose as a last resort to consider Psalm 110 as messianic in its origin, with a vision of the Messiah embodying all the historical and institutional powers of Israel (*Salmos II [73–150]: Traducción, Introducciónes y Comentario* [Estella, Navarra: Editorial Verbo Divino, 1993], 1373).

[30]Albertz, *A History of Israelite Religion*, 129.

However, the priestly functions of the king of Jerusalem did not go unchallenged. When the priest Jehoiada became the power behind the throne of the boy-king Joash (835–795 BCE), the priestly class then may have become increasingly stronger and more assertive in challenging the priestly privileges of the king. The story in 2 Chr. 26:16–21, in which Azariah and the priests rebuked King Uzziah (781–740 BCE) for insisting on "making an offering to the Lord on the altar of incense" and for which he was struck with leprosy, hints at a tension between the king and the priestly class. The king of Jerusalem and his loyal supporters, in turn, may have defended and justified the king's priestly prerogatives by pointing out that he had succeeded to the throne of the king-priest of Shalem (Gen. 14:18) and that YHWH himself swore to him that "you are a priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek" (Ps. 110:4b).

YHWH's oath confirming the king of Jerusalem "a priest forever" (Ps. 110:4b) is not really new. It simply reiterates God's previous promise to David in 2 Sam. 7:16: "Your house and your kingdom shall be made sure *forever* before me; your throne shall be established *forever*." What the oath does is simply to confirm that the Davidic ruler was a "king-priest" *from the very beginning of the dynasty and had always been so*, like Melchizedek. Both divine promises, furthermore, are unconditional: "I will not take my steadfast love from him, as I took it from Saul" (2 Sam. 7:15) || "the Lord … will not change his mind" (Ps. 110:4a).

The statement *ʿal-diḇrāṯî malkî-ṣeḏeq* in Ps. 110:4b is the *crux interpretum* of this psalm. The preposition *ʿal-diḇrāṯ* or *ʿal-dəḇar* has many nuances which have been translated in various ways, e.g., "because of," "for the sake of," "in the manner of," and "with regard to." The *hireq* suffixed to the preposition *ʿal-diḇrāṯî* is thought to be a *hireq compagnis* of the ancient construct form. The Septuagint translates the preposition as κατὰ τὴν τάξιν (LXX Ps. 109:4b) while the Latin Vulgate in turn renders it as *secundum ordinem* (Vul Ps. 109:4b), hence the popular English translation "*according to the order* of Melchizedek." The word "order," however, should not be invested with the meaning it would later acquire—after much theologizing—in the Sacrament of

Holy Orders;[31] the noun τάξις is used elsewhere for the "arrangement," "grouping," "order," or "sequence" of the temple service of the Levites (1 Esdras 1:5, 15; Lk. 1:8). The preposition *ʿal-diḇrāṯî* or κατὰ τὴν τάξιν "does not indicate that a new priestly order is being established but rather the comparison that this king-priest is *like* or *in the manner of* Melchizedek in role."[32]

There is an alternative view, however, that takes the *hireq* attached to the preposition *ʿal-diḇrāṯî* to be a first-person pronominal suffix. Moreover, *malkî-ṣeḏeq* is regarded not as a name but as a construct chain which means "king of righteousness." *ʿal-diḇrāṯî malkî-ṣeḏeq* may thus be rendered as "according to my word, O king of righteousness"[33] (cf. Granerød's "for my sake my king is loyal"[34]). It is an alternative proposal worth considering indeed, though it is a conjecture and a recent interpretation. The Septuagint translation, in contrast, gives witness to an ancient interpretation.

3. Second Temple Period

The demise of the Davidic Kingdom raised hopes that a royal descendant would someday restore it in fulfillment of the promise YHWH made to David in 2 Samuel 7. Jewish eschatology developed in

[31]"The word *order* in Roman antiquity designated an established civil body, especially a governing body. *Ordinatio* means incorporation into an *ordo*. In the Church there are established bodies which Tradition, not without a basis in Sacred Scripture, has since ancient times called *taxeis* (Greek) or *ordines*. And so, the liturgy speaks of the *ordo episcoporum*, the *ordo presbyterorum*, the *ordo diaconorum*…" (*Catechism of the Catholic Church* [Rome: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 1993], no. 1537).

[32]D. Kennard, *Messiah Jesus: Christology in His Day and Ours* (New York: Peter Lang, 2008), 355. For a contrary view, see J. Mathews, *Melchizedek's Alternative Priestly Order: A Compositional Analysis of Genesis 14:18–20 and Its Echoes Throughout the Tanak*, BBRSup 8 (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2013), 3.

[33]Corley, "Psalm 110 (109) and Israelite Royal Ritual," 52, 54; Granerød, *Abraham and Melchizedek*, 213, n. 67.

[34]Granerød, *Abraham and Melchizedek*, 213, n. 67.

which the future king from the Davidic line was expected to be anointed (*māšîᵃḥ*) with holy oil for anointing (*šemen mišḥaṭ-qōḏeš*) and rule the Jewish people during the Messianic Age. Both Gen. 14:18–20 and Ps. 110 were elaborated and reinterpreted messianically. Melchizedek became an antitype which described some of the attributes and roles of the royal and priestly Messiah, and was also given roles and traits that were no longer solely dependent on Gen. 14:18–20 and Psalm 110.[35]

A strand of Messianism thus took on a priestly character during this period when the priestly aristocracy exercised both political and religious leadership over the Jewish people. Although the sectarian community of Qumran pinned its hope on the earthly High Priest ("Messiah of Aaron") and the King ("Messiah of Israel"),[36] with the former always taking precedence over the latter (1QS 9:11; 1QSa 2:11–17), they believed it would be the celestial priest-warrior Melchizedek who would triumph over evil and establish an era of peace.[37] A fragment of the Dead Sea Scrolls (11QMelch 2:7–8) presents Melchizedek as an eschatological divine being (*ʾĕlōhîm*) who will proclaim the final Day of Atonement, atone for the sins of all the people in his lot, and judge them. In 4Q'Amramᵇ, 4QṬeharot D, and 4QBerakot A, the archangel Michael as Melchizedek (king of righteousness) fights Belial as Melchireša' (king of wickedness). These two figures serve as opposing angels who will lead the sons of light and the sons of darkness in an eschatological battle.[38]

Other traditions. According to the first century CE Jewish sectarian work "The Exaltation of Melchizedek" in 2 Enoch (also called "Slavonic Enoch"), Melchizedek was born of a virgin named Sothonim

[35]L. Stuckenbruck, "Melchizedek in Jewish Apocalyptic Literature," *Journal for the Study of the New Testament* 41:1 (2018): 124–138.

[36]M. Flowers, "The Two Messiahs and Melchizedek in 11QMelchizedek," *Journal of Ancient Judaism* 7:2 (2016): 194–227.

[37]P. Kobelski, *Melchizedek and Melchireša'* (Washington, DC: Catholic Biblical Association of America, 1981); M. Reiss, "The Melchizedek Traditions," *Scandinavian Journal of the Old Testament* 26:2 (2012): 262–263.

[38]Kobelski, *Melchizedek and Melchireša'*, 75–83.

(or Sofonim), the wife of Nir, brother of Noah.[39] The first century Jewish historian Josephus regarded him as a Canaanite warrior in the *War of the Jews* and yet as a priest in *Jewish Antiquity*. The Jewish philosopher Philo revered him as the *Logos* who was also a priest.

4. Letter to the Hebrews

The Letter to the Hebrews calls Jesus Christ a High Priest (ἀρχιερεὺς) ten times (Heb. 2:17; 3:1; 4:14, 15; 5:5, 10; 6:20; 7:26; 8:1; 9:11) and a priest (ἱερεὺς) five times (Heb. 5:6; 7:11, 17, 21; 10:21). Yet where did the author of the letter get the idea that Jesus was a priest? The early Christian community may already have had some inchoate notion of the priestly identity of Jesus prior to the Letter. His words at the Last Supper, for instance, allude to the expiatory character of his death on the cross.[40] Paul's reference to Jesus's death as a "propitiation in his blood" (ἱλαστήριον … ἐν τῷ αὐτοῦ αἵματι) in Rom. 3:25 already anticipates the Letter to the Hebrews's reflection on Jesus's priestly role on the celestial Day of Atonement.[41] The destruction of the Jerusalem Temple in 70 CE and the cessation of animal sacrifice may have precipitated reflection on the Eucharist as Jesus's sacrifice surpassing the old. Jesus's role as a mediator or intercessor at the right hand of God (Acts 5:31; Rom. 8:34; Eph. 1:20f), moreover, may also have been interpreted as a priestly function.[42]

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[39]A. Orlov, "Melchizedek Legend of 2 (Slavonic) Enoch," *Journal for the Study of Judaism in the Persian, Hellenistic, and Roman Period* 31:1 (2000): 26–27.

[40]Mt. 26:26–28; Mk. 14:22–23; Lk. 22:19–20; 1 Cor. 11:24–25; see also Rom. 3:24–25; 5:9; Eph. 5:2; 7:1; Col. 1:14, 20.

[41]M. Tiwald, "Christ as Hilasterion (Rom 3:25): Pauline Theology on the Day of Atonement in the Mirror of Early Jewish Thought," in T. Hieke & T. Nicklas, eds., *The Day of Atonement: Its Interpretations in Early Jewish and Christian Traditions* (Leiden: Brill, 2012), 189–209.

[42]G. Granerød suggests that Heb. 1:1–4 is a Christian hymn that contains a tradition on Jesus's priesthood "making purification of sins and being seated at God's right hand" ("Melchizedek in Hebrews 7," *Biblica* 90:2 [2009]: 190–191).

It is the author of the Letter to the Hebrews, however, who explicitly refers to Jesus Christ as a priest. Reflecting and theologizing on the priesthood of Christ, he typologized Gen. 14:18–20, Psalm 110, and some of the Melchizedek traditions that developed during the Second Temple period. He explains in Heb. 5:1–10 how Jesus Christ became a High Priest: "[he] did not glorify himself in becoming a high priest, but [was appointed by] the one who said to him, 'You are my Son, today I have begotten you' [Ps. 2:7b]; as he says also in another place, 'You are a priest forever, according to the order of Melchizedek'" (vv. 5–6). The writer quotes from Ps. 2:7b and then LXX Ps. 109:4b, both of which are enthronement psalms which the Jews have reinterpreted messianically in the Second Temple Period. His emphasis in this chapter is on Jesus's humility and obedience to the will of his Father: "Although he was a Son, he learned obedience through what he suffered" (v. 8). He was made perfect for this reason, and "became the source of eternal salvation for all who obey him, having been designated by God a high priest according to the order of Melchizedek" (vv. 9–10).

However, before the author discusses further the priesthood of Jesus Christ, he first explains the superiority of the Melchizedekian priesthood over the Levitic one in Heb. 7:1–10 by typologizing the story in Gen. 14:18–20 and YHWH's oath in LXX Ps. 109:4b.

Melchizedek's eternal priesthood. "Without father, without mother, without genealogy, having neither beginning of days nor end of life, but resembling the Son of God (ἀφωμοιωμένος δὲ τῷ υἱῷ τοῦ θεοῦ),[43] he remains a priest forever" (v. 3). The author deduces his argument from Gen. 14:18, in which Melchizedek suddenly and mysteriously appears in vv. 18–19 without any introduction of his family lineage,[44]

[43]The statement does not bestow parity with the Son of God on Melchizedek. The absence of his genealogy (required for the Israelite priesthood) prefigures the priesthood of the Son of God not in his pre-existence but in his glorified state. Cf. A. Vanhoye, *Old Testament Priests and the New Priest*, trans. J. Orchard (Petersham, MA: St. Bede's Publications, 1980), 156–157.

[44]According to Granerød, the surplus information given in Heb. 7:3 is based on an "argument from silence"—no genealogy of Melchizedek is given in the Bible

and from Ps. 110:4b, in which YHWH swears to the king that he is "a priest forever" (*kōhēn ləʿôlām*) like Melchizedek.

Melchizedek imparting a blessing and receiving a tithe. Melchizedek's superiority over the Levites is also manifested by the blessing he gave to Abram (who represents the Levites) and the tithe which Abram gave in turn to Melchizedek: "It is beyond dispute that the inferior is blessed by the superior.… One might even say that Levi himself … paid tithes through Abraham, for he was still in the loins of his ancestor when Melchizedek met him" (vv. 7–10).[45]

The author then explains in Heb. 7:11–28 the excellence of Jesus's priesthood based on the antitype of Melchizedek:

> One who has become a priest, not through a legal requirement concerning physical descent, but through the power of an indestructible life. For it is attested of him, "You are a priest forever, according to the order of Melchizedek." (vv. 16–17)

> Consequently, he is able for all time to save those who approach God through him, since he always lives to make intercession for them.… For the law appoints as high priests those who are subject to weakness, but the word of the oath, which came later than the law, appoints a Son who has been made perfect forever. (vv. 25, 28)

Here the author argues not only on the basis of God's oath in LXX Ps. 109:4b which he swore to Jesus Christ but also, and more importantly, "through the power of an indestructible life"—a clear reference to Jesus's resurrection and to his divinity as "Son who has been made perfect forever"—now enthroned at God's right hand, perpetually interceding on behalf of humanity before his Father. "He holds his priesthood permanently, because he continues forever" (Heb. 7:24).

("Melchizedek in Hebrews 7," 188–202). For M. Paul, however, "he [Zadok] did have a genealogy, though not the required one" ("The Order of Melchizedek [Ps 110:4 and Heb 7:3]," *Westminster Theological Journal* 49:1 [1987]: 205).

[45]J. Compton, *Psalm 110 and the Logic of Hebrews* (London: Bloomsbury-T. & T. Clark, 2015), 81–85.

The Yom Kippur and the Melchizedek tradition in 11QMelch. The temple rituals in the annual celebration of Yom Kippur (cf. Leviticus 16)[46] and, quite possibly, the Melchizedek tradition in the Dead Sea Scrolls have a bearing on the author's theologizing on the priesthood of Jesus Christ in Hebrews 9. In particular, 11QMelch's portrayal of the celestial high priest Melchizedek proclaiming the final Day of Atonement and atoning for the sins of the people may have some influence on the soteriology of the Letter to the Hebrews, which depicts Jesus as the eternal High Priest who enters the heavenly sanctuary to offer his own blood to atone for the sins of the people "once for all":

> when Christ came as a high priest of the good things that have come, then through the greater and perfect tent (not made with hands, that is, not of this creation), he entered once for all into the Holy Place, not with the blood of goats and calves, but with his own blood, thus obtaining eternal redemption. For if the blood of goats and bulls, with the sprinkling of the ashes of a heifer, sanctifies those who have been defiled so that their flesh is purified, how much more will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without blemish to God, purify our conscience from dead works to worship the living God! For this reason, he is the mediator of a new covenant, so that those who are called may receive the promised eternal inheritance, because a death has occurred that redeems them from the transgressions under the first covenant. (Heb. 9:11–15)

The Yom Kippur, a most important part of the religious heritage of Judaism, is creatively reconfigured thus in Hebrews 9 in light of faith in Jesus Christ, and in a way that has far-reaching consequences for both the Christian and Jewish religions. "The result is a startlingly original interpretation of the nature and significance of Jesus' death that uses themes and practices of Jewish temple worship metaphorically to argue for the uniqueness of Jesus' saving significance."[47]

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[46]G. Stemberger, "Yom Kippur in Mishnah Yoma," in T. Hieke & T. Nicklas, eds., *The Day of Atonement*, 121–137.

[47]C. Eberhart & D. Schweitzer, "The Unique Sacrifice of Christ According to Hebrews 9: A Study in Theological Creativity," *Religions* 10:47 (2019): 1.

Summary

The Melchizedek traditions may have originated from the early monarchy period when Jerusalem became the center of YHWH worship alongside the cult of *ʾēl ʿelyôn*, the city's patron god. The meeting of Abram and Melchizedek in Gen. 14:18–20 reflects a situation of religious tolerance, a situation in which worshippers of YHWH may have also venerated *ʾēl ʿelyôn* and given tithes to his priests. The story of Abram giving tithe to Melchizedek may have also set an example for the rural people of Judah to pay taxes to the King of Jerusalem. Over the course of time, moreover, YHWH assimilated the attributes of *ʾēl ʿelyôn* to the extent that the latter became simply a title or another name for the God of Israel. Verse 22, in which Abram identifies YHWH with *ʾēl ʿelyôn*, reflects this development.

The Davidic kings in Jerusalem may have justified their priestly prerogatives by pointing out that they have succeeded to the throne of Melchizedek who was both King and Priest. Psalm 110, which was sung during the enthronement of the Davidic King, contains an oracle in which God swears to the King of Jerusalem that "you are a priest forever like Melchizedek."

The Zadokites who replaced the Levites in the service of YHWH may have claimed lineage or kinship with the legendary figure of Melchizedek at first. But when the Deuteronomic circle began to insist on the Mosaic law designating the Levites to serve YHWH, Zadok's genealogy may have been rectified to show that he was a direct descendant of Aaron.

The fall of Jerusalem raised the hope that a scion of David would someday restore the kingdom of Judah. A strand of Messianism thus assumed a priestly character, perhaps due to the influence of the priestly aristocracy in the Second Temple Period. The Melchizedek traditions were typologized and elaborated to reflect the attributes of a priestly Messiah. He was given traits that were no longer dependent on Gen. 14:18–20 and Psalm 110. Some fragments of the Dead Sea Scrolls portray Melchizedek as an angelic warrior who would triumph over Melchireša‘ in the eschatological battle; others depict him as a

divine being who would inaugurate the final Day of Atonement and atone for the sins of his people.

In his theologizing on the priesthood of Jesus Christ, the author of the Letter to the Hebrews utilized not only Gen. 14:18–20 and Psalm 110 but also some legends and *midrashim* as well concerning the Melchizedek that developed in the Second Temple Period. He first demonstrates the superiority of the Melchizedekian priesthood over the Levitic one, then discusses the priesthood of Jesus Christ based on the typology of Melchizedek. He also presents a soteriology of Jesus Christ as High Priest which may have been influenced by the Dead Sea Scrolls' portrayal of Melchizedek inaugurating the final Day of Atonement.

Our study has thus shown how the Melchizedek traditions evolved over the course of history and how they contributed to the development of a theology (in the Letter to the Hebrews) of the priesthood of Jesus Christ which is divine, messianic, and supra-Levitical. Indeed, the Melchizedek traditions continued to develop even after the Bible had been fixed in writing.[48] A study of these post-biblical traditions—in both patristic and rabbinic literatures—is, however, beyond the scope of this essay.

[48]A. Rodríguez, "La Exegesis de Melquisedec entre los Padres de la Iglesia y Beda el Venerable," *Anales de Historia Antigua, Medieval y Moderna* 51 (2017): 61–70; M. McNamara, "Melchizedek: Gen 14, 17–20 in the Targums, in Rabbinic and Early Christian Literature," *Biblica* 81:1 (2000): 1–31; I. Chirilă, S. Paşca-Tuşa, & E. Oneţiu, "Reconstitution of Melchizedek's History in Rabbinic and Christian Traditions," *Journal for the Study of Religions and Ideologies* 16:48 (Winter 2017): 3–15; S. Minov, "Reception of the Greek Story of Melchizedek in Syriac Christian Tradition," *Journal for the Study of the Pseudepigrapha* 26:2 (2016): 108–143.

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THE CONSISTENT ETHIC OF LIFE OF JOSEPH CARDINAL BERNARDIN AND THE CRISIS OF OUR COMMON HOME

Anatoly Angelo R. Aseneta

The Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines (CBCP) describes the ecological crisis as the "ultimate pro-life issue."[1] Pope Francis points out in *Laudato Si'* (LS), his encyclical letter on the care for our "common home," that the human and natural environments deteriorate together and that such degradation affects the world's poorest and most vulnerable populations.[2] Popes John Paul II[3] and Benedict XVI[4] also pointed out the connection, even

[1]CBCP [Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines], "What is Happening to Our Beautiful Land? A Pastoral Letter on Ecology from the Catholic Bishops of the Philippines," in D. Christiansen & W. Grazer, eds., *And God Saw That It Was Good: Catholic Theology and the Environment* (Washington, DC: United States Catholic Conference, 1996), 317.

[2]Francis, *Laudato Si'* [On Care for Our Common Home] (Vatican City: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 2015), no. 48. Hereafter referred to as LS.

[3]See, for example, John Paul II, "Message for the Celebration of the World Day of Peace (Peace with God the Creator, Peace with All of Creation)" (January 1, 1990), nos. 8–9.

[4]See, for example, Benedict XVI, *Caritas in Veritate* [On Integral Human Development in Charity and Truth] (Vatican City: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 2009), no. 51.

before Francis did, between the protection of human life and that of our common home.

In light of these and of our increased awareness of the situation we all face, this essay seeks to view this crisis through the lens of Joseph Cardinal Bernardin's moral vision of a consistent ethic of life (CEL). It argues that the CEL must expand its moral vision by paying attention particularly to the modern ecological crisis. In doing so, it can make its own contributions to our efforts in caring for our common home by considering this crisis as a "pro-life" issue, that is, as something inseparably linked to our duty to protect and promote human life.

The first part of this essay provides a background of the CEL. This is followed by a brief survey of the challenges posed by anthropogenic global warming and associated climate change—a defining issue of our time—with the aim of making the CEL more ecologically-sensitive. The third part proposes Francis's call for an integral ecology as a dialogue partner for an ecologically-sensitive CEL. Finally, the essay concludes by identifying some possible ways by which a reframed CEL can contribute to our efforts in caring for our planet.

Joseph Cardinal Bernardin's Consistent Ethic of Life

Bernardin first spoke about CEL nearly 36 years ago in his December 6, 1983 Gannon Lecture at Fordham University entitled "A Consistent Ethic of Life: An American Catholic Dialogue." There the Cardinal linked together "right to life" issues (e.g., abortion, war, euthanasia, and capital punishment) with "quality of life" concerns (e.g., poverty, care for the vulnerable, racism, and health care), the basis being the dignity of the human person, the sanctity of human life, and, as a consequence, the personal and social responsibilities of protecting and preserving the latter in all its stages.[5]

[5]J. Bernardin, "A Consistent Ethic of Life: An American Catholic Dialogue" (Gannon Lecture, Fordham University, December 6, 1983), in T. Nairn, ed., *The Seamless Garment: Writings on the Consistent Ethic of Life* (New York: Orbis

It can be difficult, however, to describe precisely what the CEL is as Bernardin himself was not very clear about it and described it in different ways. He frequently identified it in particular as a "moral vision,"[6] an "ethical argument sustaining that vision,"[7] and as a "moral argument."[8] Other authors describe the consistent ethic of life in various ways as well—Kenneth R. Overberg calls it a "comprehensive ethical system"[9] while James T. Bretzke characterizes it as an "approach to Catholic Social Teaching."[10]

A more fruitful exercise, then, when attempting to characterize what the CEL is may be to examine what it seeks and does not seek to do. Indeed, what Bernardin wishes to accomplish is clear from his Fordham lecture and subsequent talks and speeches—namely, to link together different issues concerning human life, particularly right to life and quality of life. Building upon the final section of the U.S. bishops' pastoral letter on nuclear war,[11] which linked the moral issue of war with reverence for all human life, Bernardin asserts that the Catholic

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Books, 2008), 10–13. Hereafter referred to as SG with appropriate page numbers. The title of the specific address given by Bernardin, together with its nature, occasion, and place and date it was given, will be provided, if available, on the first time it is cited.

[6]J. Bernardin, "A Consistent Ethic of Life: Continuing the Dialogue" (William Wade Lecture Series, St. Louis University, March 11, 1984), in SG, 16–17.

[7]J. Bernardin, "Address to the Consistent Ethic of Life Conference" (Portland, OR, October 4, 1986), in SG, 120.

[8]J. Bernardin, "The Church's Witness to Life" (Seattle University, March 2, 1986), in SG, 104.

[9]K. Overberg, "The Consistent Ethic of Life: Putting Morality and Spirituality into Practice," *New Theology Review* 19:1 (2006): 62.

[10]J. Bretzke, "Consistent Ethic of Life," in *Handbook of Roman Catholic Moral Terms* (Washington, DC: Georgetown University Press, 2013), 49–50.

[11]National Conference of Catholic Bishops, "The Challenge of Peace: God's Promise and Our Response" (May 3, 1983).

position on abortion demands that the Church and society seek to influence a "heroic social ethic."[12] He writes:

> If one contends, as we do, that the right of every fetus to be born should be protected by civil law and supported by civil consensus, then our moral, political, and economic responsibilities do not stop at the moment of birth. Those who defend the right to life of the weakest among us must be equally visible in support of the quality of life of the powerless among us: the old and the young, the hungry and the homeless, the undocumented immigrant and the unemployed worker.[13]

In calling to stand for the protection of the right to life and promotion of the rights that enhance life from "womb to tomb," Bernardin seeks to rule out contradictory moral positions concerning the unique value of human life:

> Consistency means we cannot have it both ways: we cannot urge a compassionate society and vigorous public policy to protect the rights of the unborn and then argue that compassion and significant public programs on behalf of the needy undermine the moral fiber of the society or are beyond the proper scope of governmental responsibility.[14]

Thus, individuals and groups who pursue one or several issues should do so in ways that support a systemic vision of life. For Bernardin, it is necessary "to cultivate a conscious explicit connection among the several issues." Indeed, it is even more important for individuals and groups who witness to life across its different stages to not be seen as insensitive or even opposed to other moral claims along life's overall spectrum. A CEL calls for everyone "not to stand against each other when the protection *and* the promotion of life are at stake."[15]

Yet even as it strives to link different life issues together and rule out contradictory moral positions about the unique value of human life, the CEL does not ask everyone to do everything. Bernardin himself

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[12]Bernardin, "A Consistent Ethic of Life: An American Catholic Dialogue," 12–13.

[13]Bernardin, "A Consistent Ethic of Life: An American Catholic Dialogue," 13.

[14]Bernardin, "A Consistent Ethic of Life: An American Catholic Dialogue," 13.

[15]Bernardin, "A Consistent Ethic of Life: Continuing the Dialogue," 17.

admits that "no one can do everything, and [that] the complexity of the various issues demands some specialization."[16] Furthermore, the CEL recognizes that each of these issues is different and that each has its own meaning and morality; thus, they should not be collapsed into one. As such, Bernardin clarifies that the problem of taking human life (e.g., through abortion, capital punishment, euthanasia, and in war) cannot be equated with the problem of promoting human dignity (e.g., through humane social policies). Each of these issues is distinct, increasingly complex, and deserves individual treatment, even though a CEL recognizes that the protection of human life and its promotion are moral questions that must be confronted as pieces of a larger pattern.[17]

Inconsistent attitudes and moral positions concerning human life are obvious reasons why there is a need for a CEL. Having worked on the pastoral letter "The Challenge of Peace" and been the chairman of the U.S. National Conference of Catholic Bishops' Pro-Life Committee, Bernardin has worked with people from both anti-abortion- and justice-related camps. He observes that one is met with considerable opposition from different sources along the political and ideological spectrums when the principle prohibiting the direct taking of innocent human life is carried into the public debate. Some see the clarity of the principle's application in abortion and yet argue that it is beyond the purview of bishops to apply it to matters of national security; conversely, others understand the potential of the principle in questions about war but see its application in the issue of abortion as an affront to private choice.[18]

Yet while the inconsistency of such attitudes and moral positions that stem from different political and ideological camps appears to be the most apparent reason for the need to develop a CEL, Bernardin

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[16]J. Bernardin, "A Consistent Ethic for Church and Society" (Annual Meeting of Diocesan Pro-Life Directors, Denver, CO, August 8, 1988), in SG, 175.

[17]Bernardin, "A Consistent Ethic of Life: An American Catholic Dialogue," 11 and Bernardin, "A Consistent Ethic of Life: Continuing the Dialogue," 17.

[18]Bernardin, "A Consistent Ethic of Life: An American Catholic Dialogue," 12.

did not elaborate on this. Instead, he identifies and expounds on other reasons for the formulation of a CEL; for the sake of brevity and for the purposes of this essay, we will focus on only one, namely, the *technological challenge*.

Bernardin remarks that the CEL is both old and new. Life has always been threatened; issues such as infanticide, war, aggression, and capital punishment are not new. What is new is the context in which life is endangered, and this context is what shapes the content of the CEL. The principal cause for this new context, Bernardin argues, is modern technology, which prompts a sharper awareness of the fragility of human life. Rapidly developing technology creates new opportunities to care for human life across all its stages yet also presents new potential threats against it. War, for instance, has always threatened human life, but the threat is qualitatively different owing to the proliferation of nuclear weapons and other sophisticated means of warfare that threaten life on a previously unimaginable scale. The problems of modern technology—along with politics—thus provide a broader context that brings out more vividly the multiple ways in which life is threatened.[19]

Bernardin makes it clear that he is condemning neither politics nor technology. Citing John Paul II, he recognizes that "it is only through a conscious choice and through a deliberate policy that humanity can survive."[20] The essential question that should be asked regarding the technological challenge is this: "In an age when we *can* do almost anything, how do we decide what we *ought* to do … how do we decide morally what *we never should do*?"[21]

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[19]Bernardin, "A Consistent Ethic of Life: An American Catholic Dialogue," 11. See also Bernardin, "A Consistent Ethic of Life: Continuing the Dialogue," 16; J. Bernardin, "An Update on the Consistent Ethic of Life" (North American College, Rome, January 23, 1991), in SG, 201–210; and J. Bernardin, "The Consistent Ethic of Life" (Annual Helder Camara Lecture, Melbourne, Australia, February 23, 1995), in SG, 261.

[20]John Paul II, "Address to Scientists and Representatives of the United Nations University" (February 25, 1981), no. 4.

[21]Bernardin, "A Consistent Ethic of Life: An American Catholic Dialogue," 11.

This technological challenge cuts across both "macro-questions" of peace and "micro-questions" of medical ethics. From nuclear weapons to genetics and medicine, technology provides the material link between these issues; the moral link, however, is the unique value of human life.[22]

In summary, the technological challenge, the inconsistent attitudes people hold toward different issues along the spectrum of life, and how people tend to step against each other as they pursue their own advocacies are the driving forces behind Bernardin's call for a CEL. The threat against the dignity of the human person and the sanctity of human life is recognized in one area and overlooked or ignored in another. Some individuals and groups, believing that their concern is the most, if not the only, important one, step over those who do not share their vision. Human life and dignity are threatened in multifarious ways because of technology and a societal erosion of the value of life. And yet a CEL that acknowledges the worth of human dignity and life across different stages and circumstances would recognize these new threats and weed out contradictory moral positions about the value of human dignity and life while neither collapsing all issues into one nor saying that all of them are equally urgent. Thomas A. Shannon aptly summarizes Bernardin's call: "we cannot be schizophrenic in our moral approach to reality, nor can we simply address moral issues in an ad hoc fashion."[23]

Our Common Home in Peril: Anthropogenic Climate Change and Associated Global Warming

In order to give context to this essay, we will briefly probe a major problem that is besetting our common home, namely, anthropogenic climate change and associated global warming. It must be noted that

[22]Bernardin, "An Update on the Consistent Ethic of Life," 201.

[23]T. Shannon, "An Overview of the Key Ideas in the Consistent Ethic of Life," in SG, 4.

this survey will not be extensive; instead, it will be carried out in a summary fashion since many detailed and complex studies on the topic have already been accomplished. The limited space available, in any case, would not do justice to the intricacy of this problem. More to the point, however, our aim is not so much to give a thorough account of the matter as it is to establish the reasons why the CEL should become attentive to what is happening to the ecological system of our common home. Finally, it must be noted that this review follows the precautionary principle (LS no. 186). In other words, unless decisive evidence to the contrary is provided, it must be assumed that these problems cause harm to natural and human systems and that the human person bears significant responsibility for such, both personally and socially.[24] Indeed, some consider climate change to be the defining issue of our time. It is even described as our common home's greatest collective challenge to civilization.

The warming of the planet Earth is not necessarily negative in itself. Without this natural warming mechanism or "greenhouse effect," life on earth as we know it would not be possible.[25] Changes in the Earth's climate system[26] are not new as it has experienced variable

[24]For more details concerning the precautionary principle, see the following: Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace, *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church* (Vatican City: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 2004), no. 469; United Nations, *Rio Declaration on the Environment and Development*, Report of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (Rio de Janeiro, 1992), principle 15.

[25]The functioning of the climate system is likened to a "greenhouse" because both natural and human gases contribute to the trapping of heat near the Earth's thin atmospheric layer; this, in turn, slows down the release of energy into space. Since the temperature of the Earth can be characterized as a balance between incoming solar radiation and outgoing radiation emitted by the planet in the form of heat or infrared, the planet will heat itself up until the incoming and outgoing energies balance each other out. For more details, see R. Brecha, "The Physical Science of Climate Change," in V. Miller, ed., *The Theological and Ecological Vision of Laudato Si': Everything is Connected* (London: Bloomsbury, 2017), 30–31.

[26]The difference between weather (daily fluctuations in temperature, precipitation, barometric pressure, etc.) and climate can be characterized in terms

changes—largely driven by natural factors—throughout history.[27] However, in its *Climate Change Synthesis Report* published in 2014, the United Nations' Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) points out that not only is the current warming of the Earth's climate system "unequivocal" but also much of the observed changes since the 1950s are "unprecedented" relative to what normally occurs over decades or millennia. The IPCC also indicates that there is clear human influence on this warming of the climate system—it is *anthropogenic*, i.e., resulting from/caused by humans and their activities. Emissions of greenhouse gases or "GHGs" (majority of which is carbon dioxide or CO_2 from fossil fuel combustion and industrial processes, followed by methane or CH_4 and, finally, by nitrous oxide or N_2O) have increased since the pre-industrial era,[28] leading to an atmospheric concentration of GHGs that is unprecedented in at least the last 800,000 years. Economic and population growth, which remain to be the foremost drivers of CO_2 emissions from fossil fuel combustion, chiefly account for this surge. The IPCC insists that it is "extremely likely" that more than half of the perceived increase in average global surface temperature from 1951 to 2010 was caused by anthropogenic factors, including the increase in GHG concentrations.[29]

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of timescales. Climate refers to an average of weather conditions over a specific period of time (e.g., 10 years, 30 years, etc.) that seeks to define a baseline and examine deviations with respect to that longer-term average. For more details, see Brecha, "The Physical Science of Climate Change," 31.

[27]See Brecha, "The Physical Science of Climate Change," 31–38. For more details about the Earth's climate history, see S. Weart, *The Discovery of Global Warming*, rev. & exp. ed. (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2008). Parts of this book can be viewed at https://history.aip.org/climate/index.htm (accessed Nov. 1, 2019) and in The Geological Society of London, "Climate Change: Evidence from the Geological Record: A Statement from the Geological Society of London" (November 2010).

[28]These are called greenhouse gases because they contribute to the trapping of heat near the Earth's surface.

[29]IPCC [Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change], *Climate Change 2014 Synthesis Report* (Geneva: IPCC, 2015), 2–6.

This anthropogenic warming and its associated climate change have far-reaching effects on both *human* and *natural* systems which can lead to a crisis of our common home.[30] Four of these effects will be sketched out in what follows. First, extreme changes in many weather and climate events since ca. 1950 have been observed, particularly a decrease in cold temperature extremes and an increase in warm temperature extremes. This results in extreme weather conditions such as heavy rains, rising sea levels, frequent floods, super typhoons, and storm surges as well as heat wave, drought, wildfires, etc. In their study of tropical cyclone characteristics, paths, and landfalls in the Philippines from 1945 to 2013, for example, Hiroshi Takagi and Miguel Esteban discovered that warmer sea surface temperatures surrounding the Philippines contributed to the unusual paths and increased intensity of recent tropical cyclones in the country, particularly of super typhoon "Yolanda" (international code name "Haiyan").[31] Indeed, the IPCC expresses "very high confidence" that "impacts from recent climate-related extremes, such as heat waves, droughts, floods, cyclones and wildfires, reveal [the] significant vulnerability and exposure of some ecosystems and many human systems to current climate variability."[32]

Second, climate change also threatens biodiversity. Though the planet has faced species extinction before,[33] the current rate of

[30]Operation Noah, *Between the Flood and the Rainbow: Climate Change and the Church's Social Teaching—A Study Guide* (London: Operation Noah, 2008), 1.

[31]H. Takagi & M. Esteban, "Statistics of Tropical Cyclone Landfalls in the Philippines: Unusual Characteristics of 2013 Typhoon Haiyan," *Natural Hazards* 80:1 (2016): 211–222.

[32]IPCC, *Climate Change 2014 Synthesis Report*, 7–8. See also J. Kureethadam, *Creation in Crisis: Science, Ethics, Theology* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2014), 125–126. For more details about the link between climate change, extreme weather, and climate events, particularly with regards to precipitation, see K. Trenberth, "Changes in Precipitation with Climate Change," *Climate Research* 47:1–2 (2011): 123–138 and The Royal Society, *Climate Change: A Summary of the Science* (London: The Royal Society, 2010).

[33]There have been five mass extinctions already: at the end of the Ordovician era (nearly 439 million years ago or "mya"), the late Devonian extinction (nearly

extinction surpasses natural rates. A majority of plant and animal species will not be able to keep up with the rate of climate change.[34] According to the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment, for example, humans have, "over the past few hundred years … increased species extinction rates by as much as 1,000 times the background rates that were typical over Earth's history."[35] The IPCC expresses "high confidence" that a large portion of plant and animal species faces bigger risks during and beyond the twenty-first century, especially because climate change interacts with other stressors.

Third, these threats to the biodiversity of our common home also compromise food security. Seafood, for example, is the primary source of protein and income for nearly one billion people, especially in many developing coastal nations. Citizens in countries like Bangladesh, Cambodia, Equatorial Guinea, Gambia, Ghana, and Indonesia get more than 50% of their protein from seafood. Yet the reduction and redistribution of marine resources in sensitive regions across the world will challenge the sustained provision of fisheries productivity and other ecological services. Climate change will also negatively affect wheat, rice, and maize production in certain parts of the world that fail to

364 mya), the Permian-Triassic extinction (nearly 251 mya), the End Triassic extinction (nearly 199–214 mya), and the Cretaceous-Tertiary boundary extinction (nearly 65 mya). For a detailed account of these extinctions, see D. Jablonski, "Extinctions in the Fossil Record," in J. Lawton & R. May, eds., *Extinction Rates* (Cambridge, MA: Oxford University Press, 1995), 25–44.

[34]IPCC, *Climate Change 2014 Synthesis Report*, 13. For more details about how global warming and associated climate change threaten biodiversity, see the following: Kureethadam, *Creation in Crisis*, 151–154 and chap. 5, "Species Extinction and Biodiversity Loss"; H. Hoag, "Confronting the Biodiversity Crisis," *Nature Reports: Climate Change* 4 (2010): 51–54; C. Rosenzweig et al., "Attributing Physical and Biological Impacts to Anthropogenic Climate Change," *Nature* 453 (2008): 353–357; and T. Dawson et al., "Beyond Predictions: Biodiversity Conservation in a Changing Climate," *Science* 332:6025 (2011): 53–58.

[35]Millennium Ecosystem Assessment, *Ecosystems and Human Well-being: Biodiversity Synthesis* (Washington, DC: World Resources Institute, 2005), 21.

adapt.[36] An increase in temperature by even just two degrees Celsius, for instance, could reduce cereal production yields mostly in Asia and Africa by 20% to 40%.[37] The IPCC also notably expresses, with "robust evidence" and "high agreement," that climate change is foreseen to reduce renewable surface water and groundwater resources in most of the world's dry subtropical regions.[38] Combined with increasing food demand, these and other factors pose great risks to food security.

Lastly, the IPCC points out with "very high confidence" that anthropogenic global warming and climate change also endanger human health primarily by aggravating already existing health problems. A particular threat comes from the increased frequency of heat waves. The United Nations Development Program (UNDP) warns in its 2016 Human Development Report (HDR) that climate change is expected to cause an additional 250,000 deaths per year due to malaria, diarrhea, heat stress, and malnutrition.[39] Global warming and associated climate change also increase risks from heat stress, air pollution, drought, and water scarcity in urban environments while impacting more on food security in rural areas. Yet regardless of where they occur, whether in urban or rural settings, the effects of anthropogenic global warming and climate change are greater for developing countries with low income

[36]See S. Cooley, H. Kite-Powell, & S. Doney, "Ocean Acidification's Potential to Alter Global Marine Ecosystem Services," *Oceanography* 22:4 (2009): 172–181.

[37]U. Lele, "Food Security for a Billion Poor," *Science* 327:5973 (2010): 1554.

[38]IPCC, *Climate Change 2014 Synthesis Report*, 13. For more details about the link between climate change and food security, consult the following: Kureethadam, *Creation in Crisis*, 150–151 and 222–234; B. Hare, "Relationship Between Increases in Global Mean Temperature and Impacts on Ecosystems, Food Production, Water and Socio-Economic Systems," in H.-J. Schellnhuber et al., eds., *Avoiding Dangerous Climate Change* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 177–187; and D. Lobell et al., "Prioritizing Climate Change Adaptation Needs for Food Security in 2030," *Science* 319:5863 (2008): 607–610.

[39]UNDP [United Nations Development Programme], *Human Development Report 2016: Human Development for Everyone* (New York: UNDP, 2016), 39.

and for those who lack essential infrastructure and services or live in exposed areas.[40]

Continued anthropogenic emission of GHGs is also projected to further advance warming and long-lasting changes in all the components of our common home's climate system. In fact, global warming and associated climate change will not only continue to intensify already existing risks but also create new ones for both natural and human systems. The IPCC and other sources stress, moreover, that such risks and impacts are unevenly distributed—they are generally greater for disadvantaged peoples and communities irrespective of their countries' levels of development.[41]

The same disproportionate effects of environmental degradation can also be seen in the Philippines. A study by Marife M. Ballesteros of the Philippine Institute for Developmental Studies on the link between poverty and the environment in slum areas of the cities[42] is a case in point. About 37% (or over four million) of the population in Metro Manila lived in slums as of 2010, with an annual population growth rate of eight percent. With deleterious living conditions that negatively

[40]IPCC, *Climate Change 2014 Synthesis Report*, 15–16. For further details, refer to the following: Kureethadam, *Creation in Crisis*, 236–242; A. McMichael & E. Lindgren, "Climate Change: Present and Future Risks to Health, and Necessary Responses," *Journal of Internal Medicine* 270:5 (2011): 401–413; and A. Costello et al., "Managing the Health Effects of Climate Change," *Lancet* 373:9676 (2009): 1693–1733.

[41]IPCC, *Climate Change 2014 Synthesis Report*, 13, 69, and 72. For more details, refer to the previous chapter, specifically pp. 57–60. The following sources also make the same conclusion: UNDP, *Human Development Report 2016*, 15, 29, and 39; U. Srinivasan et al., "The Debt of Nations and the Distribution of Ecological Impacts from Human Activities," *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences* 105:5 (2008): 1768–1773; and Caritas Internationalis, *Climate Justice: Seeking a Global Ethic* (Vatican City: Caritas Internationalis General Secretariat, 2009).

[42]M. Ballesteros, *Linking Poverty and the Environment: Evidence from Slums in Philippine Cities*, Philippine Institute for Development Studies Discussion Paper Series No. 2010-33 (Makati City, Philippines: Philippine Institute for Development Studies, 2010).

impact health, livelihood, and social fiber, slum dwellers face not only economic but also environmental poverty. While everyone shares in the effects of urban environmental problems and climate change, it is the slum dwellers who suffer the most because of their hazardous locations, poor air and water quality, weak solid waste and disaster risk management, congestion, flooding, and weak to nonexistent implementation of environmental laws. These are more prevalent in slum areas around dumpsites (e.g., Pier 18 in Manila and Payatas in Quezon City), floodways (e.g., Manggahan), coasts (e.g., Baseco compound in Manila City), and roads or highways (e.g., National Government Center Eastside Development Project in Quezon City). Adverse living conditions further deepen poverty in these slum areas, increasing the vulnerability of those living in them and making socio-economic growth difficult.[43]

Towards an Ecologically-Sensitive Consistent Ethic of Life

From this brief look at a major manifestation of the modern ecological crisis, we can elicit at least three reasons why the CEL should pay attention to the predicament of our common home. First, the ruin of our common home undermines the integrity not only of non-human creation—which is God's work and has intrinsic value (LS nos. 68 and 140)—but also of human life. As we have seen, the modern ecological crisis not only threatens human life, particularly its quality, but also takes a heavy toll on it in extreme cases. Indeed, while ecological disasters may not be as frequent and direct as abortion, euthanasia, and capital punishment, they can be, in due course, not only life-threatening but also fatal. Rob Nixon's concept of "slow violence" is particularly important for understanding the effects of this crisis, for we should not underestimate the harmful impacts of human actions on our common home just because they are slower in physical manifestation and less

[43]For more details, particularly statistical data, see Ballesteros, *Linking Poverty and the Environment*, 10–26.

spectacular than other forms of violence. Such far-reaching effects that extend even to the unborn should make us consider seriously this crisis of our common home and how to deal with it.[44]

Second, the gradual destruction of our common home reveals a profoundly moral dimension particularly in terms of justice and equality. The contemporary ecological crisis is unjust chiefly because it is caused by the actions of a few—namely, more affluent and developed societies—while disproportionately harming the poor and the vulnerable who have contributed the least to it.[45] For these latter folk, who live in polluted locations close to industrial areas and in neighborhoods with poor water service and sanitation, the effects of the contemporary ecological crisis are no longer just theoretical but already a daily reality.[46]

Wealthy countries and peoples, moreover, have the capacity to "climate proof" themselves to a certain extent. The poor and the vulnerable are thus more affected precisely because they have fewer means to protect themselves and have no insurance for restoration when the effects of the modern ecological crisis strike them, whether in the form of natural calamities, food security, or diseases.[47] Indeed, as Gustavo Gutiérrez points out, the link between poverty and human life can be seen through the negation of the latter, namely, death. He holds that "poverty means death, both physical death that is early and unjust, due to [the] lack of the most basic necessities for life, and cultural death, as expressed in oppression and discrimination for reasons of

[44]R. Nixon, *Slow Violence and the Environmentalism of the Poor* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2011), 2.

[45]Kureethadam, *Creation in Crisis*, 254–260.

[46]Caritas Internationalis, *Climate Justice*, 6; H. Kempf, *How the Rich are Destroying the Earth* (Devon: Green Books, 2008), 41.

[47]Kureethadam identifies *geography* and *economy* as the primary factors in the disproportionate impacts of the modern ecological crisis on the poor and vulnerable. For more details, see *Creation in Crisis*, 259–260.

race, culture, or gender."[48] Theologically speaking, moreover, poverty means the negation of creation's significance for it is against the will of God, the Creator of life. To speak theologically of poverty is not to deny its economic and social aspects; it is to grasp its "cruel and deep meaning: its radical rejection of life, the gift of God, as this life is manifested in the narrative of creation."[49]

The irony, however, is that the poor and vulnerable have contributed the least to the crisis of our common home. To give a historical example, fossil fuel energy and advances in technology have contributed greatly to human development as well as to the improvement of health and survival. Nevertheless, these benefits have been restricted chiefly to rich countries while poorer nations bear the brunt of adverse effects that result from emissions.[50] In the words of Joshtrom Kureethadam, which fittingly summarize the moral and ethical dimensions of the crisis of our common home, "the great ethical tragedy about the contemporary ecological crisis is that a large majority of the members of our common household suffer and will suffer due to the greedy actions of a minority."[51]

Lastly, the modern ecological crisis also embodies one of the "global prescientific convictions" that the CEL should address according to Richard A. McCormick, S.J., namely, an interventionist mentality.[52] This

[48]G. Gutiérrez, "Memory and Prophecy," in D. Groody, ed., *The Option for the Poor in Christian Theology* (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 2007), 27.

[49]Gutiérrez, "Memory and Prophecy," 28.

[50]Kureethadam, *Creation in Crisis*, 258.

[51]Kureethadam, *Creation in Crisis*, 260.

[52]By "global prescientific convictions," McCormick refers to "unexamined assumptions, mostly cultural in character," that both dim the centrality of the human person in Catholic teaching and affect moral deliberative processes. McCormick identifies six such convictions that the CEL must address to have a firm historical and theological foundation, namely: the inconsistent application of physicalism in sexual ethics, bioethics, and social ethics; sexism; theological anthropomorphism; the dominance of independence in Western (and especially

refers to the biased belief, particularly of highly technological societies, that human interventions are genuine solutions to problems. Greater technological interventions, such as "geoengineering"[53] for example, are being advanced and deemed to be the solutions to our environmental problems, and yet without recognizing how such interventions gave rise to these problems in the first place.[54] Such technological solutions tend to miss the larger picture and fail to acknowledge the deeper roots of the crisis of our common home.[55]

To be sure, this is not to vilify technology which has undoubtedly benefited humanity and our common home in many ways; rather, it is to recognize the link between this crisis and how we view and use technology. In acknowledging this connection, we return to one of the driving forces behind the CEL, namely, Bernardin's concern about how technology threatens life in new ways and scales. As discussed

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American) thought; an interventionist mentality; and rampant individualism. For more details, see R. McCormick, "The Consistent Ethic of Life: Is There an Historical Soft Underbelly?" in T. Fuechtmann, ed., *Consistent Ethic of Life* (London: Sheed & Ward, 1988), 104–109.

[53]The Royal Society defines geoengineering as the "deliberate large-scale manipulation of the planetary environment to counteract anthropogenic climate change" (The Royal Society, *Geoengineering the Climate: Science, Governance, and Uncertainty* [London: The Royal Society, 2009], 1). Two highly controversial proposals are made in this field specifically to address climate change: first, to spray aerosols into the atmosphere in an attempt to reflect the sun's rays back into space, and, second, to dump iron particles into the oceans to increase their ability to absorb carbon.

[54]McCormick, "The Consistent Ethic of Life: Is There an Historical Soft Underbelly?" 107–108.

[55]See S. Baum, T. Maher, Jr., & J. Haqq-Misra, "Double Catastrophe: Intermittent Stratospheric Geoengineering Induced by Societal Collapse," *Environment Systems & Decisions* 33:1 (2013): 168–180; H. Buck, "Geoengineering: Re-making Climate for Profit or Humanitarian Intervention?" *Development and Change* 43:1 (2012): 253–270; T. Sikka, "Geoengineering in a World Risk Society," *International Journal of Climate Change: Impacts & Responses* 3:1 (2012): 143–153; and T. Svoboda, "Aerosol Geoengineering Deployment and Fairness," *Environmental Values* 25:1 (2016): 51–68.

earlier, one of the reasons why he pushed a CEL was because of how advancements in warfare technology threatened life on a previously unimaginable scale.[56] Thus, if it is to remain true to its claim that context shapes the content of this ethic and that modern technology prompts a sharper awareness of the fragility of human life, the CEL must pay attention to the crisis of our common home, especially since it threatens life in new ways and to various extents, and is related to our view and use of technology.

How the crisis of our common home harms both natural and human systems, how its effects are borne disproportionately by the poor and the vulnerable who have contributed the least to it, and how it is connected to our view and use of technology—all serve as compelling reasons for the CEL to pay attention to the destruction of our world. Our actions contributed to this crisis; consequently, it is our actions too—or lack of them—that will become decisive for the fate of our common home. If the crisis of our world severely affects human life, then it is not just our attitude but also our personal and social commitment toward human life itself that will be crucial.

Francis's Call for an Integral Ecology as a Dialogue Partner for a Reframed Consistent Ethic of Life

"Everything is connected" serves as the refrain of *Laudato Si'*. It reflects the encyclical's core vision, the heart of integral ecology, and Francis's greatest contribution to Catholic social teaching on our common home.[57] The pope devotes the entirety of chapter four of

[56]Bernardin, "A Consistent Ethic of Life: An American Catholic Dialogue." See also Bernardin, "A Consistent Ethic of Life: Continuing the Dialogue"; Bernardin, "An Update on the Consistent Ethic of Life"; and Bernardin, "The Consistent Ethic of Life," 264–266.

[57]K. Irwin, *A Commentary on Laudato Si': Examining the Background, Contributions, Implementation, and Future of Pope Francis's Encyclical* (Mahwah, NJ: Paulist Press, 2016), 117.

his encyclical to integral ecology even though references to it can be found throughout *Laudato Si'*. In what follows, we will draw the major points of chapter four that are relevant for the purposes of this essay.

The pope begins his treatment of integral ecology, which Vincent J. Miller considers to be Francis's positive response to the global ecological crisis,[58] by noting that the problems of today call for an approach that is capable of respecting every aspect of the problem in light of the fact that everything is closely interconnected. Integral ecology is a vision that takes into consideration both the human and social dimensions of the global crisis that we face (LS no. 137). It is a comprehensive vision, founded on a holistic understanding of the Creation accounts in the book of Genesis (LS no. 66), one that sees human life as grounded in three fundamental and closely entwined relationships: our relationship with God, our neighbor, and the rest of creation. The harmony between these three vital relationships, however, had been broken by sin, both externally and internally, when humanity presumed to take the place of God and refused to acknowledge creaturely limitations. This rupture in our relationship with God, in turn, disfigured not only our reception of God's mandate to "have dominion" (Gen. 1:28) over and "till and keep" (Gen. 2:15) the earth but also our relationship with our neighbors. Truly, genuine care for our own lives as well as fraternity, justice, and faithfulness to those around us are inseparable from our relationships with the natural world (LS no. 66).

Grounded in such a theological anthropology, integral ecology insists that "nature cannot be regarded as something separate from ourselves or as a mere setting in which we live. We are part of nature, included in it and thus in constant interaction with it" (LS no. 139). Francis asserts, furthermore, that creation has an intrinsic value independent of its usefulness to human beings (cf. LS nos. 33, 83–84, and 140).

Such a vision calls for a recognition of the complexity of the crises facing our common home. These are not merely environmental; indeed,

[58]V. Miller, "Integral Ecology: Francis's Moral and Spiritual Vision of Interconnectedness," in *The Theological and Ecological Vision of Laudato Si'*, 12.

to recognize "the reasons why a given area is polluted requires a study of the workings of society, its economy, its behaviour patterns, and the ways it grasps reality" (LS no. 139). Approaching the ecological crisis in this manner means that solutions must be comprehensive; they must account for interactions within natural systems as well as between natural, social, human, and cultural systems precisely because of the complexity of the problems that we face. The words of Francis aptly summarize his vision of integral ecology:

> We are faced not with two separate crises, one environmental and the other social, but rather with one complex crisis which is both social and environmental. Strategies for a solution demand an integrated approach to combating poverty, restoring dignity to the excluded, and at the same time protecting nature. (LS no. 139)

By the same token, human and natural environments deteriorate together and this affects the most vulnerable people on the planet (LS no. 48). An integral ecology thus insists on the inseparability of caring for both our natural environment and the poor. Francis, in fact, adamant as he is in his appeal to protect nature, is more resolute in his call to protect human life and the dignity of the human person:

> A sense of deep communion with the rest of nature cannot be real if our hearts lack tenderness, compassion and concern for our fellow human beings. It is clearly inconsistent to combat trafficking in endangered species while remaining completely indifferent to human trafficking, unconcerned about the poor, or undertaking to destroy another human being deemed unwanted. This compromises the very meaning of our struggle for the sake of the environment. (LS no. 91)

We cannot withdraw from our duty to care for our neighbors, especially the most vulnerable. There can be no renewal of our relationship with the environment if we do not heal our relationship with each other. We cannot combat environmental degradation effectively without attending to causes related to social and human degradation. Francis reminds us that "there can be no ecology without an adequate anthropology" (LS no. 118).

The pope's call for an integral ecology is thus an ideal and crucial dialogue partner in the effort to reframe the CEL in light of the crisis

of our common home. To begin with, there are similarities between Francis and Bernardin, particularly in the way they understand what being "pro-life" means; in this case, they both refuse to limit it to being simply "anti-abortion."[59] This is apparent in Francis's interview with Antonio Spadaro, S.J., where he pointed out that

> we cannot insist only on issues related to abortion, gay marriage, and the use of contraceptive methods. This is not possible. I have not spoken much about these things, and I was reprimanded for that. But when we speak about these issues, we have to talk about them in a context.[60]

He insists by the same token, in his apostolic exhortation *Gaudete et Exsultate*, that while our defense of unborn life must be "clear, firm and passionate," we cannot in many ways ignore those already born, especially the poor and the vulnerable, because their lives are "equally sacred."[61] Francis is not dismissing the importance of concerns like abortion; instead, he is calling for the Church to see these in a broader context and to see beyond a handful of life issues. In doing so, the Church can explain better its overall understanding of the human person and make its witness to life more credible.[62]

Bernardin, like Francis, also refuses to limit the meaning of pro-life to being concerned with only a handful of issues. He espouses a similarly broad and inclusive vision that "identifies both the protection of life and its promotion as moral questions."[63] Archbishop Michael Sheehan of Santa Fe, New Mexico captures in an apt manner the correspondence between Bernardin and Francis: "The point that

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[59]K. Mannara, "Bernardin and Bergoglio: What the Cardinal's Legacy Offers to a Church Led by Pope Francis," *New Theology Review* 28:2 (2016): 41.

[60]A. Spadaro, "A Big Heart Open to God: An Interview with Pope Francis," *America* (September 30, 2013).

[61]Francis, *Gaudete et Exsultate* [Apostolic Exhortation on the Call to Holiness in Today's World] (March 19, 2018), nos. 101–102.

[62]Mannara, "Bernardin and Bergoglio," 40 and 43.

[63]Bernardin, "A Consistent Ethic of Life: Continuing the Dialogue," 16.

[Bernardin's] consistent ethic makes is exactly the same point that Pope Francis is making—let's look at the whole picture and not just focus almost exclusively on three or so issues."[64]

There are also similarities between the CEL and integral ecology. We can gather that both visions strive to be broad, inclusive, comprehensive, and insistent on interconnections even as they differ in their respective foci. CEL, on the one hand, insists on a link between abortion and other issues concerning human life. The way individuals and groups pursue one or several issues should thus support a systemic vision of life.[65] Integral ecology, on the other hand, maintains that the "cry of the earth" and the "cry of the poor" are inseparable (LS no. 49). Both visions resist an *ad hoc* approach to the different issues that they seek to address; indeed, and more to the point, both visions seek *consistency* in the way we—as individuals, as a society, and as a Church—deal with different problems. For Bernardin, it is inconsistent to work for the protection of the unborn and yet remain unconcerned about the threat of war, the lives of inmates on death rows, and the poor, or vice versa.[66] For Francis, it is inconsistent to care for our common home while remaining indifferent to the plight of human beings, especially the poor, or the other way around (LS no. 91).

Integral ecology serves as a crucial dialogue partner for a reframed CEL in several ways. We can reckon that the CEL, as a moral vision, is still narrow in some respects and upon closer scrutiny, given its limited horizon. In his CEL, Bernardin appears inclined to restrict his attention to "classical life issues" such as nuclear war, abortion, euthanasia, and capital punishment. Abortion, in particular, takes up a specifically important and recurrent place in his works.[67] Although

[64]Quoted in D. Gibson, "Pope Francis Breathes New Life into Bernardin's Contested Legacy," *National Catholic Reporter* (October 26, 2013).

[65]Bernardin, "A Consistent Ethic of Life: Continuing the Dialogue," 17.

[66]Bernardin, "A Consistent Ethic of Life: An American Catholic Dialogue," 13.

[67]See A. Spilly, ed., *Selected Works of Joseph Cardinal Bernardin* Vol. 1: *Homilies and Teaching Documents* (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2000) and A. Spilly, ed.,

the Cardinal discusses other concerns that affect human life, such as health care and poverty, these receive relatively less attention compared to the abovementioned issues.[68] Thus, in limiting itself to "classical" concerns, Bernardin's CEL fails to give adequate attention to other issues that affect human life, whether the right to it or its quality, such as ecological issues and HIV/AIDS. In contrast to Bernardin's CEL, Ronald J. Sider's biblically-founded and completely pro-life stance seeks "fullness of life in *every* area" and embraces issues such as smoking, alcoholism, racism, and environmental destruction.[69]

Apropos of its claim and insistence that human, natural, social, and cultural ecologies are interconnected and inseparable, integral ecology can expand the moral vision of the CEL. Concern about human life and dignity must not be limited to "classical" bio- and social ethical issues, important as they are, especially if the signs of the times reveal new ways and magnitudes by which human life and dignity are threatened. Integral ecology, with its vision of the interconnectedness of everything, can stir us "to become painfully aware" of how the crisis of our common home harms not only non-human creation but also human life itself, "and thus to discover what each of us can do about it" (LS no. 19). Integral ecology, in other words, can further expand the CEL's vision so that the latter may break out from its limitation to "classical" life issues.

Moreover, apart from broadening the CEL's horizons, integral ecology's keener perception and articulation of the interconnections in

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Selected Works of Joseph Cardinal Bernardin Vol. 2: *Church and Society* (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2000) which are the only available compilations of the writings of Bernardin on the consistent ethic of life. Abortion and war are topics present in almost all of his work; he also dedicated at least two writings to the death penalty and four to euthanasia.

[68]In the abovementioned compilations, four writings were dedicated to health care and only one to poverty.

[69]See R. Sider, with the staff of Evangelicals for Social Action, *Completely Pro-Life: Building a Consistent Stance on Abortion, the Family, Nuclear Weapons, the Poor* (Westmont, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1987), 189–196.

the web of life can also give this ethic a stronger and more persuasive language for expounding on the links between life issues. As pointed out by Timothy A. Byrnes, one of the difficulties faced by the CEL is that there is specific, authoritative, and demanding Church teaching on abortion. As such, those who emphasize abortion over and above other issues are emboldened to relate their case to the public in ways that Bernardin and adherents of the CEL cannot.[70] With *Laudato Si'*, however, which Francis intends to be added to the body of the Church's social teachings (LS no. 15), there is now at least a clear point of reference for asserting the connectedness of all things.

Contributions of a Reframed Consistent Ethic of Life to Discourse on the Care for Our Common Home

The crisis of our common home is not just an environmental problem that threatens God's handiwork, which has an intrinsic value of its own. It is also a crisis that imperils human life itself. Indeed, the Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines considers this ecological crisis to be the "ultimate pro-life issue."[71] Protecting and promoting the life and dignity of the human person at every stage and in every circumstance entails safeguarding our common home as this is one of the conditions necessary for upholding and sustaining human life and dignity. Although Francis's call for an integral ecology shares many similarities with Bernardin's CEL, it challenges the Cardinal's ethic to expand its moral vision to include the protection of our world as a pro-life issue, both for its own sake and for the sake of human life.

This expanded horizon of the CEL, in turn, can make its contributions to our efforts in caring for our common home. First, this ethic can provide us with a moral vision that enables us to recognize

[70]T. Byrnes, "How 'Seamless' a Garment? The Catholic Bishops and the Politics of Abortion," *Journal of Church and State* 33:1 (1991): 18, 31–35.

[71]CBCP, "What is Happening to Our Beautiful Land?" 317.

how caring for our world is an indispensable element of our systemic defense of life in every stage and circumstance. The value of a CEL is that it impels us to face the full range of threats against life. It resists a single-issue focus or an ad hoc approach to morality by the Church even if an issue like abortion is more urgent. As such, given how the crisis of our common home seriously threatens human life in terms of both its quality and the very right to it, the CEL can highlight this crisis as a pressing issue that touches on the dignity and quality of life today. It is an ethic that can sharpen our moral sensitivity and broaden our intellectual framework for debating issues that affect human life.[72]

Caring for our common home, then, is—and must be—a constitutive dimension of Christian discipleship, particularly of our duty to protect and promote the dignity of the human person, especially the poorest and most vulnerable. It is intimately connected with—indeed, inseparable from—our other efforts to defend human life.

Second, a reconfigured CEL can also provide the framework for Francis's appeal to observe and practice integral ecology consistently (LS no. 217). By closely linking care for the environment with our other endeavors to defend human life and dignity as well as promote a systemic vision of life, our attitude toward the world becomes inseparable from our stance toward human life. In other words, if we truly and passionately cherish human life in all its stages and circumstances, then we cannot neglect the state of our common home that sustains us. Earth, indeed, is our *only* home.[73] It can continue existing without us—as it has done for billions of years—but we cannot survive without it.[74] We are not just a part of nature; for better or worse, our very lives depend on it.

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[72]J. Bernardin, "Religion and Politics: The Future Agenda," *Origins* 14:21 (1984): 326–327.

[73]For a description of the Earth as a Goldilocks planet, i.e., "just right" for human and non-human beings to flourish in, see Kureethadam, *Creation in Crisis*, 15–33.

[74]For an account of the entry of human beings into the evolutionary history of the Earth, see Kureethadam, *Creation in Crisis*, 33–41 and D. Edwards, *Ecology at the Heart of Faith* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2006), 8–14.

Along the same lines, those who care only about the environment with little or no regard for the plight of their neighbors and especially the most vulnerable are called upon to broaden their moral universe. It is inconsistent to lament the loss of biodiversity and the degradation of the natural environment while remaining nonchalant about human oppression (LS no. 91). This critique applies especially to conservation efforts that focus on the preservation of natural environments and species at the cost of displacing human populations, such as in some parts of Africa and the Amazon.[75] A reframed CEL, according to Bernardin's original vision, cuts both ways and exposes inconsistencies and narrow moral horizons of opposing camps.

An ecologically sensitive CEL can provide the moral vision and framework for articulating in a coherent manner the linkages between various ethical issues concerning the preservation and enhancement of human life in all its stages as well as of our common home, God's creation on which life itself depends. More to the point, however, this reframed ethic can serve as a moral guide toward a consistent living out of our duty to protect and promote life in light of the modern ecological crisis. It can help us achieve a "moral and spiritual wholeness" that embraces concern for human beings and the rest of God's creation[76] and helps us realize that Christian love is not a "rare fluid to be economized" but rather a "capacity which grows by use."[77]

[75]C. Iheka, "Pope Francis' Integral Ecology and Environmentalism for the Poor," *Environmental Ethics* 39:3 (2017): 250.

[76]R. Wennberg, *God, Humans, and Animals: An Invitation to Enlarge our Moral Universe* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 2003), 13.

[77]M. Midgley, *Animals and Why They Matter* (Athens, GA: University of Georgia Press, 1983), 119.

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GEOGRAPHY AND IDENTITY

Spatial Word Pairs in John 8:23 and the Question of Docetism

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In one of his Shafer Lectures in 1966, E. Käsemann concluded that John's Christology of glory is "naïvely docetic."[1] For him, the gospel's emphasis on the "other-worldly" nature of Jesus makes understanding the latter's incarnation difficult.[2] He thus could not but ask:

> In what sense is he [Jesus] flesh, who walks on the water and through closed doors.… He cannot be deceived by [human persons], because he knows their innermost thoughts even before they speak. He debates with them *from the vantage point of the infinite difference between heaven and earth*.…[3]

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[1]"One can hardly fail to recognize the danger of his christology of glory, namely, the danger of docetism. It is present in a still naïve, unreflected form and it has not yet been recognized by the Evangelist or his community" (E. Käsemann, *The Testament of Jesus: A Study of the Gospel of John in the Light of Chapter 17*, trans. G. Krodel [London: S.C.M. Press, 1968], 26). According to Käsemann, John "use[s] the earthly life of Jesus merely as a backdrop for the Son of God proceeding through the world of man [*sic*] and as the scene of the inbreaking of the heavenly glory" (Käsemann, *The Testament of Jesus*, 13). The work was originally written in German as *Jesu letzter Wille nach Johannes 17* (Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr [Paul Siebeck], 1966).

[2]Käsemann, *The Testament of Jesus*, 9.

[3]Käsemann, *The Testament of Jesus*, 9 [emphasis added]. Käsemann concludes that John, in his search for an answer to the question "Who is Jesus?", "was

Käsemann's provocative conclusions have drawn criticism from various corners in the midst of some acknowledgment for his theological insights.[4] S. Smalley, for one, has rightly perceived some claims about Jesus in the Gospel to be liable to a docetic interpretation but only if they are taken in and of themselves.[5] He points out, contrary to Käsemann, that when these are interpreted in context, "the total effect can scarcely be regarded as one of 'divinity without humanity'."[6] It is not our intention in this article, however, to engage in a critical

able to give an answer only in the form of a naïve docetism" (Käsemann, *The Testament of Jesus,* 26).

[4]See the extensive critique, for instance, of M. Thompson in *The Humanity of Jesus in the Fourth Gospel* ([Philadelphia, PA: Fortress, 1988], 1–6). Thompson puts into question Käsemann's presuppositions, exegetical conclusions, and method of focusing his analysis on chapter 17 (Thompson, *The Humanity of Jesus in the Fourth Gospel*, 6). See also L. Johnson (*The Writings of the New Testament* [London: SCM, 1986], 475) who calls John's portrayal of Jesus to be "in many ways the most human." He argues that the "other-worldly" depiction of Jesus is a result of the Gospel's theological and literary expression (Johnson, *The Writings of the New Testament*, 475). R. Brown (*The Community of the Beloved Disciple: The Life, Loves, and Hates of an Individual Church in New Testament Times* [Mahwah, NJ: Paulist Press, 1979], 116), meanwhile, considers Käsemann's "naively docetic" description of the Gospel to be anachronistic.

[5]S. Smalley, *John: Evangelist & Interpreter* 2nd ed. (Downer's Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1998), 60.

[6]Smalley, *John: Evangelist & Interpreter*, 60–61. U. Schnelle (*Antidocetic Christology in the Gospel of John: An Investigation of the Place of the Fourth Gospel in the Johannine School*, trans. L. Maloney [Minneapolis, MN: Fortress, 1992], 228) argues that John's unique portrait of Christ demonstrates the Gospel's antidocetic tendency, "a reaction to docetic christology" that is present in 1 John. He is asserting, with this position, that 1 John was written prior to the rest of the gospel. P. Anderson ("From One Dialogue to Another: Johannine Polyvalence from Origins to Receptions," in T. Thatcher & S. Moore, eds., *Anatomies of Narrative Criticism: The Past, Present, and Futures of the Fourth Gospel as Literature*, SBLRBS 55 [Atlanta, GA: Society of Biblical Literature, 2008], 102) suggests that John presents Jesus to be both stoic and pathetic, and that "to ignore either side of these polarities is to distort the character of the dynamic tension intrinsic to John's distinctive flesh-and-glory Christology."

discussion with Käsemann on the issue of John's seemingly naïve docetism; rather, our focus is to investigate if John's use of binary cosmological language (i.e., ἄνω - κάτω and οὐκ ἐκ τοῦ κόσμου τούτου - ἐκ τούτου τοῦ κόσμου) has the potential to contribute to a docetic interpretation of the Gospel. We shall do this by exploring the binary cosmological language in John 8:23 according to the following steps: first, through a comparison with OT (LXX) cosmological language; second, through a narrative-critical analysis of its larger and immediate contexts; and third, through rhetorical criticism using the insights of spatial point-of-view analysis. Before that, however, we shall first give an overview of docetism and then briefly survey some scholarly contentions for an inherent docetism in John.[7]

1. A Quick Look at the Heresy Called Docetism

Docetism[8] is broadly defined as "the assertion that Christ's human body was a phantasm, and that his sufferings and death were mere appearance."[9] Two separate but interrelated questions regarding two aspects of Jesus Christ's humanity are thus posed: "Was he really

[7]Our focus, amid a seeming consensus of anti-docetic elements in 1 John, will be on the Gospel of John and not on the Johannine literature as a whole. For convenience, we are using "John" to refer to both the Fourth Gospel and the evangelist who wrote it.

[8]Discussions of docetism are sometimes co-related with gnosticism. According to N. Brox ("'Doketismus'—Eine Problemanzeige," *Zeitschrift für Kirchengeschichte* 95:3 [1984]: 313), however, the two phenomena are separate and not to be compared: "Andere gnostische Christologien sind einfach de facto auf einem anderen Weg als dem Doketismus. Gnostische Christologie und Doketismus sind jedenfalls nicht in jedem Fall gleichzusetzen." See also the discussion of D. Streett in *They Went Out from Us: The Identity of the Opponents in First John* (Göttingen: Walter de Gruyter, 2011), 25–50.

[9]Cf. "Docetism," in H. Bettenson & C. Maunder, eds., *Documents of the Christian Church* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 37. G. Stroumsa ("Christ's Laughter: Docetic Origins Reconsidered," *JECS* 12:3 [Fall 2004]: 267–268), however, claims that docetism has not been given a convincing definition so far.

incarnated?" and "If he was, did he really suffer and die on the cross?"[10] Affirmative answers to these questions assert Jesus's human nature, yet reconciling Jesus's humanity with divinity was problematic for some early Christians, hence their attempts to separate the earthly Jesus from the Son of God who comes from above. This in turn gave birth to a conglomeration of belief systems which have been broadly described as docetic.[11]

G. Strecker clusters the various docetic belief systems into three categories: first is the view attributed to Basilides, which held that it was another person (e.g., Simon of Cyrene) who was crucified and not Jesus Christ; second is the belief system found in the work of Cerinthus, which affirmed that the Christ departed from Jesus before the passion so that it was only the human Jesus who suffered and died;[12] and third, lastly, is the belief system propagated by Marcion, Saturninus, and Cerdo, among others, that expounded the pneumatic nature of Christ which makes him impassible,[13] and hence Jesus Christ is said to have only "appeared to suffer."[14] We can therefore deduce

[10]Cf. Stroumsa, "Christ's Laughter," 268. See also W. Löhr ("Docetism," in H. Betz et al., eds., *Religion Past & Present*, Encyclopedia of Theology and Religion [Leiden/Boston: Brill, 2008], 122–123) who counts dualism (i.e., the devaluing of creation or the material) as one of the major motifs of docetism.

[11]G. Strecker, in H. Attridge, ed., *The Johannine Letters: A Commentary on 1, 2, and 3 John*, Hermeneia, trans. L. Maloney (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress, 1996), 71. The original German version of this book is *Die Johannesbriefe*, Kritish-exegetischer Kommentar über das Neue Testament 14 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1989).

[12]Strecker adds, in this category, a kind of adoptionist Christology where the Spirit is said to have entered upon Jesus during his baptism while Jesus's two natures remained separate (Strecker, *The Johannine Letters*, 71).

[13]This category is also called Monophysite docetism (cf. Streett, *They Went Out from Us*, 38–39).

[14]Strecker, *The Johannine Letters*, 72–75.

from these categories that docetism encompasses varied belief systems that are reflective of initial attempts at Christology.[15]

Having briefly described docetism, we shall quickly go through some scholars who interpret Johannine Christology along the lines of such.

2. Inherent Docetism in John? Some Assertions

It should be noted that Käsemann was not the first to perceive an apparent problem in John's unique portrayal of Jesus. He acknowledged that his ideas ran along the same line as those of F. C. Baur,[16] G. P. Wetter,[17] and E. Hirsch,[18] who perceived some

[15]Stroumsa ("Christ's Laughter," 69) opines that docetism is neither a clearly definable sect nor a doctrine but a "theological option that shows up in a wide variety of early Christian texts." According to A. McGrath (*Heresy: A History of Defending the Truth* [New York: HarperOne, 2009], 103), many of those whom the Church Fathers considered to be heretics were individuals who actually "undertook their theological quests out of a genuine concern to ensure that the Christian faith was represented and articulated in the most authentic and robust forms"; what made them "heretics" was their persistence in their theological propositions (and refusal to concede) even when these were found to be inadequate.

[16]For F. Baur (*Vorlesungen über neutestamentliche Theologie*, Bibliothek theologischer Klassiker 46 [Gotha: Friedrich Andreas Perthes, 1892], 175–176), John's use of σὰρξ ἐγένετο instead of ἄνθρωπος ἐγένετο in 1:14 signifies that the λόγος assumed only the body of a human person along with its natural weaknesses and finiteness. It was not the full reality of being human which is signified by ἄνθρωπος ἐγένετο (Baur, *Vorlesungen über neutestamentliche Theologie*, 175–176).

[17]G. Wetter (*Der Sohn Gottes: Eine Untersuchung über den Charakter und die Tendenz des Johannes-Evangeliums*, Forschungen zur Religion und Literatur des Alten und Neuen Testaments 26 [Gottingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1916], 154–155) sees John's portrayal of Jesus to be a reflection of the gospel's purpose, i.e., to prove that Jesus is indeed the Son of God, the Redeemer; hence, he could not but present Jesus as a being with supernatural powers and one who has no human weaknesses.

[18]E. Hirsch (*Das Vierte Evangelium: In seiner ursprünglichen Gestalt verdeutscht und erklärt* [Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr/Paul Siebeck, 1936], 80–81) also believes that the gospel's mythic treatment of Jesus as someone who can walk on the sea and

elements in John to be docetic or as having a tinge of docetism. K. B. Larsen, on the other hand, located the problem in John's narrative style. Analyzing the portrayal of the Johannine Jesus using Greimas's "semio-narrative approach," he maintains that the cognitive overshadows the pragmatic aspect in narratology by situating Jesus's Christological moment ἐν ἀρχῇ (Jn. 1:1).[19] Jesus thus becomes "the omniscient subject of cognition," i.e., the omniscient protagonist with a *messianisches Selbstbewusstsein*.[20] Noting the many verbs of cognition that are used therein, Larsen posits that the Gospel's main focus is the cognitive dimension (which is also clearly enunciated in the Gospel's purpose in Jn. 20:31), not the pragmatic one, and that the evangelist only used the latter to be at the service of the former.[21]

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engage in curious conversations with the Samaritan woman and with Nicodemus, among others, has influenced the gospel's overall portrait of him. For W. Wrede (*Charakter und Tendenz des Johannesevangeliums*, Sammlung gemeinverständlicher Vorträge und Schriften aus dem Gebiet der Theologie und Religionsgeschichte 37 [Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr/Paul Siebeck, 1933], 38), the overall portrayal of Jesus in John does not create a convincing picture of a human being even though John portrays him with some human traits: "Man kann ihrer schliesslich sogar eine ganze Anzahl zusammenaddieren, wenn man sich bemüht.… Aber man fühlt nur zu deutlich, dass das alles dennoch das Bild eines Menschen nicht schafft" (Wrede, *Charakter und Tendenz des Johannesevangeliums*, 38). Nevertheless, Wrede affirms the historical person of Jesus whom the evangelist portrays as a divine being on earth yet whose humanity is merely transparent in order for the divine light to shine through in this world (Wrede, *Charakter und Tendenz des Johannesevangeliums*, 39). M. Thompson provides in her dissertation (*The Humanity of Jesus in the Gospel of John* [Durham, NC: Duke University, 1985], 17–23) a concise summary of the above authors' ideas and their view of Johannine Christology which intersects with Käsemann's proposition on John's seemingly naive docetism.

[19]K. Larsen, "Narrative Docetism: Christology and Storytelling in the Gospel of John," in R. Bauckham & C. Mosser, eds., *The Gospel of John and Christian Theology* (Grand Rapids, MI/Cambridge: Eerdmans, 2008), 350.

[20]Larsen, "Narrative Docetism," 351.

[21]Larsen, "Narrative Docetism," 349, 353.

Thus, instead of Käsemann's "naïve" docetism, Larsen suggests that what is present in John is a "narrative" docetism.[22]

Larsen's proposition is an interesting one indeed, yet it does not answer the question of whether or not John's Christology is docetic. Nevertheless, his proposal, if correct, spurs us on to ask: "Why would the evangelist choose a 'docetic narrative style'? Was docetism in the consciousness of the evangelist at all?" We shall return to this question in our exploration of 8:23.[23]

3. Analysis of John 8:23 and Its Binary Cosmological Language

Having briefly laid out the various scholarly positions on the problem of an alleged docetism in John, we shall now explore if the evangelist's presentation of Jesus as being "not of this world" and as coming from "above" does exhibit a docetic *Tendenz*. Is the Johannine Jesus a divine being from above who appeared on earth below disguised and hiding in lowliness, as Käsemann puts it?[24]

As cited in the introduction, one reason Käsemann uses to support his "naïve docetism" claim is that John depicts Jesus as someone who parries with his interlocutors "from the vantage point of the infinite difference between heaven and earth."[25] A concrete example of this is Jesus's discussion with the Ἰουδαῖοι in 8:23:

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[22]Larsen, "Narrative Docetism," 354. Larsen is quick to point out that one should not understand his use of the phrase "narrative docetism" to be "a religio-historical placing of the Gospel of John, nor … a theological assessment of its relation to later orthodox Christology" (Larsen, "Narrative Docetism," 354).

[23]All unmarked Bible verses are from the Gospel of John.

[24]"[Do] not those features of his lowliness rather represent the absolute minimum of the costume designed for the one who dwelt for a little while among men, appearing to be one of them, yet without himself being subjected to earthly conditions" (Käsemann, *The Testament of Jesus*, 12)?

[25]Cf. footnote 3 above.

καὶ ἔλεγεν αὐτοῖς·
A ὑμεῖς ἐκ τῶν κάτω ἐστέ,
B ἐγὼ ἐκ τῶν ἄνω εἰμί·
A1 ὑμεῖς ἐκ τούτου τοῦ κόσμου ἐστέ,
B1 ἐγὼ οὐκ εἰμὶ ἐκ τοῦ κόσμου τούτου. (Jn 8:23 BNT)[26]

In this verse, we have four clauses in an A-B-A1-B1 pattern with four spatial descriptions: ἐκ τῶν κάτω (A), ἐκ τῶν ἄνω (B), ἐκ τούτου τοῦ κόσμου (A1), and οὐκ ἐκ τοῦ κόσμου τούτου (B1). We immediately notice the strict correspondence in the structure of the verse (i.e., pronoun subject - adverbial phrase - verb)[27] where we see a synthetic[28] antithetical parallelism, what G. Van Belle might regard as repetition, variation, and amplification[29] and which could signal an

[26]The Greek text is based on K. Aland et. al., eds., *Novum Testamentum Graece* (BNT) 28th ed. (Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 2001). Unless otherwise indicated, all Biblical references in English are taken from the *New Revised Standard Version* (New York: Division of Christian Education of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the United States of America, 1989).

[27]Except for B1 where εἰμὶ comes between οὐκ and ἐκ τοῦ κόσμου τούτου.

[28]Our classification of "synthetic" parallelism (in contrast to synonymous) is based on the distinctions identified by R. Kaplan ("Cultural Thought Patterns in Inter-Cultural Education," in T. Silva & P. Matsuda, eds., *Landmark Essays on ESL Writing* [New York/Abingdon, OX: Routledge, 2011], 15) who defines synonymous parallelism as "the balancing of the thought and phrasing of the first part of a statement or idea by the second part" and synthetic parallelism as "the completion of the idea or thought of the first part in the second part." We thus do not consider οὐκ ἐκ τοῦ κόσμου τούτου and ἐκ τούτου τοῦ κόσμου to be mere synonymous repetitions of ἄνω and κάτω, respectively. The spatial categories ἄνω and κάτω refer to bipartite cosmological categories similar to those found in the LXX that express ontological realities without necessarily containing any value judgement. By complementing these with οὐκ ἐκ τοῦ κόσμου τούτου and ἐκ τούτου τοῦ κόσμου, John seems to direct the reader's attention to the κόσμος and to his description of it, and, in the process, differentiates Jesus from the characteristics that are inherent in "this κόσμος."

[29]In his detailed analysis of Johannine literary style characteristics, G. Van Belle ("Theory of Repetitions and Variations in the Fourth Gospel: A Neglected Field of Research?," in G. Van Belle, M. Labahn, & P. Maritz, eds., *Repetitions and Variations in the Fourth Gospel: Style, Text, Interpretation*, BETL 223 [Leuven/Paris/

intentional attempt to draw the reader's attention to the content of the parallel.[30] A has an antithetic parallel in B as does A1 with B1 while the spatial categories in AB are synthetically paralleled in A1B1;[31] indeed, the repetition of the antithetic parallel AB in A1B1 could not be more emphatic. It thus behooves us to ask, "What does John want to put across to his readers or hearers in this verse?"[32] We shall proceed, therefore, with an analysis of 8:23 below.

Walpole, MA: Peeters, 2009], 21) has rightly perceived the fourth evangelist to be "an expert in repetition and variation." Citing the works of P. Chang (*Repetitions and Variations in the Gospel of John* [Strasbourg: 1975]), T. Popp (*Grammatik des Geistes: Literarische Kunst und theologische Konzeption in Johannes 3 und 6*, ABG 3 [Leipzig: Evangelische Verlagsanstalt, 2001]), and C. Black ("'The Words That You Gave to Me I Have Given to Them': The Grandeur of Johannine Rhetoric," in R. Culpepper & C. Black, eds., *Exploring the Gospel of John: In Honor of D. Moody Smith* [Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox, 1996], 220–239), Van Belle agrees that Johannine repetition is not limited simply to verbatim repetition but also includes "variation" along with its consequent effect of "amplification" ("Theory of Repetitions and Variations," 23–27).

[30]Cf. Van Belle ("Theory of Repetitions and Variations," 30) who identified the following seven functions of repetition in John:

> 1) to highlight or draw attention; 2) to establish or fix in the mind of the implied reader;… 3) to emphasize the importance of something; 4) to create expectations, increasing predictability and assent (anticipation); 5) to cause review and reassessment (retrospection); 6) to unify disparate elements; [and] 7) to build patterns of association or contrasts.

[31]By synthetic parallelism we mean that ἐκ τούτου τοῦ κόσμου and οὐκ ἐκ τοῦ κόσμου τούτου enhance or concretize the meanings of κάτω and ἄνω, respectively. This means that κάτω and ἄνω now take on the semantic nuances which John correlates with "from this κόσμος" and "not from this κόσμος" (cf. footnote 27).

[32]8:23 as we mentioned earlier is not a cosmological statement. Nonetheless, even though ἐκ τῶν ἄνω - ἐκ τῶν κάτω are used antithetically in 8:23, it is undeniable that John has a wholistic conceptualization of the world when he introduces in the Prologue that "all things came into being through him [the Logos]" (1:3).

3a. ἄνω - κάτω / οὐκ ἐκ τοῦ κόσμου τούτου - ἐκ τούτου τοῦ κόσμου and the Septuagint

We note at the outset that the verse is not a cosmological statement despite the use of κόσμος in 8:23. It is probable, however, that John's use of cosmological language reflects an implicit *Weltbild* that can be traced back to Judaism. Indeed, while there has been a long-standing debate on the origin of and influences on John, the gospel's undeniable Jewish and OT heritage has come to the attention of scholars with the discoveries at Qumran.[33] With this as our point of departure and following the contention of O. Böcher[34] and E. Ladd,[35] it is probable that John's binary cosmological language can be attributed to the gospel's Jewish origins.[36]

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[33]Cf. M. Menken, "Observations on the Significance of the Old Testament in the Fourth Gospel," in G. Van Belle, J. van der Watt, & P. Maritz, eds., *Theology and Christology in the Fourth Gospel*, BETL 184 (Leuven: Leuven University Press & Peeters, 2005), 155–175; C. Westermann, *The Gospel of John in the Light of the Old Testament*, trans. S. Schatzmann (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1998); and M. Hengel, "The Old Testament in the Fourth Gospel," *Horizons in Biblical Theology* 12:1 (1990): 23–34. In the words of R. Schnackenburg (*The Gospel According to St. John* Vol. 1, trans. K. Smyth [New York: Crossroad, 1990], 124), "many thoughts and images of the O.T., mostly taken further in theological meditation and development, come together in John and are made to serve Johannine theology. This Gospel would be unthinkable without the O.T. basis which supports it." See also S. Smalley, *John: Evangelist and Interpreter* (Exeter: Paternoster, 1978), 112, and the survey of R. Brown in *The Gospel According to John (i-xii)* Vol. 1, The Anchor Bible (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1966), LII–LXVI. We acknowledge that our position neither denies that the Judaism of that time was influenced by Hellenism nor that there could be influences on the Gospel other than Judaism.

[34]O. Böcher, *Der johanneische Dualismus im Zusammenhang des nachbiblischen Judentums* (Gütersloh: Gütersloher Verlagshaus Gerd Mohn, 1965), 26.

[35]G. Ladd, *A Theology of the New Testament*, rev. ed. (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1993), 261.

[36]Cf. C. Barrett (*The Gospel According to St. John: An Introduction with Commentary and Notes on the Greek Text*, 2nd ed. [London: SPCK, 1978], 341) who attributes John's use of ἄνω and κάτω to Judaism rather than to Hellenism.

Having presupposed such, is it possible then that what we perceive as Johannine dual cosmological language is actually John's appropriation of the OT *Weltbild* to serve some purpose (cf. 20:31)?

Before we answer this question, let us look at the essence of OT cosmology. J. Pennington, in his analysis of such, countered the claim of tripartite OT cosmology (heaven—earth and sea—Sheol/underworld) espoused by L. Stadelmann[37] and J. E. Wright,[38] among others, and seems to have argued convincingly that the absence of a clearly defined third category in the OT points not to a tripartite cosmology but to a bipartite one, although such is expressed in various ways using "embellishments."[39] Finding support from OT texts (e.g., Ps. 148) and the studies of D. Tsumura[40] and O. Keel,[41] he considered the

[37]L. Stadelmann, *The Hebrew Conception of the World: A Philological and Literary Study*, AnBib 39 (Rome: Pontifical Biblical Institute, 1970), 9–10, 177.

[38]J. Wright, *The Early History of Heaven* (New York/Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 53–54.

[39]J. Pennington, "Dualism in Old Testament Cosmology: *Weltbild* and *Weltanschauung*," *Scandinavian Journal of the Old Testament* 18:2 (2004): 266. Pennington cites Isa. 7:11 where Sheol is used as a substitute for earth, manifesting what he calls a semantic overlap (Pennington, "Dualism in Old Testament Cosmology," 266). Böcher (*Der johanneische Dualismus*, 23) also advocates for a bipartite OT cosmology:

> Wenn man also von drei Teilen der alttestamentlichen Welt sprechen wollte, so sind dies—von oben nach unten—nicht Himmel, Erde und Unterwelt, sondern allenfalls Himmel, Erde und Ozean (Ex 20,11). Der Ozean freilich, auf dem die Erde gleichsam schwimmend gedacht ist, erhält nirgends selbständige theologische Relevanz. Im wesentlichen ist das Weltbild des at schon in vorexilischer Zeit zweiteilig.

[40]Cf. D. Tsumura, "A 'Hyponymous' Word Pair: 'Rṣ and Thm(t) in Hebrew and Ugaritic," *Biblica* 69:2 (1988): 258–269. See also D. Tsumura, *The Earth and the Waters in Genesis 1 and 2: A Linguistic Investigation*, JSOTSup 83 (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1989), 72–77.

[41]Cf. O. Keel, *The Symbolism of the Biblical World: Ancient Near Eastern Iconography and the Book of Psalms*, trans. T. Hallett (New York: Seabury, 1978).

underworld (Sheol) to be in a hyponymic relationship with the earth (similar to the seas and the depths of the ocean) such that the OT biblical view of the world (*Weltbild*) can be described as basically dualistic in two interrelated senses: 1) heaven is the dwelling place of God while the earth and the netherworld are for human beings, and 2) heaven and earth, although separate, are God's creation.[42] Pennington also opined, with the support of various texts, that this dualistic cosmological language does not have just one function, i.e., it could express either an antithesis[43] in some instances or a merismus[44] in others.[45]

The LXX, unlike John, does not use the binary pair ἐκ τούτου τοῦ κόσμου and οὐκ ἐκ τοῦ κόσμου τούτου. The use of ἄνω in reference to heaven and κάτω in reference to the earth, however, is attested to in many texts (e.g., Ex. 20:4; Deut. 4:39; 5:8; 1 Kgs. 8:23; Isa. 8:21–22).[46] Noteworthy, too, is the LXX's concomitant

[42]Pennington ("Dualism in Old Testament Cosmology," 266).

[43]Cf. Ps. 102:19; 115:16; Eccl. 5:2.

[44]Cf. Gen. 1:1; 14:22; Lev. 26:19. Other authors who uphold that a bipartite OT cosmology reflects a merismus which expresses the totality of creation include M. Deroche ("Isaiah XLV 7 and the Creation of Chaos?", *VT* 42:1 [1992]: 19–21) and G. Wenham (*Genesis 1–15*, WBC [Waco, TX: Word Books, 1987], 15).

[45]Pennington, "Dualism in Old Testament Cosmology," 271–272. Pennington finds support for his views on the phenomena of merismus and antithesis in OT cosmology from the two works of J. Krašovec: *Der Merismus im Biblisch-Hebräischen und Nordwestsemitischen*, BibOr 33 (Rome: Biblical Institute Press, 1977) and *Antithetic Structure in Biblical Hebrew Poetry*, VTSup 35 (Leiden: Brill, 1984). He observes that the OT use of the heaven-earth dualistic word pair conveys both a *Weltbild* and a *Weltanschauung* which are inherently related. He explains that

> when heaven is used with its "direct meaning" of the astral and atmospheric world, "heaven and earth" refers to the *Weltbild*, the physical cosmology of the world. Conversely, when heaven is used in its "symbolic" sense of the place of God's dwelling, "heaven and earth" refers to the *Weltanschauung*, or what we may term its "ontological cosmology." (Pennington, "Dualism in Old Testament Cosmology," 274–275)

[46]All OT texts cited are from the LXX. We are using *Vetus Testamentum Graecum: Auctoritate Academiae Scientiarum Gottingensis editum* (1931–) for the LXX texts and

use of κάτω with ἄνω along with their respective parallels γῆ and οὐρανός and antithetical use of κάτω / γῆ with ἄνω / οὐρανός. This reflects the semantic relationship of ἄνω with οὐρανός and κάτω with γῆ. The use of κόσμος in reference to elements that are in the οὐρανός (cf. e.g., Deut. 4:19; 17:3; Sir. 43:9; Isa. 13:10; 24:21) is worth mentioning as well. The LXX makes it clear, moreover, that οὐρανός is the dwelling place of God (1 Kgs. 8:30; 2 Chr. 6:21; 2 Macc. 3:39) and that γῆ is for humans (Ps. 115:16) while also emphasizing that the Lord is ὁ θεός of both heaven and earth (Deut. 4:39; 10:14; Jos. 2:11; Ps. 89:11; 113:11; cf. Ps. 139:8). In this last usage, κάτω and ἄνω are used to express a bipartite cosmology and to signify in a merismatic sense God's lordship of all creation, inclusive of the space above and the space below and all that they contain.[47] We thus see the use of binary language in the above texts as expressing an OT bipartite *Weltbild* while pointing at the same time to a *Weltanschauung* of God's lordship over all.

Going back to John 8:23, we recall its use of the spatial categories ἄνω / οὐκ ἐκ τοῦ κόσμου τούτου and κάτω / ἐκ τούτου τοῦ κόσμου which shows the following similarities when compared to that of the LXX: first, ἄνω and κάτω are juxtaposed to each other with regard to the surface structure; second, ἄνω refers to the dwelling place of the divine while κάτω to that of humans; and third, both are used as antithetical geographical markers, i.e., showing the separation of one from the other. Yet there are also noticeable differences nonetheless. First, the use of ἄνω and κάτω in 8:23 has, in contrast to the LXX, no explicit reference to God's creation. Second and in line with the first, John uses ἄνω and κάτω not in a merismatic sense to refer to the whole of creation[48] but in an antithetical geographical sense that

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A. Pietersma & B. Wright, eds., *A New English Translation of the Septuagint* (New York/Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007) for the English translation unless indicated otherwise.

[47]Cf. Wright, *The Early History of Heaven*, 53.

[48]Although John's use of κάτω and ἄνω in 8:23 does not reflect a merismus, he nonetheless continues the OT idea of God's lordship of all creation when

highlights the difference in location of two beings—Jesus and the Ἰουδαῖοι. Third, whereas the LXX generally considers ἄνω to be the dwelling place of God and κάτω as that of humans, 8:23 specifically locates Jesus's origin in the ἄνω (hence implying his divinity) and that of the Ἰουδαῖοι in the κάτω. The antithetical positioning of ἄνω with κάτω and Jesus's explicit statement that he comes from ἄνω while the Ἰουδαῖοι belong to the κάτω thus reflect a seemingly antithetical relationship between Jesus and the Ἰουδαῖοι. Fourth and last, John uses οὐρανός to refer to the dwelling place (or place of origin) of the Spirit (1:32), angelic beings (1:52), Jesus, the living bread (6:51), and of God (12:28) yet he curiously does not use it in a parallel construction in opposition to κόσμος; rather, he uses οὐκ ἐκ τοῦ κόσμου τούτου as the antithesis of ἐκ τούτου τοῦ κόσμου.

It may be safe, then, given these observations, to conclude that John follows the OT (LXX)[49] in using the binary pair ἄνω and κάτω while at the same time incorporating his own innovations. John varies and amplifies the LXX's cosmological use of the pair by using the parallel οὐκ ἐκ τοῦ κόσμου τούτου and ἐκ τούτου τοῦ κόσμου so that ἄνω and κάτω take on additional nuances other than being purely cosmological markers. The explicit addition of the pronouns ἐγώ and ὑμεῖς to ἄνω and κάτω, respectively, signals that these spatial markers are now to be interpreted vis-à-vis these personas and what they stand for.[50] In a language where the predicate often comes first,[51] the foregrounding of the subjects ὑμεῖς and ἐγώ followed by their respective spatial references shows that the emphasis of the verse is on the identity of the two juxtaposed subjects along with their places of origin. Jesus, who persistently claims to be one

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he announces in the Prologue that all things came into being through the λόγος and that without him not one thing came into being (1:3).

[49]Cf. footnote 35 above.

[50]This will be discussed further in the next section.

[51]Cf. A. Robertson (*A Grammar of the Greek New Testament in the Light of Historical Research*, 3rd ed. [London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1919], 417) who reasons that the "predicate first" structure occurs because the emphasis of the sentence usually lies in the predicate.

with the Father (8:38, 42), to be the Son who was sent by Him (6:38; 10:36), claims the same abode as that of God in 8:23. It only follows that they would have the same geographical origin—the place above, not the κόσμος below—given that Jesus claims oneness of identity with the Father.[52] The emphasis on coming from the ἄνω, therefore, strengthens the authentication of Jesus's identity as the Son of the Father. For just as the OT God is believed to be present both in the heavens and on the earth (cf. Ps. 139:7–8),[53] this claim does not negate Jesus's physical presence in the world below. Moreover, it is probable that John's use of binary cosmological language (κάτω / ἐκ τούτου τοῦ κόσμου and ἄνω / οὐκ ἐκ τοῦ κόσμου τούτου in Jn. 8:23) and Jesus's call to belief in 8:24 are, when read in the light of 3:16 and 20:31, a part of John's literary style to reflect the gospel's *Weltanschauung*, a worldview that continues the OT theme of a faithful God who loves and saves his people below (cf. e.g., Ps. 56:11; 144:18–20; Isa. 41:17; Jer. 29:11–13). Jesus, in other words, the One sent by the Father about whom 1:14 says ὁ λόγος σὰρξ ἐγένετο, continues the work of the Father in the world below (4:34; 9:4; 17:4) amid his being οὐκ ἐκ τοῦ κόσμου τούτου.

Having looked thus into the possible background of the cosmological language in 8:23, we shall now consider the text in its larger and immediate contexts.

3b. John 8:23 in Its Larger and Immediate Contexts

John 8:23 is situated within the immediate context of Jesus's conversation with the Ἰουδαῖοι (8:21–30), a pericope that is preceded by Jesus's tussle with the Φαρισαῖοι (8:12–20) regarding the validity of his claim to be the light of the world and which ends with an ominous reference to Jesus's arrest when his hour comes. It is followed by a dispute with the Ἰουδαῖοι (8:31–59) concerning issues of descent and

[52]That one's identity is connected to one's father and the latter's geographical origin is clearly demonstrated in 1:45 where Jesus is described as the son of Joseph who comes from Nazareth.

[53]This a merismatic use of heaven and Hades which signifies God's presence in all places.

which results in name-calling (cf. 8:44, 48) and, finally, their intent to throw stones at Jesus (8:59). The larger context (8:12–59), in a nutshell, contains three accounts of Jesus's encounter with groups of people—identified as the Φαρισαῖοι (8:12–20), Ἰουδαῖοι (8:21–30), and Ἰουδαῖοι—who had (initially) believed in him (8:31–59) and whose discussions center on the question of Jesus's identity.[54]

The unity, continuity, and progression of the narrative can be seen in the various themes that run throughout these three encounters. First, the theme of Jesus's origin is present in vv. 14, 21–23, and 42—he claims knowledge of his whence and whither in v. 14, describes his origin and destination in terms of spatial categories in vv. 21–23, and finally names his origin as from God in v. 42. Second, Jesus's oneness with the Father is expressed in vv. 19, 29, 42, and 55. Third, Jesus consistently claims to have been sent by the Father (vv. 16, 18, 26, and 42). Fourth, all three interlocutors are faced with the dilemma of neither knowing Jesus's identity (vv. 19, 25, and 53) nor understanding his words (vv. 19, 22, 27, and 43). Fifth, Jesus promises life (light) to those who believe in him (vv. 12, 24, and 51). Sixth and last, the theme of Jesus's invitation to faith in him is present in all three units (vv. 12, 24, and 46; cf. 30) with his proclamations as warrants. These six themes have Jesus's identity as an overarching concept—i.e., his proclamation of who he is as the light (v. 12), the one from above (v. 23) who is greater than Abraham (vv. 53 and 58), the Son of the Father whose identity will be fully revealed when he is lifted up (v. 28)—along with the consequences for those who accept or refuse such a proclamation.

How does 8:23 fit into this larger context? Jesus's dialogue partners in 8:21 are the Ἰουδαῖοι, and he announces his departure to where they cannot follow. It is curious, then, that instead of being worried by Jesus's weighty pronouncement that they will die in their sins, the Ἰουδαῖοι focus on Jesus's "going away" and wonder if he will kill

[54]We are subdividing 8:12–59 into the following sub-units: 1) 8:12–20; 2) 8:21–30; and 3) 8:31–59 based on narrative markers, e.g., Jesus's interactions with three different groups of interlocutors, the narrator's concluding statement after each interaction, and thematic coherence. Cf. Brown, *The Gospel According to John*, 1: 202.

himself.[55] Jesus's restatement of ἐν τῇ ἁμαρτίᾳ ὑμῶν ἀποθανεῖσθε in 8:21 and twice in 8:24 (with the plural ἁμαρτίαι) regarding the impending predicament of the Ἰουδαῖοι should they remain in their unbelief, however, brings the focus of the conversation back to their plight. Instead of giving a response to the question μήτι ἀποκτενεῖ ἑαυτόν (8:22), Jesus gives a parallel statement about his place of origin (ἐκ τῶν ἄνω, οὐκ ἐκ τοῦ κόσμου τούτου) and contrasts this with that of the Ἰουδαῖοι who are ἐκ τῶν κάτω, ἐκ τούτου τοῦ κόσμου (8:23). Jesus thus gives them the reason why they cannot go to where he will be going (cf. 8:22)—they come from two distinct places. He also seems to be telling them, moreover, to worry about themselves and not him. Indeed, why should they worry about him when he is from above, i.e., divine, and his death is but his glorification (8:28)? They ought instead to be concerned about themselves because they are from below, from this world, a place John characterizes as a place of sin (1:29) and death (cf. 4:47). Nevertheless, the Ἰουδαῖοι shall have a way out of their impending predicament should they believe in Jesus (8:24) even though they each come from distinct places.

The word pair ἄνω and κάτω and its parallel highlight the separation and distance of one space and its inhabitants from the other. John, however, was able to emphasize, through the separation and distance engendered by the cosmological language, that those from the κάτω need salvation from someone who comes from the ἄνω. The parallel spatial antithetic language in 8:23 functions to reinforce Jesus's proclamation of his identity while persuasively creating at the same time the paramount need to believe in him, for only in doing so will those from the κάτω be able to go to where Jesus is going (cf. 14:2) and not die in their sins (8:24; cf. 5:24; 8:51–52). We can thus say that the bipartite cosmological language in 8:23 is, along with having an explicit Christological affirmation (i.e., the whence and whither of Jesus), at the service of the Gospel's soteriological

[55]See 7:34–36 for a similar pronouncement which also resulted in a misunderstanding.

proclamation.[56] Indeed, the gospel's explicit purpose statement in 20:31 clearly supports the emphasis on Jesus's salvific mission. John has to emphasize the other-worldly origin of Jesus for only the One who is from the Father can save those who are from below.[57] To raise the issue of docetism vis-à-vis John's binary cosmological language in this context, then, would fail to ask the appropriate question.

Having thus examined its larger and immediate contexts, we will now identify other literary markers that will further aid our understanding of 8:23.

3c. Spatial Plane Point-of-View Analysis of John 8:23

G. Yamasaki maintains that the narrator of a biblical narrative uses some subtle strategies to put her evaluative stance across to the audience[58] and, in the process, influence the reader to sympathize with it.[59] M. Sternberg identifies fifteen such persuasion strategies, and from these Yamasaki considers point-of-view manipulation to be "perhaps a narrator's most powerful and most versatile tool for impacting an audience's evaluation of characters in a story."[60] Building

[56]F. Moloney ("The Johannine Son of Man," *BTB* 6:2–3 [1976]: 184) has rightly perceived 8:21–30 to be a last-ditch effort from Jesus to invite an unbelieving audience to believe in him.

[57]M. Hengel ("Christological Titles in Early Christianity," in *Studies in Early Christology* [Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1995], 366–367) is right to claim that John's emphasis on the divinity of Jesus beginning from the Prologue (Jn. 1:1) until the end of the gospel (Jn. 20:28), together with Jesus's self-declaration in the middle (Jn. 10:30), reveals that the goal of the entire gospel is "personal faith and its confession" (cf. 20:31).

[58]We are using the word "audience" to encompass both reader and hearer.

[59]G. Yamasaki, *Perspective Criticism: Point of View and Evaluative Guidance in Biblical Narrative* (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2012), 6.

[60]Yamasaki, *Perspective Criticism*, 7. The fourteen remaining strategies which M. Sternberg (*The Poetics of Biblical Narrative: Ideological Literature and the Drama of Reading*, Indiana Literary Biblical Series [Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1985],

on P. Lubbock's description,[61] Yamasaki compares the narrator who uses spatial plane point-of-view strategy to a tour guide who spatially positions the audience at certain vantage points in the story (e.g., in relation to a particular character) and, in so doing, creates either a bond or distance between the audience and the character.[62] The narrator uses techniques such as having the reader follow a character closely,[63] giving syntactic prominence to a character,[64] or providing significant details.[65]

In the previous section, we identified themes running through 8:12–59 that focus on the identity of Jesus. Of the ten verses comprising 8:21–30, ἐγώ in reference to Jesus as subject is used ten times and twice

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475–481) identified are: 1) an agent or action described through a series of epithets; 2) use of a single epithet; 3) use of loaded language; 4) explicit judgment between narrator and characters being left ambiguous; 5) delegating judgment to the characters; 6) judgment through nonverbal (drastic) acts; 7) foregrounding plot elements for judgment; 8) repetition of information; 9) inside view of characters; 10) order of presentation; 11) displacement of the normal order of presentation; 12) analogical patterning; 13) recurrence of key words; and 14) neutral or pseudo-objective narration.

[61]P. Lubbock (*The Craft of Fiction* [London: Jonathan Cape, 1921], 251) defines point of view as "the relation in which the narrator stands to the story."

[62]Yamasaki, *Perspective Criticism*, 10, 18. The creation of this impact depends on whether the former is being led to merge with the latter or if the audience is being "held at arm's length" from the character so that he or she is but an observer in the goings on in the narrative (Yamasaki, *Perspective Criticism*, 10).

[63]Yamasaki, *Perspective Criticism*, 19. In this strategy, the very close positioning of the reader to the character enables the former to see or experience the situation in the same way the character does (Yamasaki, *Perspective Criticism*, 19). Yamasaki cites the four gospels' portrayal of Jesus as clearly utilizing this strategy (*Perspective Criticism*, 21).

[64]Adapting the insights of S. Kuno (*Functional Syntax: Anaphora, Discourse and Empathy* [Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1987]) to biblical studies, Yamasaki opines that the reader develops empathy with the character who is the subject of the clause, i.e., the character that is usually in the first noun phrase (*Perspective Criticism*, 25–26).

[65]Yamasaki, *Perspective Criticism*, 28–30.

in the expression ἐγώ εἰμι (8:26, 28).[66] There are only two verses where the Ἰουδαῖοι speak (the misunderstanding in 8:22 and the question in 8:25), leaving the rest for Jesus's self-proclamations (8:21, 23, 24, 26, 28, and 29).[67] The use of the title ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου (8:28) and the claim to have been sent by the Father (8:26, 29), meanwhile, provide more details on the identity of Jesus alongside his earlier claim to have come from above and not from this world.

Given all these narrative markers, the narrator is clearly making Jesus the point-of-view character, thereby leading the reader to follow him more closely and listen to him as he parries with the Ἰουδαῖοι. Upon hearing Jesus's solemn and definitive proclamations coupled with the assurance of deliverance from death (8:24) vis-à-vis the ignorance and lack of knowledge of the Ἰουδαῖοι (8:19, 22, and 25), the reader is moved to empathize with him, make a stand for him, and aspire for that place above where he comes from. R. Bultmann is right, therefore, to argue for the presence of *Entscheidungsdualismus* in John.[68] This, however, is not just a choice between two things that possess equal weight. The descriptions of the world below (darkness, death, etc.) already militate against it in favor of the world of Jesus above. The binary cosmological statement in 8:23 has a two-fold rhetorical function: it bespeaks the identity of Jesus (cf. σὺ τίς εἶ in Jn. 8:25) and what this identity entails for those who are from below (cf. 8:24). John employs OT cosmological language to present the identity of Jesus as a divine being, an identity that is inseparable from his soteriological function.

Does this narrative style make John docetic? A negative answer is perhaps best captured in the words of G. O' Day when she wrote that

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[66]Conversely, the expression ἐγώ οὐκ εἰμι is also used in reference to Jesus (cf. 8:23).

[67]John 8 vv. 27 and 30 are parentheses.

[68]Cf. R. Bultmann, *Theology of the New Testament* Vol. 1, trans. K. Grobel (London: SCM, 1965), 21.

"any studies of Johannine revelation that ignore the form, style, and mode of Johannine revelatory language will always miss the mark."[69]

4. Excursus

While word order may be deemed of little significance in a language that uses case-endings, J. Heimerdinger argues that the author who may be free from grammatical concerns still faces semantic and pragmatic constraints such that he cannot just move words around as he or she pleases.[70] These constraints are due to both the functions that words are supposed to play in a sentence and the purpose of the sentence where these words occur.[71] In short, whatever function the author intends the words or sentence to have in the narrative influences the ordering of words.[72]

John 8:23 presents two different word orders for the prepositional phrase involving κόσμος: ἐκ τούτου τοῦ κόσμου (A1) and ἐκ τοῦ κόσμου τούτου (B1), with the demonstrative οὗτος functioning as an adjective that modifies κόσμος. These phrases complement the verb to which they are respectively attached: where the subject is ὑμεῖς (the Ἰουδαῖοι), οὗτος is pre-positioned and is closer to the subject; where the subject is ἐγώ (Jesus), οὗτος is post-positioned to κόσμος and is

[69]G. O'Day, "Narrative Mode and Theological Claim: A Study in the Fourth Gospel," *JBL* 105:4 (1986): 662.

[70]J. Heimerdinger, "Word Order in Koine Greek: Using a Text-Critical Approach to Study Word Order Patterns in the Greek Text of Acts," *Filologia Neotestamentaria* 9 (1996): 140.

[71]Heimerdinger, "Word Order in Koine Greek," 140.

[72]According to Sternberg (*The Poetics of Biblical Narrative*, 1), "biblical narrative is oriented to an addressee and regulated by a purpose or a set of purposes involving the addressee. Hence our primary business as readers is to make purposive sense of it, so as to explain the *what's* and the *how's* in terms of the *why's* of communication."

farther from the subject. What immediately follows the subject ἐγώ, moreover, is the negating adverb οὐκ.

ὑμεῖς ἐκ τούτου τοῦ κόσμου ἐστέ,
ἐγὼ οὐκ εἰμὶ ἐκ τοῦ κόσμου τούτου.

We mentioned earlier that the foregrounding of the subjects in the two clauses signals the importance of the prepositional phrases in the narrative. When ὑμεῖς (the Jews) is the subject, the demonstrative adjective (οὗτος) is positioned before the noun it modifies (κόσμος). This is significant because in Koine Greek the demonstrative adjective is usually placed after the noun it modifies.[73] This "front-shifting" of the demonstrative adjective in ἐκ τούτου τοῦ κόσμου thus highlights "*this* world" to be the world of the addressees.[74] The proximity οὗτος to ὑμεῖς emphasizes the relationship of the Jews with "*this* world" and not just with any other world.[75] Conversely, when ἐγώ (Jesus) is the subject, the demonstrative adjective (οὗτος) is positioned after the noun (κόσμος) at the very end of the clause! The negation with οὐκ as well as the distancing of οὗτος from ἐγώ widely dissociates Jesus from "*this* world;"[76] he comes from another κόσμος (cf. Jn. 17:14).

[73]N. Turner, *A Grammar of New Testament Greek* Vol. III, Syntax (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1963), 193. While Turner attributes the postposition to Hebrew influence, Heimerdinger ("Word Order in Koine Greek," 142) opines that attributing word order to foreign influence is problematic since languages vary in their word order patterns and authors face constraints (e.g., the emphasis they want to express through the words which reflects their intention) in the ordering of words. Without discounting the influence of foreign languages on Koine, Heimerdinger pleads for caution in positing Semitic influence on Koine word order ("Word Order in Koine Greek," 142). Nevertheless, she accepts with certainty the Semitic influence on Koine noun phrase word order, i.e., noun-adjective ("Word Order in Koine Greek," 143).

[74]Cf. Heimerdinger, "Word Order in Koine Greek," 144.

[75]Cf. Heimerdinger ("Word Order in Koine Greek," 167) where she explains the emphatic value of the demonstrative pronoun when it precedes the noun.

[76]Cf. T. Givón (*Syntax: An Introduction* Vol. 1 [Amsterdam/Philadelphia, PA: John Benjamins, 2001], 370) who claims that negative assertions are "equally *strong assertions*, i.e. used in psychological context of high certainty and high evidential

Indeed, the variation in the positioning of οὗτος in 8:23 further attests to John's literary finesse in putting across the identity of Jesus vis-à-vis that of the people in this world.

5. Conclusion

In this article, we looked at the binary cosmological language in John 8:23 (ἄνω - κάτω and its parallel οὐκ ἐκ τοῦ κόσμου τούτου - ἐκ τούτου τοῦ κόσμου) and examined it in relation to Käsemann's claim that this gospel contains naively docetic elements. Our exploration revealed that John's use of this parallel binary language in 8:23 reflects not only his OT (LXX) heritage but also his literary prowess. Contextual and rhetorical analyses of 8:23 reveal how this binary language is used at the service of the gospel's Christological and soteriological proclamation. With the antithesis engendered by these binary pairs, John was able to emphasize the identity of Jesus as the One sent by the Father while making those from below realize, at the same time, their true identity and concommitant need for the salvation that will be effected only by the One who comes from above. It is perhaps sound to conclude, then, with these results, that the binary cosmological language in 8:23 is part and parcel of John's revelatory scheme. A docetic interpretation of this binary language thus reflects a fragmented reading of the gospel which does not give due consideration to John's narrative style and purpose. The evangelist has to present Jesus as a divine being who comes from above, one who is οὐκ ἐκ τοῦ κόσμου τούτου, in order to establish the ground for his salvific proclamation which only a fully incarnated divine being can accomplish.[77] John could not have done it any other way.

support." He further adds that negative assertions are "typically made on the tacit assumption that the hearer either has heard about, believes in, is likely to take for granted, or is at least familiar with the corresponding affirmative" (Givón, *Syntax,* 371).

[77]Cf. Schnelle, *Antidocetic Christology*, 229.

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THE MISSION-VISION OF JOHN PAUL II IN *REDEMPTORIS MISSIO*

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2019 marks the commemoration of a significant mission document of the Church—it is the 100th anniversary of Pope Benedict XV's *Maximum Illud*, the first mission encyclical of the modern era. The Church also recalls that it is the 60th anniversary of St. John XXIII's 1959 announcement of the Second Vatican Council, which gave us the mission decree *Ad Gentes*. The renewal of missionary evangelization continued with St. Paul VI's *Evangelii Nuntiandi* (EN; 1975) and St. John Paul II's *Redemptoris Missio* (RM; 1990), two documents that have had a pivotal effect on the "mission consciousness" of the contemporary Church. Finally, Pope Francis made another significant contribution in more recent times with his masterpiece *Evangelii Gaudium*, issued on November 24, 2013, the feast of Christ the King.

This modest reflection, which focuses on a mission document written by one of the three "saint-popes" (John XXIII, Paul VI, and John Paul II) of the Vatican II era, will attempt to capture the highlights of *Redemptoris Missio*, which was authored by John Paul II (canonized April 27, 2014). It will be a medium-length presentation—although the original document in the text issued by the Vatican runs to 153 pages—and will seek to manifest the enduring importance of RM for the Church's commitment to missionary evangelization in the contemporary world.

Introduction of the Author. When he was elected pope on October 16, 1978, Karol Jósef Wojtyla took the name John Paul II. Under his leadership, the papal ministry focused on evangelization and global mission as he traveled to numerous countries, strengthened local Christian communities, encountered followers of other religions, spoke on the social teachings of the Church, canonized saints, honored blesseds, and met with youth and government leaders. The contributions of this 264th pope of the Catholic Church, whose pontificate extended for over 26 years (1978-2005), are remarkable indeed.

When John Paul II died on April 2, 2005, the fact sheet from Reuters News noted some remarkable statistics about his pontificate. He traveled a total of 775,231 miles around the world, or 3.24 times the distance from the earth to the moon. He read aloud more than 20,000 addresses before audiences in the millions, and issued more than 100 major documents as pope, including 14 encyclicals, 45 apostolic letters, 14 apostolic exhortations, and 11 apostolic constitutions. John Paul II also beatified 1,338 people and canonized 482 saints, more than all of his predecessors in the last four centuries combined.

John Paul II asserted that the Second Vatican Council set the direction for his papacy. He noted in 2000 that the

> Second Vatican Ecumenical Council has been a gift of the Spirit to his Church. For this reason it remains a fundamental event, not only for understanding the Church's history at this end of the century, but first and foremost for exploring the abiding presence of the risen Christ beside his Bride in … world events.

In 2002, the fortieth anniversary of the beginning of the Council, he observed:

> I had the grace of participating in that event and in my heart I hold valuable and unforgettable memories.… The Council documents … have not lost their value nor their brilliance.… In the Council we have received a sure compass to guide us on the path of the century that is beginning.

The dates of John Paul II's beatification (May 1, 2011) and canonization (April 27, 2014) were marked by the feast of the

Divine Mercy. He had a deep commitment to this devotion as it was propagated by Sr. Faustina Kowalska, a fellow Pole. One can also note its intimate link with mission, for is not missionary evangelization all about proclaiming God's abundant love, compassion, and mercy? Mission is grounded in being so filled with God's loving mercy that one wishes to proclaim it to the world. Mission makes God's merciful love present and contagious.

One of the major emphases of John Paul II was, without a doubt, his focus on the renewal of the Church in her missionary identity and commitment. When his mission encyclical *Redemptoris Missio* (Mission of the Redeemer) was published on December 7, 1990 (on the 25th anniversary of *Ad Gentes* [AG], the mission document of Vatican II), Cardinal Daneels of Brussels wrote: "This document best exemplifies who this pope is; it is the fruit of his mission in every continent. There is nothing better to define his pontificate than to say: he is a missionary pope."

St. John Paul II did everything in his power to renew mission, asserting that mission is at the heart of the Church: "the Church here on earth is missionary by her very nature" (AG 2). He was deeply convinced that "missionary activity renews the Church, revitalizes faith and Christian identity, and offers fresh enthusiasm and new incentive. *Faith is strengthened when it is given to others!"* (RM 2).

Although one could add more to the "statistics" of John Paul II that were noted earlier in this essay, these already have a much deeper significance: they reflect his extraordinary commitment to mission. He used *every opportunity* to spread the message and person of Jesus; indeed, "JP2" was an extraordinary apostle of Jesus Christ! This presentation thus turns to sketching a synthetic overview of *Redemptoris Missio*, St. John Paul II's mission encyclical written to commemorate the 25th anniversary of Vatican II's *Ad Gentes* (1965-1990).

Gift of a Mission Encyclical. John Paul II's eighth encyclical, *Redemptoris Missio* was issued on December 7, 1990 in the thirteenth year of his pontificate. In RM, the pope sounds an urgent clarion call to all Church sectors to renew their enthusiasm and commitment to

the evangelization of the world. Composed of eight chapters plus an introduction (1-3) and conclusion (92), RM has a "doctrinal" section (4-30) and a "pastoral" section (31-91) which treat the "why" and "how," respectively, of contemporary missionary evangelization.

John Paul II begins by stating his conviction about "the *urgency of missionary activity*, a subject to which [he is] devoting the present Encyclical" (1). The pope asserts that "missionary activity specifically directed *ad gentes* [to the nations] appears to be waning," and that this fact "must arouse concern among all who believe in Christ." Why? Because "in the Church's history, missionary drive has always been a sign of vitality, just as its lessening is a sign of a crisis of faith" (2).

The pope thus urges a "fresh impulse to missionary activity," the deepening of the "commitment of the particular Churches," and the harnessing of "all of the Church's energies [for] a new evangelization" (2-3). The focus of John Paul II, in a word, is direct and clear: "I wish to invite the Church to *renew her missionary commitment"* (2). All are invited to participate: "*Peoples everywhere, open the doors to Christ!"* (3).

Vision of Evangelization. What view of evangelization emerges from a comprehensive analysis of RM? The document speaks repeatedly of mission, evangelization, and salvation in a holistic fashion: "Jesus came to bring integral salvation, one which embraces the whole person" (11); "evangelical witness … is directed towards integral human development" (42); "action on behalf of integral development and liberation … is most urgently needed" (58).

As affirmed repeatedly in the encyclical (20, 41-60), integral evangelization reflects current missiological thought as well as recent magisterial teaching. Paul VI clearly encouraged Catholics to view evangelization holistically in EN, and speaks in the second chapter of the complexity of the evangelizing action and of its various complementary and mutually enriching elements. RM echoes this vision: "Mission is a single but complex reality, and it develops in a variety of ways" (41). It "is one and undivided, having one origin and one final purpose; but within it, there are different tasks and kinds of activity" (31). Such is the understanding of evangelization that the pope consistently promotes throughout RM.

Foundational Mission Theology. The years following the Second Vatican Council were a golden opportunity to explore, debate, renew, and clarify the Church's mission, and it is true that the Council "has already borne much fruit in the realm of missionary activity.… Above all, there is a new awareness that *missionary activity is a matter for all Christians"* (2). John Paul II, however, discerned a need to reaffirm diverse aspects of the Catholic Church's foundational theology of Christian mission and evangelization. RM thus clearly affirms the foundations of mission theology as well as the centrality and urgency of mission in the life of the Church.

At least one third of the encyclical (three chapters out of eight) deals with theological questions. Chapter One includes core elements of the dogmatic theology of revelation and faith, Christology and soteriology, and ecclesiology and missiology. Chapter Two focuses on biblical theology, particularly the Kingdom of God. Chapter Three, to the delight of missiologists, is completely devoted to pneumatology, examining the role of the Holy Spirit in the life of the Church and her evangelizing mission.

The following are key emphases in the opening chapter: **(a)** All mission is centered in God's wonderful, generous, and loving plan of salvation (*mysterion*), made known through Jesus and accepted in faith; Jesus is the "definitive self-revelation of God" and "the fundamental reason why the Church is missionary by her very nature" (5). **(b)** While affirming the universality of salvation with the Scriptures (1 Tim. 2:4), "the Church believes that God has established Christ as the one mediator and that it has been established as the universal sacrament of salvation" (9). **(c)** The Pope unhesitatingly reaffirms these fundamentals of Church teaching, noting that "*mission is an issue of faith"* (11).

The biblical theme of the Kingdom (*basileia*) is the integrating leitmotif of the second chapter. Preaching the Kingdom and promoting its values are the evangelizing tasks of the Church, which is "effectively and concretely at the service of the Kingdom" (20). The encyclical, moreover, offers clarity on and interpretation of other dimensions of Kingdom theology: that the Kingdom of God and the Christ-event are

complementary proclamations (16); that the Kingdom necessarily has a transcendent horizon (17); that the Kingdom "cannot be detached either from Christ or from the Church" (18); and that theocentrism and ecclesiocentrism demand a nuanced critique that is consistent with Church teaching (17-18).

The theology of the Holy Spirit (pneumatology) is currently of particular interest to missiologists and missionaries alike. "The Holy Spirit is indeed the principal agent of the whole of the Church's mission of evangelization. The Holy Spirit's action is preeminent in mission *ad gentes"* (21). This centrality of the Spirit is emphasized because the Spirit's "presence and activity affect not only individuals but also society and history, peoples, cultures and religions" (28). Ask any missionary, in fact, and you will receive eloquent personal testimony that the presence and power of the Spirit is active in peoples, cultures, and religions, renewing the face of the earth! The acts of today's apostles continuously write the Gospel of the Holy Spirit!

Transmitting the Urgency of Mission. The English subtitle of *Redemptoris Missio* is "On the Permanent Validity of the Church's Missionary Mandate." Mission is thus, always and everywhere, essential; it is "not considered a marginal task for the Church but is situated at the center of her life, as a fundamental commitment of the whole People of God" (32). Mission is "the greatest and holiest duty of the Church" (63). As such, the following affirmations of the pope resonate throughout the work: "I have chosen to travel to the ends of the earth in order to show this missionary concern" (1); "mission *ad gentes* is still in its infancy" (40); "I see the dawning of a new missionary age" (92).

Yet while no one seeks to minimize the pope's assertions concerning the centrality and urgency of missionary evangelization, it is valid to ask questions about strategies for implementation. Words of exhortation must give way to programs of concrete actualization. In the considered judgment of this author, the encyclical as such is strong on the *why* of mission but is only moderately successful with regard to the *how*. Mission animation—the *how* of mission—requires continued discussion indeed. It is best accomplished locally, within the

local Church, although one can highlight some creative suggestions found within RM.

That the Christian family is a key and irreplaceable force in evangelization (42) is an insight that is consistent with the teaching of Vatican II, which termed the family the "domestic church" (*Lumen Gentium* [LG] 11). Promoting Christian family life should redound to mission awareness and animation. Indeed, while material and financial donations are gratefully accepted, families are challenged to offer "a special contribution to the missionary cause of the Church by fostering missionary vocations among their sons and daughters" (80).

The pope saint also challenges Christians: do you wish to promote mission? True disciples are urged to "carry out a sincere review of their lives regarding their solidarity with the poor" (60). We as followers of Jesus "should reassess our own way of living" (81) and "fight hunger by changing [our] lifestyle" (59). "We cannot preach conversion unless we ourselves are converted anew every day" (47).

The role of missionary institutes and societies is crucial in worldwide evangelization. Missionaries themselves should continue their "radical and total self-giving," initiate "new and bold endeavors," and "not allow themselves to be daunted by doubts, misunderstanding, rejection or persecution" (66). Diocesan seminarians and priests "must have the mind and heart of missionaries" (67), and the Church must seek to expand the spheres "in which lay people are present and active as missionaries" (72). Missionary dynamism should become contagious!

The involvement of the youth is also essential to mission and evangelization. They should be offered opportunities to visit overseas missions as well as meet and offer hospitality to non-Christians and migrants within their own country (82). The idealism of youth—their rejection of violence and war as well as of racism and closed nationalism, desire for freedom and justice, and affirmation of the dignity and role of women (86)—is a potential resource. The vision of Charles de Foucauld as a "universal brother" can also fire the imagination of the youth (89) and serve as a path toward missionary commitment.

Additional Major Emphases. In composing a popular overview of a papal encyclical, one faces the challenge of providing a balanced presentation. This writer thus sees several other major emphases on evangelization within *Redemptoris Missio;* he devotes a paragraph to each theme (indicated in italics).

Local Churches around the world are the central actors in mission today. All evangelization is accomplished harmoniously and necessarily in, with, and through the local Church, which is responsible for the totality of mission. This is a sea change in the dynamics of mission, and both local Churches and missionaries alike must explore the ramifications of this new reality. Many leads are found in the encyclical (26, 30, 39, 48-52, 62-64, 71, 83-85, 92).

Authentic evangelization is a *freely-offered gift*, not an external imposition that violates human dignity and freedom. Witnessing and proclaiming Christ are not at odds with the dignity of human beings as persons or their freedom of conscience (7-8). Rather than restrict freedom, genuine mission seeks to advance it. RM is clear: "*The Church proposes; she imposes nothing*" (39).

The Church needs *missionary vocations*. Individuals who receive the permanent, life-long vocation to foreign, transcultural mission are her treasured resource. Their vocation is necessary for the Church (32); it is a unique calling (27, 65), the model of the Church's missionary commitment (66), and is to be assiduously cultivated (79, 84), particularly by mission institutes themselves (65-66).

The encyclical looks positively upon *interreligious dialogue*, devoting several sections to its comprehensive presentation (55-57). Interfaith dialogue "is part of the Church's evangelizing mission … [it] is not in opposition to the mission *ad gentes* … [and] *does not dispense from evangelization*." Indeed, this section (55) speaks of God's call to all peoples and God's presence to them "of which their religions are the main and essential expression." The Church's reverence for the followers of other faiths and religions is clearly affirmed as such by the encyclical.

Women receive the pope's praise and gratitude in RM for their outstanding contribution to evangelization: "I extend a special word

of appreciation to the missionary religious sisters" (70). "How can we forget the important role played by women" (71)? "It is necessary to recognize—and it is a title of honor—that some Churches owe their origins to the activity of lay men and women missionaries" (71).

The process of *inculturation* and its relationship to mission receive extensive treatment (25, 52-54, 76). Authentic evangelization involves the Church in the inculturation process, an "intimate transformation of authentic cultural values through their integration in Christianity and the insertion of Christianity in the various human cultures" (52). This task is never finished, and it encounters new challenges today especially in large cities "where new customs and styles of living arise together with new forms of culture and communication" (37). Mission and inculturation demand fresh initiatives and creativity in the complex age of the megalopolis!

The entire final chapter of *Redemptoris Missio* treats of *missionary spirituality* (87-91). Four elements characterize Jesus's disciples-turned-missionaries: the missionary is to be led by the Spirit, live the mystery of Christ who himself was sent, love the Church and humanity as Jesus did, and desire the holiness of saints. Mission spirituality, in a word, is "a journey towards holiness" (90) while the success of renewing the urgency of the Church's missionary impulse "demands holy missionaries" (90).

Precious Details—Not to be Lost. In a work as long as RM, one expects to find several details that demand further reflection. This synthesis presentation takes note of five additional themes (indicated in italics) and their importance for evangelization.

The *personalist philosophy* and orientation of John Paul II is manifest throughout the work. The person is always central in evangelization and in all mission apostolates: in working for justice (42), fostering interreligious dialogue (55-57), and promoting development. The human person "is the principal agent of development, not money or technology" (58). The missionary, in uniquely personalist terms, is described as "a person of the Beatitudes" (91), and it is personal love that is always "*the driving force of mission"* (60).

The encyclical profusely expresses the *Church's gratitude* to its missionaries (2, 57, 60, 70). Her theologians also provide an important service for the cause of evangelization (36), and are called to promote the study of world religions and the science of missiology (83). There is a need as well for the Church to renew her commitment to ecumenism within mission (50).

Looking at today's world from the viewpoint of evangelization, the document distinguishes *three* demographics: peoples of other faiths, Christians requiring pastoral care, and the so-called "post-Christians"; all require unique approaches (32-34). In terms of geography, moreover, the pope emphasizes the missionary demands within Asia (37, 55, 91).

Significant and surprising is the fact that *one unique quote* appears verbatim no less than three times in the text (6, 10, 28): "we are obliged to hold that the Holy Spirit offers everyone the possibility of sharing in the Paschal Mystery in a manner known to God." One certainly cannot take to be mistaken the pope's assertion that God's loving plan of salvation includes each and every person!

Evangelization as "*God's work*" (24) is clearly affirmed; it is based "not on human abilities but on the power of the Risen Lord" (23). Missionaries are conscious that they owe their faith and vocations "not to their own merits but to Christ's special grace" (11). They must believe that "it is not we who are the principal agents of the Church's mission, but Jesus Christ and his Spirit" (36). Indeed, a missioner's faith journey "proceeds along *the path* already trodden by the Virgin Mary" (92).

Paul VI wrote fifteen years earlier (1975) that the modern person "listens more willingly to witnesses than to teachers, and if [she or he] does listen to teachers, it is because they are witnesses" (EN 41). This passage is recalled in *Redemptoris Missio* (42), and it must remain a central focus if the Church wishes to respond "with generosity and holiness to the calls and challenges of our time" (92).

Integral Evangelization: A Synthetic Overview. This essay has consciously limited itself to one pivotal document on mission and evangelization. John Paul II's *Redemptoris Missio* is a microcosm for understanding missionary evangelization; the pope without a doubt

gifted the Church with a rich understanding of the theology and praxis of missionary evangelization during his lengthy pontificate. However, can the discussion be taken further?

Much enlightenment can be drawn from two documents issued by the Secretariat for Non-Christians (founded in 1964 by Paul VI and renamed in 1988 as the Pontifical Council for Interreligious Dialogue). On Pentecost Sunday in 1984, the Secretariat promulgated the document entitled "The Attitude of the Church toward the Followers of Other Religions: Reflections and Orientations on Dialogue and Mission" (DM). Hidden in this little-known work on the interrelationship between dialogue and mission is a pivotal statement. The source affirms that mission and evangelization are understood "in the consciousness of the Church as a single but complex and articulated reality" (13).

The Pontifical Council for Interreligious Dialogue, in conjunction with the Congregation for the Evangelization of Peoples, then presented the document "Dialogue and Proclamation: Reflections and Orientations on Interreligious Dialogue and the Proclamation of the Gospel of Jesus Christ" (DP) on Pentecost Sunday in 1991. There, once again, the evangelizing mission of the Church is understood as a "single but complex and articulated reality" (2).

These two documents (DM and DP) emphasize the unity and integral nature of evangelization while affirming at the same time that evangelization necessarily comprises many dimensions, that it is a complex reality. They assert, in addition, that this multi-faceted concept can be explained, articulated, and elaborated.

Identifying Various Elements of Integral Evangelization. Despite their lengthy and complex titles, these two documents just mentioned have added considerable clarity to a Catholic understanding of missionary evangelization. This results from the fact that specific "principal elements" are named—mission and evangelization are composed of: **(a)** personal presence and witness of life; **(b)** commitment to social development and human liberation; **(c)** interreligious or interfaith dialogue; **(d)** explicit Gospel proclamation and catechesis;

and **(e)** liturgical life, prayer, and contemplation (cf. DM 13 and DP 2). The one evangelizing mission of the Church is, in a word, comprised of several component elements that form an integral whole. This is holistic evangelization; this is—in compact expression—the wide view of evangelization promoted by John Paul II in RM.

This five-point vision has served the Church well over the past decades. It expresses the thought of John Paul II in *Redemptoris Missio* (and in DM and DP) in a manner that ordinary Catholics can readily grasp and appreciate without at the same time doing violence to the richness and complexity of missionary evangelization. Surely one can easily perceive that the thought expressed in RM is adequately captured in this five-point schema. Employing it, in turn, enables smooth maneuvering through lengthy papal documents. Indeed, viewing evangelization through its various essential dimensions results in clarity, insight, and proper integration. This, without a doubt, is the current Catholic vision of evangelization!

Further Discussion of the Five Elements. Additional insight into the integral nature of evangelization is attained by relating these five principal elements of evangelization specifically with the mission documents of recent popes: John Paul II's *Redemptoris Missio*, Paul VI's *Evangelii Nuntiandi*, and Francis's *Evangelii Gaudium* (EG). Such an exercise illustrates the integral nature of the Church's task of evangelization as captured by Paul VI when he described evangelization as "bringing the Good News into all strata of humanity" (EN 18), a holistic insight which John Paul II undoubtedly affirms.

Christian presence and witness of life form the "initial act of evangelization" (EN 21). Day-to-day activities, various duties in the community, living together and promoting harmony, and doing so as individuals of integrity—all these are to be a basic "faith-witness" that demonstrates how Christian living is shaped by Christian faith and values. Through this wordless witness, "Christians stir up irresistible questions in the hearts of those who see how they live" (EN 21). People today desire and respect authentic witnesses (cf. RM 11, 42; EN 41; EG 14, 20, 119-121, 149-151). Mother Teresa of Calcutta (canonized on September 4, 2016), for instance, who is known for her loving

and selfless care of the poorest of the poor, is a venerated "icon" of Christian presence, life, and service (*Ecclesia in Asia* 7).

Harmonious living as good neighbors based on faith convictions should issue naturally from a mutual *commitment to social development and human liberation* and the genuine service of humanity. This means serving the most unfortunate on the peripheries of society, witnessing to justice, and defending the integrity of creation. All dimensions of social concern are included here, ranging from peace-building, education, and health services to promoting family life and good government. Areas of social development or human promotion are vast fields indeed for the Church's evangelizing mission (cf. RM 58-60; EN 18-19, 29-33; EG 50-109, 181-185, 197-216).

Many of these evangelizing activities are necessarily inserted into specific contexts, and they naturally assume an interreligious dimension particularly in the Asian reality. Similar to most places in the world of today, the Church in Asia accomplishes her mission within pluralistic and diverse cultures. She enters into *interreligious* or *interfaith dialogue*, cooperating with the followers of the great religious traditions. Such dialogue takes many forms—there are the dialogues of daily life, deeds of service, religious experts, and faith experience as well as of other forms and approaches. John Paul II, moreover, asserts that "interreligious dialogue is a part of the Church's evangelizing mission" (RM 55). It emerges from one's faith convictions. Indeed, dialogue with religions and cultures is the truly appropriate Christian response in contemporary circumstances (cf. RM 52-54, 55-57; EN 20, 53; EG 115-118, 238-243, 250-254).

In mission and evangelization today, there is the role of *explicit Gospel proclamation and catechesis*. This dimension of evangelization involves preaching, catechesis on Christian life, and teaching and transmitting the content of the faith; in a word, it means "telling the Jesus story" and passing on the beautiful truths of the Christian faith. When the Holy Spirit opens the door and when the time is opportune, Christians do tell the Jesus story, giving explicit witness and testimony to the faith. Others are thus invited, in freedom of conscience, to follow and know Jesus. Christians themselves, moreover, are also further

instructed in their faith through various forms of proclamation. Such is the process by which the Christian faith is communicated to the next generation of believers (cf. RM 44-51; EN 22, 27, 42; EG 3, 12, 24, 110-111, 246).

Finally, integral-holistic evangelization will necessarily include *liturgical life*, *prayer*, *and contemplation*. No one can be engaged effectively in the Church's mission without a strong faith- and prayer-life. Spreading the fire of the Gospel will be accomplished only by those already burning with an experience of the Lord, and so evangelization needs holy women and men who are themselves on fire with the love of Christ. In a word, holiness is an irreplaceable condition for evangelizers. The "God-experience" in prayer and contemplation, in sacramental and liturgical life, will illumine and transform all other dimensions of evangelization (cf. RM 46-49, 87-92; EN 23, 43-44, 47; EG 47, 173, 259-288).

It is obvious that these five "principal elements" of an integral understanding of evangelization complement and reinforce each other. Paul VI, in speaking of the complexity of the Church's evangelizing action, gave a timely admonition: "Any partial and fragmentary definition which attempts to render the reality of evangelization in all its richness, complexity and dynamism does so only at the risk of impoverishing it and even of distorting it" (EN 17; see also EG 176). He continued by saying that it "is impossible to grasp the concept of evangelization unless one tries to keep in view all its essential elements" (EN 17). Popes John Paul II and Francis continually emphasize the "integral meaning of the mission of evangelization" (EG 176) in a similar vein.

This holistic view therefore sets aside an older concept of the Church's mission. No longer are the elements of social justice, interfaith dialogue, peace-building, education and health care, life-witness, etc. simply "preparatory" or "first steps" toward evangelization (*praeparatio evangelica*). All five "principal elements" are now constitutive of an integral understanding. Popes Paul VI, John Paul II, and Francis have expanded the horizons of evangelization; the more restrictive view,

which held that only explicit Gospel proclamation and sacramental life constituted mission, has clearly been superseded.

One also finds a renewed emphasis, concomitant with this expanded vision of evangelization, on the missionary nature of the *entire Church* (cf. AG 2; RM 61-76; EN 14, 59; EG 14, 20, 119-121). This means that every baptized member of the Church, be they lay, ordained, or religious, is an evangelizer. Indeed, the laity often found it difficult to appreciate how they were to be evangelizers back when evangelization used to be linked more exclusively with explicit Gospel proclamation and sacramental life. Today, Catholic evangelization engages the entire Church (from top to bottom, and especially all members of various local Churches), all states of life (lay, religious, ordained, married, single), and all apostolic activities as well as various forms of witness (the five principal elements). Yes, the totality of Christian missionary evangelization incorporates all these aspects.

Conclusion. This essay has presented an overview of John Paul II's *Redemptoris Missio* and highlighted its key insights. It has also elucidated a panoramic overview of a Catholic vision of evangelization. Yet after many words have been written, after various definitions and categories have been clarified, and after one more presentation has been completed, Catholic Christians must step back and radically affirm: *All mission and evangelization is God's project. The Holy Spirit is always the principal agent of evangelization.* For evangelizers, missionaries, priests, catechists, religious, and lay alike, mission necessarily means trying to find out what God wills and what God is doing. The authentic evangelizer then bends her or his will to God's will, joyfully surrenders to God's loving plan, and expends all efforts and energy to become a worthy instrument that enables God's design to unfold. Evangelization, at heart and center, is "*an issue of faith*, an accurate indicator of our faith in Christ and his love for us" (RM 11). For Christians, for all local Churches, to live is to evangelize!

Selected *Redemptoris Missio* Bibliography

This brief bibliography of commentaries related to St. John Paul II's mission encyclical *Redemptoris Missio* limits itself to twenty-five pivotal authors. Thus, while it includes many significant sources, this bibliography does not claim to be an exhaustive presentation of the literature that is available on this important missionary document.

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THE IGNATIAN MYSTICISM OF RECONCILIATION LIVED THROUGH COOPERATION IN MISSION

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Mindful of the Second Vatican Council, Pope John Paul II revisited the definition and function of the Church, presenting it as striving to bring all peoples to full reconciliation with God, with themselves, with their neighbor, and with the whole of creation.[1] The Church, in sum, "is also by her nature always reconciling."[2] The General Congregation (GC) of the Society of Jesus, for example, has been focusing on reconciliation and peace, particularly in terms of the *sentire cum Ecclesia* of the *Spiritual Exercises*—the 34th GC identified the Society's mission as a ministry of reconciliation in the service of Christ[3] while the recent 36th GC recognized Jesuits as being companions on a mission of reconciliation and justice.[4] The mission

[1]John Paul II, *Reconciliatio et Paenitentia* [On Reconciliation and Penance] (December 2, 1984), no. 8.

[2]John Paul II, "Homily at Liverpool" (May 30), *Insegnamenti* 2 (1982): 1992.

[3]Cf. General Congregation 34, d. 6, no. 163, in J. Padberg, ed., *Jesuit Life & Mission Today: The Decrees and Accompanying Documents of the 31st–35th General Congregations of the Society of Jesus* (St. Louis, MO: Institute of Jesuit Sources, 2009), 560. General Congregations are hereafter referred to as GC.

[4]Cf. GC 36, d. 1, in *The 36th General Congregation of the Society of Jesus* (Gujarat: The Jesuit Conference of South Asia, 2017), 39.

of reconciliation and justice, in particular, plays an important role in the Society's universal apostolic preferences from 2019 to 2029.[5]

Before exploring the Ignatian mysticism of reconciliation, we must delineate the context of today's meaning of reconciliation in relation to three kinds of losses, namely, the loss of a sense of God, a sense of human dignity, and a sense of the holiness of all creation.[6]

First, we have lost a sense of God, a sense of wonder and mystery in recognizing the presence of God who is working in all of creation. Overwhelmed by egoism, greed, and anger, we have lost the sense of God's presence, a loss that undermines human dignity and obscures the holiness of creation. As a result, "hope itself seems threatened; in place of hope, we find fear and anger."[7] Can we rediscover a sense of God? Second, we have lost a sense of human dignity. A lack of respect for human rights leads to humiliation and violence; indeed, "we [have] heard accounts of the shocking forms of suffering and injustice that millions of our brothers and sisters endure."[8] How can we respond to the victims of the broken world? "How can we help restore the bonds of humanity with the true source of Life, so as to escape the vicious circle of violence?"[9] Third, we have lost a sense of the holiness of all creation. A dangerous attitude prevails given the loss of awe and wonder in our encounter with nature—that of being masters, consumers, and ruthless exploiters, thereby breaking any sense of communion with

[5]Cf. A. Sosa, "Universal Apostolic Preferences of the Society of Jesus, 2019–2029" (February 19, 2019). Available at https://iaju.org/sites/default/files/pdf/2019/2019-06_19feb19_eng%20%281%29.pdf.

[6]The 36th General Congregation of the Society of Jesus reflects on the three kinds of reconciliation. See http://gc36.org/companions-mission-justice-reconciliation/ (accessed Sept. 1, 2017).

[7]GC 36, d. 1, no. 1, in *The 36th General Congregation of the Society of Jesus*, 39.

[8]GC 36, d. 1, no. 25, in *The 36th General Congregation of the Society of Jesus*, 49.

[9]A. Nicolás, "Reply to *Ex Officio* Letters 2014," *Acta Romana Societatis Iesu* XXV (2014): 1032.

nature.[10] How can we prevent the exploitation of nature and promote solidarity among ourselves?

Facing this crisis, Fr. Adolfo Nicolás, S.J., raised four questions on the perspective of the Society's mission of reconciliation in his *ex officio* letter of 2014.[11] The first question centered on major conflicts that generate greater pain and suffering, the second addressed the impact of those major conflicts on Jesuit lives, particularly on prayer, community life, and the apostolate, and the third considered the institutional response to these major conflicts. The fourth question reflected on the mystical dimension of reconciliation which Nicolás, interestingly enough, referred to as a gift from God: "Reconciliation is a gift from God. In it God himself is 1) present consoling, 2) restoring broken humanity, and 3) opening a mystery that is beyond us."[12]

Mindful of this understanding, this author would like to explore further the mysticism of reconciliation in order to respond to today's existing challenges: the loss of a sense of God, of human dignity, and of the holiness of all creation. He will first examine some classical concepts of Ignatian mysticism and an understanding of Ignatian reconciliation. After these two aspects of the Ignatian tradition are considered, it will then be suggested that we might find a renewed understanding of the Ignatian mysticism of reconciliation that is appropriate for today's mission in the notions of cooperation with God, collaboration with others, and care for creation.

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[10]Cf. Francis, *Laudato Si'* [On Care for Our Common Home] (Vatican City: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 2015), no. 11.

[11]Cf. A. Nicolás, "*Ex officio* Letter of 2014," 2013/16 (November 12, 2013), *Acta Romana Societatis Iesu* XXV (2013): 800–801.

[12]Nicolás, "*Ex officio* Letter of 2014," 801.

Ignatian Mysticism: Mysticism of Joy, Consolation, Service, and Cooperation

Christian Mysticism as God-experience

"Mysticism is something we experience, and what we experience, however imperfectly, is God. Mysticism is experience of God rather than knowledge about God."[13] Mysticism, mystical experience, and God-experience, then, are almost synonymous. Since mysticism is the experience of faith, hope, and love,[14] mystical experience allows one to deepen the lived experience of God's love by the help of the Holy Spirit. It eventually transforms the individual, opening one's inner eyes to see the working presence of God in everything while one, through such an experience, reciprocally sees everything with the eyes of God. Mystical experience thus provides the privileged place for finding the will of God and cooperating with God. It cultivates in particular one's capacity for self-surrender to God's will, and can be concretely practiced, as Karl Rahner claimed, by forgiving others without expecting reward and by reconciling the estranged without counting one's own woundedness.[15] Mystical experience embraces surrender of self-love to the will of God, facilitating one's confrontation with one's own weakness and acknowledgement of one's sinfulness, and yet while recognizing one's being called to follow the crucified and risen Christ.

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[13]L. Cunningham, *The Catholic Heritage: Martyrs, Ascetics, Pilgrims, Warriors, Mystics, Theologians, Artists, Humanists, Activists, Outsiders, and Saints* (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 2002), 85–86.

[14]Cf. H. Egan, *Ignatius Loyola the Mystic* (Wilmington, DE: Michael Glazier, 1987), 21.

[15]Cf. K. Rahner, "Reflections on the Experience of Grace," in *Theological Investigations* III, trans. B. Kruger (Baltimore: Helicon, 1967), 86–90.

Ignatian Mysticism: Mysticism of Joy

Karl Rahner, though he does not give a clear definition of mysticism, speaks of Ignatius as a mystic.[16] He understands Ignatian mysticism as a mysticism of joy in the world, and reconciles the tension between a spirituality of "*fuga saeculi* (flight from the world)" and a spirituality of "divinely commissioned work in the world" by following the Ignatian grace of finding God in all things. This principle is grounded in the *Spiritual Exercises* not only in the Contemplation to Attain God's Love in particular but also in the Principle and Foundation, where the attitude of indifference means 1) perpetual readiness to hear a call from God to new tasks, 2) availability to find and serve God, 3) willingness and readiness for new assignments, 4) courage to accept a state of restless wandering, and 5) courage to seek God in everything and in all ways.[17] With the help of Ignatian indifference, one can be free to go back into the world for the service of God, a mission through which one can experience God with joy. The Ignatian mysticism of joy in the world, in other words, includes both finding God present and working in the world and serving God in everything.

Ignatian Mysticism: Mysticism of Consolation

The Ignatian mysticism of consolation is rooted in the ministry of Ignatius and his first companions, which is described by Ignatius in the Formula of the Institute as the ministry of consolation, "the spiritual consolation of God's faithful through hearing confessions and administering other sacraments."[18] The first Jesuits saw much of their ministry as being similar to that of Jesus as it is presented in the Fourth Week of the *Spiritual Exercises*, namely, Christ's bringing

[16]Cf. K. Rahner, "The Ignatian Mysticism of Joy in the World," in *Theological Investigations* III, 280.

[17]Cf. Rahner, "The Ignatian Mysticism of Joy in the World," 290–291.

[18]*Formula of the Institute* 1550, no. 1, in J. Padberg, ed., *The Constitutions of the Society of Jesus and Their Complementary Norms: A Complete English Translation of the Official Latin Texts* (St. Louis, MO: The Institute of Jesuit Sources, 1996), 4.

consolation, the good news of the risen life, to his followers, as John O'Malley explains in *The First Jesuits*.[19]

Brian O'Leary explains the different modes of consolation in the *Spiritual Exercises* by acknowledging that no one specific description of them may offer a comprehensive understanding of consolation.[20] A multifaceted experience of consolation takes various forms for, and adopts unique approaches to, sufferers in loss and mourning. Just as each of the different Biblical figures had a focused experience of consolation, each person who makes the *Exercises* receives a particular consolation, specific healing, and personal freedom. Such a gratuitous experience of consolation may therefore lead the exercitant to be drawn closer to a renewed understanding of reality and to an ever greater freedom. This consolation experience which Jesus offers, moreover, seems to be a grace given freely and as a specific and focused experience.

Some contemporary Jesuits have attempted to understand the meaning of Ignatian consolation today. Kevin O'Brien, S.J., on the one hand, connects helping souls with various ministries of consolation. He proposes accompaniment as a renewed expression of the ministry of consolation, particularly in relation to the Jesuit refugee service: "Accompaniment is a novel expression of Jesuit ministry, but it is shaped in the tradition of Jesuit ministries of consolation."[21] On the other hand, Roger Dawson, S.J., and Nicholas Austin, S.J., claim that applying character strengths in positive psychology reliably leads to the experience of consolation and helps to understand the essence of consolation.[22]

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[19]Cf. J. O'Malley, *The First Jesuits* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1993), 82–84.

[20]B. O'Leary, "Consoler and Consolation," *The Way Supplement* 99 (2000): 66.

[21]K. O'Brien, "Consolation in Action: The Jesuit Refugee Service and the Ministry of Accompaniment," *Studies in the Spirituality of Jesuits* 37:4 (2005): 35.

[22]R. Dawson & N. Austin, "The Consolation of Character Strength in Ignatian Spirituality and Positive Psychology," *The Way* 53:3 (2014): 7–21.

Pope Francis, on the occasion of his Apostolic Visit to South Korea in 2014, delivered this key message to the Korean Jesuits: "Be Jesuits who give consolation to people."[23] Ignatian consolation impels the exercitant toward sharing consolation with others. Carlos Coupeau, S.J., claims that the "consolation of the Fourth Week is not a gift to obtain love only for ourselves. That is to say, it is [a] gift that makes us apostles, impelling us towards others, too, to feel the acting and consoling presence of the Spirit."[24] Consolation as such has a dynamic of moving outward for Christ's mission; indeed, the leap to a mystical experience of consolation can be received only as a grace in the person's being disposed to becoming an instrument of consolation in mission. The Ignatian mysticism of consolation is an inner experience of the risen Lord as the abiding source of consolation, an experience that results in being sent to share the joy and peace in Christ with others.

Ignatian Mysticism: Mysticism of Service

De Guibert understands Ignatian mysticism as a mysticism of service. Following the traditional categories of seraphic, cherubic, and angelic souls, he places Ignatius of Loyola among the angelic, and explains that "[among the angelic souls] these infused gifts are not directed exclusively at the union of the purely spiritual human faculties with God, but extend down to more material capacities … and thus tend not just towards union but also towards service."[25] Ignatius, for example, encountered Jesus who was carrying the cross at *La Storta* and heard His invitation: "*Io voglio che tu ci serva* (I want you to serve us)."[26] Mysticism of service as an infused gift from God, therefore, does not necessarily remain an exclusive prerogative of the human; rather, it asks

[23]"Pope Francis Visits Jesuit Community," *Sogang News* (August 21, 2014).

[24]C. Coupeau, "Ambassadors of Consolation," *Review of Ignatian Spirituality* 37 (2006): 71.

[25]J. de Guibert, in G. Ganss, ed., *The Jesuits: Their Spiritual Doctrine and Practice*, trans. W. Young (St. Louis, MO: The Institute of Jesuit Sources, 1986), 55–56.

[26]H. Rahner, *The Vision of St. Ignatius in the Chapel of La Storta* (Roma: Centrum Ignatianum Spiritualitatis, 1975), 60.

for a human response to God's love, a response actualized in service. "All the magnificent gifts which God gave him converge upon this service, and through this service they are diffused."[27] Mysticism of service is an act of response to the love of God.

Ignatian Mysticism: Cooperation with God and Collaboration with Others and Creatures

Ignatian mysticism, that service which is an act of response to the love of God, specifically means human instrumental cooperation in the service of God. Ignatius understood the being of a Jesuit particularly as an instrument in the hand of God. He summarizes, for example, the theme of cooperation with God in the *Constitutions* of the Society of Jesus, indicating that such is essential for the Jesuits if they are to realize their way of proceeding. The Preamble, in n. 134 of the *Constitutions*, speaks of this cooperation: "The gentle disposition of Divine Providence requires cooperation from his creatures."[28] Chapter X, n. 813 recapitulates the Ignatian charism of cooperation with God by using the metaphor of an instrument: "the means which unite the human instrument with God and so dispose it that it may be wielded well by his divine hand."[29] N. 814 then offers the conclusion that "we may cooperate with the divine grace according to the arrangement of the sovereign providence of God our Lord."[30] The Jesuit way of proceeding thus focuses, both at the beginning and end of the *Constitutions*, on cooperating with the providence of God.

The metaphor of an instrument thus plays an important role in the Ignatian mysticism of cooperation with God. Michael Buckley, applying

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[27]de Guibert, *The Jesuits: Their Spiritual Doctrine and Practice*, 58.

[28]*Constitutions* 134 (referred to hereafter as *Const)*, in Padberg, *The Constitutions of the Society of Jesus and Their Complementary Norms*, 56.

[29]*Const.* 813, in Padberg, *The Constitutions of the Society of Jesus and Their Complementary Norms*, 400.

[30]*Const.* 814, in Padberg, *The Constitutions of the Society of Jesus and Their Complementary Norms*, 400–402.

the theology of instrumentality, has called attention to the metaphor of instrument in relation to mystical union with God: "[The] starkness of the metaphor of the instrument in the hand stresses mystical contact and union, the primacy of the influence of God, and the descending nature of God's presence and influence."[31] This understanding of instrumentality characterizes Ignatian mysticism as both mystical experience of union with God and apostolic action toward which that experience is directed.

Ignatian mysticism also moves toward collaboration with others and with creation. The personal experience of Ignatius was a mystical experience of creaturehood, of being a sinner who is yet loved by God, a love that is mediated through relationship with others and with creation as is outlined in the *Spiritual Exercises:* "Everything cooperates to continue to give me life and strength … everything contributes to my well-being … I think of the people who have prayed for me and love me."[32] Collaboration with others and with creation thus begins with the understanding of God's being at work with them. This sustaining and cooperative action in all created things for the sake of human beings is described in the Contemplation to Attain God's Love: "This is to consider how God works and labors for me in all creatures upon the face of the earth, that is, He conducts Himself as one who labors."[33] Thus, just as God is immanently at work in all things, so humans are invited to collaborate with God and with all creatures, i.e., *con todo amar y servir* is the necessary complement of *en todo amar y servir*.

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[31]M. Buckley, *The Catholic University as Promise and Project: Reflections in a Jesuit Idiom* (Washington, DC: Georgetown University Press, 2007), 87.

[32]D. Fleming, *Draw Me Into Your Friendship: A Literal Translation and a Contemporary Reading of the Spiritual Exercises* (St. Louis, MO: Institute of Jesuit Sources, 1996), 53.

[33]*Spiritual Exercises* 236 (hereafter referred to as *SpEx)*, in Ignatius of Loyola, *The Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius: A New Translation Based on Studies in the Language of the Autograph*, trans. L. Puhl (Chicago: Loyola University Press, 1968), 103. All quotations from the *SpEx* are from this edition.

Ignatian Reconciliation[34]

The faithful, on the occasion of the canonization of Ignatius of Loyola in 1622, remembered him as a reconciler. His portrait in the bull of canonization *Rationi congruit* was that of a man of all the works of mercy, and of a reconciler in particular. Ignatius "reconciled enemies and made them pray for one another. All these works prove to what extent he loved his neighbor because of his love for God."[35] Thus, in order to deepen further an understanding of Ignatian reconciliation, this author raises the following questions: What is the meaning of Ignatian reconciliation? How did Ignatius understand and realize it with his companions? What did he write about reconciliation? What are the implications for those who want to follow Ignatius's footsteps today?

Formula

John O'Malley points out that the first Jesuits' concept of their self-identity was that of "peacemakers and promoters of reconciliation in all sectors of society."[36] The Formula of the Institute distinguishes Jesuits as men "reconciling the estranged, in holily assisting and serving those who are found in prisons or hospitals, and indeed in performing any other works of charity, according to what will seem expedient

[34]"We are sent on mission by the Father, as were Ignatius and the first companions at La Storta, together with Christ, risen and glorified but still carrying the cross, as he labours in a world yet to experience the fullness of his reconciliation. In a world torn by violence, strife and division, we then are called with others to become instruments of God, who 'in Christ reconciled the world to himself, not counting their trespasses'. This reconciliation calls us to build a new world of right relationships, a new Jubilee reaching across all divisions so that God might restore his justice for all." Cf. GC 35, d. 3, no. 60, in Padberg, *Jesuit Life & Mission Today*, 747.

[35]*Institutum Societatis Iesu* Vol. 1: *Bullarium et Compendium Privilegiorum* (Florence: Ex Typographia a SS. Conceptione, 1892), 145–155. Quoted in N. Hausman, "'What Ought I to Do?' The 'Pilgrim's Testament,' a Source for the Apostolic Religious Life," *Centrum Ignatianum Spiritualitatis* 20:1–2 (1990): 15.

[36]O'Malley, *The First Jesuits*, 71.

for the glory of God and the common good."[37] O'Malley claims that an expression of reconciliation first appeared in 1550, one that was derived from the first companions' apostolic experience between 1540 and 1550. He also considers the ministry of reconciliation as key for understanding the social character of Jesuit ministry.[38] Yet while O'Malley pays attention to the social aspect of the ministry of reconciliation, Carlos Coupeau points to its spiritual dimension: "The privileged space for the Jesuits is prayer and confession where they become mediators when faced with situations of conflict or animosity."[39] The Ignatian idea of reconciliation, therefore, has a rich spiritual tradition as well as a social character. As such, we may now explore further an understanding of reconciliation while considering other writings of St. Ignatius of Loyola.

Reconciliation with God: The *Spiritual Exercises*, the Constitutions of the Society of Jesus, and the *Spiritual Diary* of St. Ignatius of Loyola

The *Spiritual Exercises*: Conversion, confession, and reconciliation. For Ignatius, reconciliation with God requires the awareness of one's own sinfulness as a particular reality in relation to the histories of sin as an objective reality and of one's own sin as a subjective reality. Both realities lead to the feeling of confusion and shame, yet this affective response to the objective and subjective dimensions of sins helps the exercitant to confront her or his own sinfulness and ask for pardon. Ignatius, particularly through the Triple Colloquy, asks the exercitant to converse with our Lady, beseeching her for assistance in obtaining the grace of three things: 1) an interior

[37] *Formula of the Institute* 1550, no. 1, in Padberg, *The Constitutions of the Society of Jesus and Their Complementary Norms*, 4.

[38] Cf. O'Malley, *The First Jesuits*, 169.

[39] C. Coupeau, "Reconciliación," in P. Cebollada et al., eds., *Diccionario de espiritualidad ignaciana* (Bilbao: Mensajero, 2007), 1534–1538; quoted in A. Mateos, "Reconciliation and Migration: A Process that Sets Us in Motion," *Promotio Iustitiae* 124 (2017): 37.

knowledge of one's own sins and hatred of them; 2) to feel the disorder of one's action, correct oneself, and put oneself in order, and 3) knowledge of the world.[40] The grace of conversion thus begins with an acknowledgement that penetrates through one's heart, in the depth of the reality of personal and collective sin. "Reconciliation with God is first and foremost a call to profound conversion, for each Jesuit, and for all of us."[41]

Ignatius suggested in the *Spiritual Exercises* that the exercitant make a general confession for these spiritual benefits: 1) greater sorrow in the present for all the sins and wrongs of one's whole life, 2) greater interior knowledge of sins and their malice, and 3) preparation for reception of the Blessed Sacrament.[42] A deep sense of reconciliation with God can thus be realized through contrition for one's sinfulness and surrender to God's merciful love; indeed, reconciliation with God is given here as an unexpected gift from God's goodness and mercy. Ignatius speaks of a response to this forgiving grace, an inner feeling of gratitude which he names a cry of wonder: "There is a cry of wonder accompanied by surging emotion as I pass in review all creatures. How is it that they have permitted me to live, and have sustained me in life!"[43] This cry of wonder, moreover, not only speaks of a moral stage of repentance but also becomes a privileged place of experiencing the infinite and merciful love of God. From the gift of divine mercy thus comes gratitude, one of the fruits of reconciliation with God. Gratitude creates in the exercitant the sense of renewal in being forgiven and beloved by God, thereby being freed to love and follow God.

The Constitutions of the Society of Jesus: Reconciliation with one another. Ignatius uses an expression of reconciliation only twice in the *Constitutions;* one of them is in reference to a division among members of the community: "Passion or any anger of some

[40]Cf. *SpEx* 63, in Ignatius of Loyola, *The Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius*, 31.

[41]Cf. GC 36, d. 1, no. 17, in *The 36th General Congregation of the Society of Jesus*, 45.

[42]Cf. *SpEx* 44, in Ignatius of Loyola, *The Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius*, 24.

[43]*SpEx* 60, in Ignatius of Loyola, *The Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius*, 30.

in the house toward others should not be permitted. If anything of the sort arises, the parties should be made to reconcile immediately, with appropriate satisfaction."[44] Explaining this phrase, Toni Witwer claims that the theme of reconciliation in the *Constitutions* concerns itself especially with the context of unity within the Society by way of living in obedience, pursuing continued dialogue and openness, trying actively to avoid disagreement with one another, and trying to reconcile with one another.[45] The process of reconciliation thus calls for a reverential relationship based on the reality of difficulties and yet with respect for differences.

With regard to reconciliation in particular, n. 250 of the *Constitutions* explains respect for others in relation to praising and reverencing God:

> In all things they should try and desire to give the advantage to the others, esteeming them all in their hearts as if they were their superiors and showing outwardly, in an unassuming and simple religious manner, the respect and reverence appropriate to each one's state, so that by consideration of one another they may thus grow in devotion and praise God our Lord, whom each one should strive to recognize in the other as in his image.[46]

Respecting others, therefore, cannot be disconnected from finding the presence of God; both are interconnected. Reconciliation with God and reconciliation with others likewise go hand-in-hand—the more deeply one is reconciled with God, the deeper one's reconciliation is with others and with God's creation. In this way, each person may recognize the image of God in others and revere them so that each cultivates a sense of reconciliation, reuniting human beings and God's creation with God.

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[44]*Const.* 275, in Padberg, *The Constitutions of the Society of Jesus and Their Complementary Norms*, 121.

[45]Cf. T. Witwer, "Testi ignaziani per il dialogo e la riconciliazione: Esercizi spirituali, Costituzioni, Lettere," *Ignaziana* 15 (2013): 51.

[46]*Const.* 250, in Padberg, *The Constitutions of the Society of Jesus and Their Complementary Norms*, 112.

The *Spiritual Diary*: From obtaining pardon to surrender through conformity with the will of God. Ignatius's main purpose in writing the *Spiritual Diary* was to record his deliberation on complete poverty. He desperately longed for confirmation from God in the process of the election on poverty, and yet he became impatient with the Trinity. A breakthrough of mystical experience then occurred in a process of reconciliation with the Trinity through Christ—on February 24, 1544, Ignatius wrote, "I felt or saw Jesus … begging and praying Jesus to obtain pardon for me from the most Holy Trinity."[47] On the following day, February 25, Ignatius expressed his desire not to be confirmed by God but to be reconciled with God: "I neither asked nor sought confirmation, but desired to be reconciled with the three Divine Persons.… When the Mass was finished, I wanted to be reconciled with the most Holy Trinity, and I begged this of Jesus … assuring myself … only to be reconciled."[48] On February 26, 1544, Ignatius finally placed his trust solely in Jesus who is the mediator: "When I recalled Jesus, I felt much confidence in Him, and I thought He was ready to intercede for me; yet I did not seek or ask further confirmation concerning the past, remaining quiet and restful in this regard."[49]

The *Spiritual Diary* of Ignatius thus shows that reconciliation with God is prior to having confirmation. Reconciliation for Ignatius meant to obtain pardon from the Most Holy Trinity because of his being far from God. Reconciliation, pardon, and conversion of hearts are almost synonymous in this sense, moving toward going back to God; indeed, for Michael Buckley, reconciliation means to restore union. Reuniting human beings with God, in other words, is the forgiveness of sins,

[47]Entry for Feb. 24, 1544, in Ignatius of Loyola, *The Spiritual Diary of St. Ignatius*, trans. W. Young (Rome: Centrum Ignatianum Spiritualitatis, 1979), 29. Hereafter referred to as *Diary*.

[48]Entry for Feb. 25, 1544, in *Diary*, 30.

[49]Entry for Feb. 26, 1544, in *Diary*, 30.

and it issues from the longing of God and of human beings.[50] Jesus Christ as the Reconciler is the central mediator for reconciliation with God, and reconciliation with God through Christ the Reconciler is the starting point of Ignatius's commitment to mission.

Interestingly enough, however, Ignatius's reconciliation with the Trinity goes even further. It extends into the inner journey of the spiritual surrender through conformity with the will of God, and plays a role in Ignatius's conforming of his will to the Divine Will. On February 26, 1544, Ignatius wrote that "the thought came to ask and beg Jesus to make [him] conformable with the will of the Most Holy Trinity, in the way He thought best."[51] This is Ignatius's inner attitude of disposition which allows him "to be governed by the Divine Majesty, Who bestows and withdraws His graces as He thinks best."[52] Having decided to conform himself thus to the Divine Will, Ignatius grew in surrender to "the giver of all graces." He pursued neither confirmation nor reconciliation at this point, only cooperation with the will of God by entrusting himself to God, as he wrote, "Where do you wish to take me, Lord?"[53]

Ignatian Mysticism of Reconciliation: Cooperation with God and Collaboration with Others and with Creation

Cooperation with God

The Ignatian mysticism of reconciliation can mean cooperation with the divine initiative for God's will is that such a reconciliation

[50]Cf. M. Buckley, "Likewise You are Priests: Some Reflections on Jesuit Priesthood," in T. Lucas, ed., *Spirit, Style, Story: Essays Honoring John W. Padberg, S.J.* (Chicago: Loyola Press, 2002), 37.

[51]Entry for Feb. 26, 1544, in *Diary*, 30.

[52]Entry for Feb. 26, 1544, in *Diary*, 31.

[53]Entry for Mar. 5, 1544, in *Diary*, 37.

may lead all to union with God. Charles André Bernard, for instance, understands that spiritual experience is experienced as a gift, and that it asks in turn for free human cooperation as a response to this calling.[54] Ignatian mysticism in particular, as the spiritual experience of "being a sinner and yet forgiven," asks that one cooperate with God's will of reconciliation with creatures and with human beings. Michael Buckley claims that the ministry of reconciliation begins with God's desire for reconciliation and that God makes his appeals through human beings;[55] Mark Rotsaert asserts that Ignatius's message of reconciliation calls for human cooperation in creating the presence of God among us.[56] As an experience of God, therefore, Ignatian mysticism seeks to cooperate with the divine will as a response to God's call for reconciliation among human beings through Christ.

Ignatian mysticism, therefore, is a mysticism of joy, consolation, and service based on the experience of the *Spiritual Exercises* while Ignatian reconciliation, grounded in *missio Dei*, is a conversion toward, and restoration of union with, God. As Toni Witwer points out, the union of minds and hearts among the members of the Society is the key issue of reconciliation in the *Constitutions*. Ignatian reconciliation, moreover, also pursues the *missio ad extra* by which there is a participation in Christ's mission of reconciliation. Ignatius strongly urged the Jesuit scholastics at Coimbra in 1547 to commit themselves to helping others as well as to maintaining their fraternal union: "I want you not merely [to] maintain this unity and uninterrupted love among yourselves but also to extend it to all persons, striving to enkindle in your souls the lively desire for your neighbor's salvation."[57] The more

[54]Cf. C. Bernard, *Teologia Spirituale* (Milano: San Paolo, 2002), 9; quoted in H. Alphonso, "Experience of 'God as God' and Interreligious Dialogue: Reflections in the Light of Spiritual Theology," *Gregorianum* 87:4 (2006): 829.

[55]Cf. Buckley, "Likewise You are Priests," 11.

[56]Cf. M. Rotsaert, "Una Spiritualità del Dialogo e della Riconciliazione: Ignazio di Loyola (1491–1556)," *Ignaziana* 15 (2013): 45.

[57]*Letter* 169, in Ignatius of Loyola, *Monumenta Ignatiana. Sancti Ignatii de Loyola Societatis Jesu fundatoris, epistolae et instructiones*, 12 vols. (Madrid: MHSI, 1903–1911),

surprising instruction is that serving others has two dimensions—becoming "perfect instruments of God's grace," on the one hand, and "bringing God's creatures back to him," on the other: "You will become perfect instruments of God's grace, and collaborators in the sublime work of bringing God's creatures back to him as their highest end."[58] God is the initiative of reconciliation, and in Christ all of God's grace comes through in collaboration with His faithful who are instruments of Christ.

Collaboration with Others and with Creation

If the Ignatian mysticism of reconciliation means cooperation with the divine initiative to accomplish God's will of reconciliation, it can also mean collaboration with others and with creation. The Ignatian way of collaborating with others, on the one hand, presumes finding the image of God in the neighbor.[59] This is the foundation of the Ignatian belief that Jesuits should be able to accept and respect each person as a sacred creature with his or her inherent dignity. Instead of seeking others willing to collaborate with Jesuits merely to accomplish some program or plan, Ignatian collaboration is deeply rooted in the recognition of Jesus in each human being. This recognition allows Jesuits, from their encounter with the suffering people of God, to appreciate the simplicity and wisdom of these "anawim." The Ignatian way of collaborating with creation, on the other hand, intends the loving of God in all creatures and all of them in God in conformity with the divine will.[60] Collaboration with creation, therefore, means relating to

507 (hereafter referred to as *Epp. et instruct.* I) and in Ignatius of Loyola, *Letters and Instructions*, eds. J. Padberg & J. McCarthy, trans. M. Palmer (St. Louis, MO: Institute of Jesuit Sources, 2006), 172.

[58]*Letter* 169, in *Epp. et instruct.* I, 507–508; Ignatius of Loyola, *Letters and Instructions*, 172.

[59]Cf. *Const.* 250, in Padberg, *The Constitutions of the Society of Jesus and Their Complementary Norms*, 112.

[60]Cf. *Const.* 288, in Padberg, *The Constitutions of the Society of Jesus and Their Complementary Norms*, 124.

the environment with awe and wonder and not objectifying it; indeed, this sense of awe and wonder is a basic condition of caring for nature and the environment.[61] John Paul II warned of the danger of humanity's adoption of an attitude of dominion: "Instead of carrying out his role as a cooperator with God in the work of creation, man sets himself up in place of God and thus ends up provoking a rebellion on the part of nature."[62] Collaborators, in being personally connected particularly with the broken hearted and broken world, may thus find Christ crucified for us. Collaboration with creation, touched by the immensity of the broken world, makes possible a profound service for reconciliation: "This compassionate relationship with the Crucifix and the crucified moves us to action."[63] Collaboration, therefore, both with others and with creation, and in relation to a mysticism of reconciliation, is a profound experience of feeling compassion and of recognizing Jesus within the brokenness of others and of creation.

Ignatius, in the *Spiritual Exercises*, the heart of Ignatian mysticism, invites exercitants to be with the vulnerability and helplessness of Jesus: "This is to consider how the divinity hides itself; for example, it could destroy its enemies and does not do so, but leaves the most sacred humanity to suffer so cruelly."[64] Using the expression "for my sins," Ignatius invites the exercitants to ask for compassion with Jesus's suffering. Peter Faber, well-known as the best giver of the *Exercises*, even relates his personal sins with universal calamities. This is not so much about causing unnecessary feelings of guilt among the faithful as it is about acknowledging the reality of collective sinfulness and the

[61]Cf. *Laudato Si'*, no. 11.

[62]John Paul II, *Centesimus Annus* [On the Hundreth Anniversary of *Rerum Novarum*] (Rome: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 1991), no. 37.

[63]R. Velasco, "Reconciliation and Justice from the Perspective of the Decree 'Companions in a Mission of Reconciliation and Justice'," *Promotio Iustitiae* 124 (2017): 15.

[64]*SpEx* 196, in Ignatius of Loyola, *The Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius*, 82.

responsibility of all human beings to collaborate with one another in order to reconcile with one another.

> I wished too that there might be no more universal calamities in the world because of my sins; for it often—indeed almost always—happens that widespread calamities such as plagues, wars, famine, and so forth come about as a result of the accumulated sins of many men, each bearing his own share of the responsibility.[65]

A person's sensitivity to the brokenness of others is a way of solidarity through the repenting of one's sins and acknowledging of one's responsibility for the world.

The Thirty-Sixth General Congregation of the Society of Jesus also reaffirms a calling to collaboration with others for God's work of reconciliation: "Rather than ask what we should do, we seek to understand how God invites us—and so many people of good will—to share in that great work."[66] Fr. Arturo Sosa, S.J., says, "We want to collaborate generously with others … which comes from the experience of God, of being called to the mission of Christ Jesus, which does not belong to us exclusively, but which we share with so many men and women consecrated to the service of others."[67] Instead of considering ourselves, then, as self-sufficient or becoming self-referential, those who live the Ignatian charism ought humbly to recognize that they need one another to be bridges between those who are in conflict. Collaboration with others and with creation, in brief, requires a humble and discerning inner attitude: "what does God really want for our world?"[68]

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[65]P. Favre, *The Spiritual Writings of Pierre Favre*, ed. & trans. E. Murphy, J. Padberg, & M. Palmer (St. Louis, MO: Institute of Jesuit Sources, 1996), 204.

[66]GC 36, d. 1, no. 3, in *The 36th General Congregation of the Society of Jesus*, 40.

[67]A. Sosa, "Mass of Thanksgiving, Church of the *Gesù*, Rome, 15 October 2016," quoted in *The 36th General Congregation of the Society of Jesus*, 141.

[68]Nicolás, "Reply to *Ex Officio* Letters 2014," 1034.

An Asian Approach to the Ignatian Mysticism of Reconciliation

An Asian approach to the Ignatian mysticism of reconciliation involves cultivating a sense of deep listening within dialogue,[69] on the one hand, and promoting attention for the restoration of harmony as a manifestation of peace and justice, on the other. The former is the necessary condition for cooperation with God as well as for collaboration with others and with creation; the latter is the Asian contextual understanding of reconciliation. If we seek to know what God wants for His salvific work, we should first listen from the heart to the cry of suffering of others and of creation. This deep listening leads to discernment, one that goes back to the theme of God's initiative of reconciliation as well as to His call to cooperate with Him and collaborate with others and creation toward action. We can be drawn into the deep compassion that is a gift of one's entering into the deepest heart of Jesus Christ when we, mindful of the fact that Jesus Christ is the true reconciler, listen attentively to the voice of the voiceless and sincerely confront the broken world with its grief and sorrow. Indeed, an Asian approach to the Ignatian mysticism of reconciliation begins from compassion and moves toward the service of compassion.

A deepened art of listening with the heart can be a central contributor to the ministry of reconciliation in Asia. On the occasion of the 50th anniversary of *Nostra Aetate* in 2015, the FABC office for ecumenical and interreligious affairs spoke of a way of silence and listening among various religions and cultures in Asia:

[69]Cf. FABC (Federation of Asian Bishops' Conferences) which has been focusing on a three-fold dialogue with the poor, cultures, and religions. "We reaffirm the strong need [for] the triple dialogue with the poor, cultures, and religions, in a journey towards the Kingdom of justice, peace, and ecological harmony" (from the Sixth Bishops' Institute for Interreligious Affairs [BIRA VI]). See "Asian Celebration of 50th Anniversary of *Nostra Aetate*," in V. Tirimanna, ed., *For All the Peoples of Asia* Vol 6: *Federation of Asian Bishops' Conferences Documents from 2012–2016* (Quezon City: Claretian, 2017), 107–108.

> In an existential silence, we empty ourselves and listen deeply to the voices of the others without judging, with a loving heart. In the depth of silence, we are aware of Jesus' presence among us, which is inspiring our journey of interreligious dialogue and action for transforming the world.[70]

Their statement reveals self-emptying, along with deep listening, as essential in a dialogue for reconciliation, a self-emptying that characterizes the spirituality of dialogue in Asia. Listening in depth, in other words, occurs not from a position of superiority but only from a position of humility and respect. This inner attitude of self-emptying, moreover, can also play an important role in reconciling difficult and painful situations. Considering the theology of dialogue, for instance, the seventh Bishops' Institute for Interreligious Affairs issued this statement on the spirituality of dialogue for reconciliation:

> [The] Spirit has often used powerlessness and vulnerability to effect mutual forgiveness and reconciliation among individuals, families, and communities.… Dialogue, finally, demands a total Christ-like self-emptying so that, led by the Spirit, we may be more effective instruments in building up God's Kingdom.[71]

The listener, though powerless and vulnerable, may draw from Christ's compassionate healing presence the inner strength and courage to open her or his heart, an opening that eventually leads to mutual understanding and enrichment for reconciliation.

Mindful of Zen meditation, William Johnston, S.J., also urges his readers to listen to themselves, particularly to the inner self where each one can be a mirror that reflects the suffering of the world and echoes the cry of the poor.[72] "Only by listening can we reach the roots; only by

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[70]"Asian Celebration of 50th Anniversary of *Nostra Aetate*," 109.

[71]"Statement of the Seventh Bishops' Institute for Interreligious Affairs on the Theology of Dialogue (BIRA IV/7)," in G. Rosales & C. Arévalo, eds., *For All the Peoples of Asia* Vol. 1: *Federation of Asian Bishops' Conferences Documents from 1970 to 1991* (Quezon City: Claretian, 1997), 310–311.

[72]Cf. W. Johnston, *The Mirror Mind: Zen-Christian Dialogue* (New York: Fordham University Press, 1990), 172–176.

listening can we see the real evil which is in ourselves and in the world around; only by listening can we tap the sources of that compassion that alone will heal."[73] By listening to ourselves, he claims that we can see both the beauty of God and the reality of evil. The Holy Spirit then guides us, indicating what to do in order to cooperate with God's initiative of reconciliation.

Both Luis Antonio Cardinal Tagle of Manila and Fr. Adolfo Nicolás, S.J., gave valuable speeches in relation to silence and listening on the occasion of the Synod for the New Evangelization in 2011. Tagle, on the one hand, spoke of the silence that leads to truth: "The Church must discover the power of silence. Confronted with the sorrows, doubts and uncertainties of people, she cannot pretend to give easy solutions. In Jesus, silence becomes the way of attentive listening, compassion and prayer. It is the way to truth."[74] Nicolás, on the other hand, said that it "is necessary for us to listen with greater attention and with an immense humility to recognize the voice of the Lord where we did not expect that it could be heard."[75] By listening from the heart, one learns to forget oneself and to give oneself totally to the other, a process in which God is present all throughout in wonder. As such, while Johnston focuses on listening to ourselves, both Tagle and Nicolás focus on listening to others as a way of finding the presence of God in every human community. An Asian attitude of deep listening from the heart and of finding God's active presence in silence can thus contribute to the understanding of the Ignatian mysticism of reconciliation.

An Asian approach to the Ignatian mysticism of reconciliation can also promote concern for the restoration of that harmony which

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[73]Johnston, *The Mirror Mind*, 175.

[74]Intervention of L. Tagle at the XIII Ordinary General Assembly of the Synod of Bishops, "The New Evangelization for the Transmission of the Christian Faith" (October 7–28, 2012).

[75]Intervention of A. Nicolás at the XIII Ordinary General Assembly of the Synod of Bishops.

manifests and flows from peace and justice. Indeed, the recognition of the "sacredness of nature" and encouragement of all to live "in harmony with nature and to foster its growth"[76] are key aspects of Asian cultural and religious traditions. The Theological Committee of the Federation of Asian Bishops' Conferences, speaking from its understanding of the Asian context, relates Asian cosmic perspectives with harmony:

> There is an Asian approach to reality, an Asian understanding of reality, that is profoundly organic, i.e., a worldview wherein the whole, the unity, is the sum-total of the web of relationships, and interaction of the various parts with each other.… Our efforts to resolve disharmony and promote wholeness of life need to draw from our Asian cultural and religious resources that will resonate with our people and speak to them more effectively.[77] Harmony as such has not been merely an ideal for Asians but also a call to the Asian Church: "[In] an Asia marked by diversity and torn by conflicts, the church must in a special way be a sacrament—a visible sign and instrument of unity and harmony."[78]

The spirituality of harmony in Asia is perceived to be four-fold: harmony with oneself, with fellow humans, with creation, and with God.[79] First, harmony with oneself is not only a personal integration of body and mind but also an interconnection between the macro-cosmos of the universe and the micro-cosmos within the human person. Second, harmony with fellow humans is grounded upon the doctrine of the *imago Dei*, a faith that invites an attitude of respect for cultural and religious diversity as well as collaboration with others to

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[76]"Final Statement of the Twelfth Bishops' Institute for Interreligious Affairs on the Theology of Dialogue (BIRA IV/12)," in Rosales & Arévalo, *For All the Peoples of Asia* Vol. 1, 330.

[77]"Asian Christian Perspectives on Harmony: A Document of the Theological Advisory Commission of the Federation of Asian Bishops' Conferences," in F.-J. Eilers, ed., *For All the Peoples of Asia* Vol. 2: *Federation of Asian Bishops' Conferences Documents from 1992 to 1996* (Quezon City: Claretian, 1997), 276.

[78]"Journeying Together Toward the Third Millennium: Statement of the Fifth Plenary Assembly," in Rosales & Arévalo, *For All the Peoples of Asia* Vol. 1, 282.

[79]Cf. "Asian Christian Perspectives on Harmony," 286.

promote harmony. Third, harmony with creation asks each one of us to find the presence of God who is among us and recognize in the other a reflection of God's providential love for God's creatures. Lastly, harmony with God is the starting point of all other kinds of harmony because God is the foundation of harmony. This four-fold spirituality of harmony thus goes back to right relationship with God.

> Starting from consciousness of the God-given harmony within oneself, one moves into harmonious relationship with one's fellow humans; then one spreads out to be in harmony with nature and the wider universe. This unfolding and realization of right relationship within oneself, with the neighbors and [with] the cosmos leads to the summit experience of harmony with God.[80]

The God-given harmony makes possible the right relationship with others and with creation, which in turn leads to the right relationship with God; indeed, there is no difference between the relationship with God, with others, and with creation. This understanding of harmony weaves together the woof and warp of a web of relationships. Harmony, however, does not mean "a compromising with conflictual realities" nor a "complacency about the existing order"; rather, it means "transformative attitude and action"[81] that impel one to live in communion with all things and collaborate with them for peace and justice. An understanding of the Ignatian mysticism of reconciliation as a collaboration with others and with creation can thus be deepened within the Asian perspective of harmony as a web of relationships, introducing a particular sense of the interrelatedness of all life, the valuation of and gratitude for the meaning of all life, and a new world of right relationship with God, others, and creation.

Conclusion

A characteristic of Christian mysticism is the immediate and passive experience of the presence of God. Reconciliation, which is

[80]"Asian Christian Perspectives on Harmony," 286–287.

[81]"Asian Christian Perspectives on Harmony," 290.

the work of God, focuses on the love of God poured out upon us as a result of the reconciliation that God has effected in Christ.[82] A mystical experience of reconciliation, therefore, is an experience of God's grace. What follows thus are three points that summarize the contribution of this article.

First, a new understanding of the Ignatian mysticism of reconciliation assists those who devote themselves to the service of reconciliation to become aware of God's initiative of reconciliation. A ministry of reconciliation is God's dream, that is, *missio Dei*. Cultivating a sense of *missio Dei* allows all Jesuits, as well as those with whom they are partners in mission, to be humble instead of needing to be in charge of an apostolic task. It leads them to be humble instruments of God. Indeed, since reconciliation is God's work through Christ and not just the result of one's own human effort, it reorients us back toward God, establishing the right relationship with God that eventually invites to conversion.

The second contribution of a new understanding of the Ignatian mysticism of reconciliation is the recognition that Christ's ministry of reconciliation is inviting us, working together as humble instruments in Christ's hands, to cooperate with Him. Being united with Christ in service is a way of the Ignatian mysticism of reconciliation. Understanding our inner identity as coworkers for the ministry of reconciliation helps us listen to the call of Christ, the eternal King, and so leads us to discern deeply, in the context of mission, what leads to the greater good. The focus on reconciliation helps us face the question of Christ's presence in concrete reality, always seeking to know how Christ wants us to be with Him in the middle of our broken world. A sense of being coworkers of Christ, therefore, allows us to be touched by the suffering of the world and urges us to follow the promptings of the Holy Spirit.

The third contribution of a new understanding of the Ignatian mysticism of reconciliation is the development of insights into collaboration with others and with creation for the better service

[82]Cf. R. Schreiter, *The Ministry of Reconciliation: Spirituality & Strategies* (New York: Orbis, 1998), 14.

of reconciliation. Instead of objectifying others and creation, this understanding helps cultivate a sense of human dignity and of the holiness of all there is in order to share the common mission of reconciliation with creation. When it comes to resisting social sin or the globalization of indifference, the Ignatian mysticism of reconciliation calls us to be in solidarity with those who are suffering sorrow and brokenness and to go back to the Father in communion with sister moon and brother sun. This is because reconciliation is a process of restoring our relationship with God as God is found in one another. The Asian understanding of harmony can thus contribute to the deepening of the Ignatian mysticism of reconciliation by encouraging in-depth listening and coexistence in harmony. Contemplating the web of relationships in God in particular makes all people and all things relevant and sacred, which in turn develops a deep sense of networking and collaboration with one another and with all creation. Looking at the web of relationships in a deeper fashion helps us to see the working presence of God in everything, and finding God in all things makes the web of life right for the glory of God.

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MARY AND ECUMENISM

Hopeless Conflict or False Dilemma?

Leo-Martin Angelo R. Ocampo

Mary's role vis-à-vis the tenuous relationship between Roman Catholics and other Christians may be likened to the proverbial image of a double-edged sword—the figure of the Mother of Jesus can serve as a common reference or rallying point among believers of various denominations, on the one hand, yet also act as an added obstacle to understanding and harmony between them, on the other. This paper explores the evolution of Marian doctrine and devotion in relation to the pursuit of ecumenical agreement and fellowship among the followers of Christ.

Before anything else, however, it must be reiterated that we are not dealing with monolithic realities when it comes to engaging with Christian churches today. Such is the basic problem in this field as articulated by Weeden, for whom "it is impossible to write about Mary from *the* Protestant point of view because there is no one Protestant viewpoint."[1] There is no uniform Orthodox, Evangelical, or Lutheran stance on Mary even when we speak of Orthodox Christians, Evangelicals, or Lutherans in particular. Except for the Roman Catholic Church which enjoys a relative degree of uniformity, at least when it comes to official doctrine and practice, Christian churches often

[1]T. Weeden, "Mary: A Protestant Perspective," *Chicago Studies* 27:1 (1988): 80.

vary within and among themselves with regard to both beliefs and practices. It is for this reason that we deal with issues rather than with relationships in this study. Moreover, for the sake of focus, we shall confine the discussion further into two areas: doctrine and devotion.

Mary from Protestant Standpoints

Gaventa and Rigby expressed well the multiplicity of Protestant viewpoints of Mary in the plural title of their anthology, *Blessed One: Protestant Perspectives on Mary*.[2] In her foreword to this book, Norris makes an insightful observation: "I think that many Protestants, if they think about Mary at all, get hung up on what they are *supposed* to believe about her."[3] She even goes on to share that the "church in which [she] was raised had a curious attitude towards Mary, an odd mixture of hubris and bashfulness. We dragged Mary out at Christmas, along with the angels, and placed her at center stage. Then we packed her safely in the crèche box for the rest of the year."[4] She laments thus: "We effectively denied Mary her place in Christian tradition and were disdainful of the reverence displayed for her, so public and emotional, by many millions of Catholics around the world."[5]

Unitatis Redintegratio, the Second Vatican Council's decree on ecumenism, also points to Mariology as one of the key areas of disagreement among modern Christians:

> We are aware indeed that there exist considerable divergences from the doctrine of the Catholic Church concerning Christ Himself, the Word of God made flesh, the work of redemption, and consequently,

[2]B. Gaventa & C. Rigby, eds., *Blessed One: Protestant Perspectives on Mary* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2002).

[3]K. Norris, Foreword to Gaventa & Rigby, eds., *Blessed One: Protestant Perspectives on Mary*, ix (emphasis added).

[4]Norris, Foreword, xi–xii.

[5]Norris, Foreword, xi–xii.

> concerning the mystery and ministry of the Church, and *the role of Mary in the plan of salvation*.[6]

As Aureada says, "Mary has been a controversial girl, a pain in the neck, a stumbling block … in ecumenical discussions especially!"[7] There seems to be, inasmuch as Catholics are so attached to Mary, a corresponding aversion to her on the part of some Christians from other churches.

Connelly makes a similar observation, remarking that "other Christians have ignored Mary. They aren't interested in looking seriously at her life or character. For many of us Mary is little more than a figurine in the nativity set that we dust off each year and put away."[8] Nonetheless, he articulates that the reality of the figure of Mary is not so easily swept under the rug; to do so would be ironic, if not tragic, given her prominent role in the life of Jesus himself:

> How can we simply ignore her when the Bible tells us so much about her godliness and courageous obedience to God? One part of the Christian community lifts Mary almost to the level of deity while another part finds it easier to confine her to Christmas pageants and sentimental Christmas cards. I'm afraid that if most of us were asked to name the great women of faith in the Bible we would quickly picture Ruth gleaning in the fields of Boaz or Mary of Bethany anointing Jesus with precious oil, but we would not even think of Jesus' mother.[9]

Whether at the Nativity or at Calvary, the central role of Mary cannot be denied without doing injustice to the Gospels themselves, where we often find her next to her Son. In fact, as Butler notes, there are actually more verses about Mary in the Bible than there are about

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[6]Second Vatican Council, *Unitatis Redintegratio* [Restoration of Unity] (November 21, 1964), no. 20 (emphasis added). Hereafter referred to as UR.

[7]J. Aureada, "Mary: A Paradigm in Ecclesiology," *Quarens: Journal of Theology and Pastoral Life* 8 (2013): 1.

[8]D. Connelly, *Mary: What the Bible Really Says* (Illinois: Intervarsity Press, 1998), 11.

[9]Connelly, *Mary: What the Bible Really Says*, 11–12.

the Eucharist, something Protestant Christians cannot just overlook.[10] As Padgett puts it, "Mary is imperative to ecumenism because she is central to the story."[11]

Indeed, the relationship of other Christians with Mary has not always been an antagonistic one. As the Second Vatican Council acknowledged,

> It gives great joy and comfort to this holy and general Synod that even among the separated brethren there are some who give due honor to the Mother of our Lord and Savior, especially among the Orientals, who with devout mind and fervent impulse give honor to the Mother of God, ever virgin.[12]

Eastern Christians in particular have always been very devoted to Mary. They have remained united with Catholics in the belief in her divine motherhood and perpetual virginity, and the Council recognized in *Unitatis Redintegratio* the manner in which they

> pay high tribute, in beautiful hymns of praise, to Mary ever Virgin, whom the ecumenical Council of Ephesus solemnly proclaimed to be the holy Mother of God, so that Christ might be acknowledged as being truly Son of God and Son of Man, according to the Scriptures.[13]

John Paul II also affirmed the peculiar closeness of Eastern Christians with the Mother of the Savior, commenting that "it does not surprise us therefore that Mary occupies a privileged place in the worship of the ancient Oriental churches with an incomparable abundance

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[10]D. Butler, "The Blessed Virgin Mary in the Protestant Tradition," in W. McLoughlin & J. Pinnock, eds., *Mary is for Everyone: Papers on Mary and Ecumenism* (Wiltshire: Gracewing, 1997), 56.

[11]C. Padgett, *Wholly Mary, Mother of God* (Cincinnati, OH: St. Anthony Messenger Press, 2011), 60.

[12]Second Vatican Council, *Lumen Gentium* [Light of Nations] (November 21, 1964), no. 69.

[13]UR no. 15.

of hymns and feasts."[14] Thus, while the Virgin has at times been a bone of contention among Christians, she can also be seen as a ray of hope for Christian reconciliation and unity, "a Marian light cast upon ecumenism."[15]

Many of the original Reformers, too, were themselves devoted to Mary, or at least respected her as an exemplary disciple of Christ. As Migliore attests:

> The Reformers were, of course, deeply respectful of Mary. They accepted the patristic designation of Mary as theotokos, "the bearer of God," a name whose primary import both for the patristic church and for the Reformers was christological rather than mariological. Luther often spoke of Mary as the "blessed Mother of God" and wrote a beautiful treatise on the Magnificat (1521). Calvin discussed the stories of Mary with characteristic insight and balance in his commentaries on the Gospels, saying that Mary should be held in high regard. He referred to her not only as the holy Virgin but also as our teacher in the faith, remarking that even the apostles were her students in certain matters.[16]

This respectful or even reverent attitude toward Mary, however, was markedly qualified and already growingly distinct from the Catholic veneration of the Virgin. Migliore is quick to add thus: "For Calvin, however, Mary was accorded appropriate honor not by bestowing high-sounding titles on her but by following her simple obedience and her witness in praise of the grace of God."[17] Nevertheless, O'Meara wisely recalls that aversion to Mary is not integral to the Reformation itself:

> It was the times with their changes in intellectual and cultural outlook, it was the very history of the Reform with its forgetfulness of the fullness of its Lutheran and Calvinist inheritance, which caused a religion to

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[14]John Paul II, *Redemptoris Mater* [Mother of the Redeemer] (March 25, 1987), 31. Hereafter referred to as RM.

[15]RM no. 50.

[16]D. Migliore, "Woman of Faith: Toward a Reformed Understanding of Mary," in Gaventa & Rigby, eds., *Blessed One: Protestant Perspectives on Mary*, 117 (emphasis added).

[17]Migliore, "Woman of Faith," 117.

> come into existence without any place for Christ's mother. We should remember that this was not the view of the Reformers, nor is it intrinsic to Protestantism.[18]

Roots of the Conflict

So where is the discord about Mary, which has persisted until today, coming from?

The Protestant difficulty concerning Mary does not seem to be due to her *in se* but to some differences with the Roman Catholic Church regarding both doctrine and devotion. As John Paul II acknowledges, "Many Protestant communities, because of a particular conception of grace and ecclesiology, are opposed to Marian doctrine and devotion, maintaining that Mary's co-operation in the work of salvation prejudices Christ's unique mediation."[19] This is especially true with regard to certain teachings and titles, such as the novel doctrine of Mary as Mediatrix, Co-Redemptrix, and Advocate that was being proposed for definition as dogma since the 1950's, or even the solemnly defined dogmas of the Immaculate Conception and Assumption, to which even some Orthodox denominations take exception.[20]

Another point of disagreement is the fact that some manifestations of Marian devotion are characterized by excess and exaggeration—a valid concern that has been acknowledged even by Catholics. For Paul VI,

> the ecumenical aspect of Marian devotion is shown in the Catholic Church's desire that, without in any way detracting from the unique character of this devotion, every care should be taken to avoid any

[18]T. O'Meara, *Mary in Protestant and Catholic Theology* (New York: Sheed and Ward, 1966), 137.

[19]John Paul II, General Audience (November 12, 1997).

[20]For a thorough and very erudite discussion of these recent disputes, see A. Blancy, M. Jourjon, & the Dombes Group, *Mary in the Plan of God and in the Communion of Saints* (New York/Mahwah, NJ: Paulist Press, 1999), 96–109.

> exaggeration which could mislead other Christian brethren about the true doctrine of the Catholic Church.[21]

For instance, we find a rather curious reprobation, in the acts and decrees of the First Plenary Council of the Philippines, of images of Mary vested as a priest.[22] The Catholic Church has always certainly distinguished between the worship due to God alone, referred to in Latin as *latria*, the honor accorded to the saints, called *dulia*, and the unique reverence accorded to Mary, known as *hyperdulia* and which is above that accorded to any other saint.

Paul VI likewise said that "the Church desires that any manifestation of cult which is opposed to correct Catholic practice should be eliminated."[23] The 1975 CBCP pastoral letter *Ang Mahal na Birhen*, for example, explicitly disapproves of specific local abuses such as multiplying images of Mary and pitting them against each other as rivals, using Marian sacramentals as magical and superstitious objects, and obsessing over visions and "strange announcements, threats and practices," among others.[24] The subject of invoking Mary's intercession is also particularly problematic for other Christians since the Protestant tradition promotes direct access to God with Christ as the One Mediator.[25]

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[21]Paul VI, *Marialis Cultus* [Marian Devotion] (February 2, 1974), no. 32. Hereafter referred to as MC.

[22]"Reprobata est imago B. Mariae Virginis vestibus sacerdotalibus indutae." See Plenary Council of the Philippines, *Acta et Decreta Primi Concilii Plenarii Insularum Philippinarum*, Caput VI, 570, 3.0 (Manila: Typis Pontificiae Universitatis Sancti Thomae, 1956).

[23]MC no. 32.

[24]See Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines, *Ang Mahal na Birhen: Mary in Philippine Life Today* (Manila: Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines, 1975), 80.

[25]See, likewise, the discussion of Blancy et al. regarding differences in the aspects of the Marian cult in *Mary in the Plan of God and in the Communion of Saints*, 109–113.

Migliore elaborates on this quandary from the Protestant side, also attributing the problem to certain Catholic doctrines and devotions:

> Unlike Roman Catholic theology, Reformed theology has never given much attention to Mary, the mother of Jesus.… The reason for this eclipse of Mary in Protestant theologies in general and Reformed theologies in particular [is] not difficult to identify. The profuse growth of Mariology in the Middle Ages met with strong criticism at the time of the Reformation. Since the Reformers held with Scripture that there could be only one mediator between God and humanity (1 Tim. 2:5), *exaggerated Marian titles and exuberant Marian devotion* seemed to them to threaten the clarity of the gospel message of salvation by grace alone, through faith alone, in Christ alone.[26]

Weeden traces the conflict and identifies the crux of the Protestant problem about certain Marian doctrines:

> The Reformers and Wesley rejected the Catholic position that grace is a power that can be bestowed or dispensed. Consequently, for them, as well as Protestants today, Mary could not be an agent of grace and cannot have played any contributory role in God's redemptive plan except to be a vessel for the fulfillment of the incarnation. The Marian theses of coredemptrix, mediatrix and dispensatrix have no theological meaning for Protestantism.[27]

Indeed, it is interesting to note that although the so-called fifth Marian "dogma" has never been officially declared as such, there are at least two dioceses in the Philippines—Digos and Kidapawan—whose cathedrals carry the title of *Mary, Mediatrix of All Grace*. There are movements in the other direction, though—in April 2017, a Vietnamese congregation with the name *Congregation of the Mother Co-Redemptrix* was renamed *Congregation of the Mother of the Redeemer* at the instance of the Congregation for the Evangelization of Peoples to avoid the "theological ambiguity" of the title.

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[26]Migliore, "Woman of Faith," 117 (emphasis added).

[27]Weeden, "Mary: A Protestant Perspective," 85.

Describing these doctrinal debacles as "an ecumenical interlocking deadlock,"[28] Aureada avers that

> Protestants have reread these dogmas, in the light of up-dated biblical narratives on her and have found them inaccurate and empty doctrines or complex jargons. Protestants have been criticizing Catholic Marian piety as bordering on idolatry—if not outright, plain and simple Mariolatry—because Catholic Marian devotional practices seem to "deify" her.[29]

Barth even goes as far as to say that

> in the doctrine and worship of Mary, there is disclosed the one heresy of the Roman Catholic Church which explains the rest. The "mother of God" of Roman Catholic Marian dogma is simply quite the principle, type and essence of the human creature co-operating servant-like (*ministraliter*) in its own redemption on the basis of prevenient grace.…[30]

In the interest of fairness, however, it must be pointed out that Protestants are not the only ones objecting to these novel dogmas—Catholics are as well. In his review of *Mary is for Everyone: Essays on Mary and Ecumenism*, Hurley narrates what happened in the Commission tasked by the Vatican to examine the proposed fifth Marian dogma:

> The commission consisted of eighteen Catholic mariologists and five other theologians: three Orthodox, one Lutheran and one Anglican.… The advice was unanimous as well as negative. The titles, it was submitted, are ambiguous and, even if given a minimal content, their definition would be inopportune.[31]

All these notwithstanding, O'Meara suspects that there are deeper reasons for the Protestant opposition to Catholic Marian doctrine and devotion. For him,

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[28]Aureada, "Mary: A Paradigm in Ecclesiology," 7.

[29]Aureada, "Mary: A Paradigm in Ecclesiology," 4.

[30]K. Barth, *Church Dogmatics* (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1956), 143.

[31]M. Hurley, "Mary is for Everyone: Essays on Mary and Ecumenism (review)," *The Month* 31:5 (1998): 203.

> Luther calls to his aid the authority of Scripture in dealing with Mary, for instance, when he abolishes the feast of the Assumption. This may be a strong factor, but *sola scriptura* is not the guide in his dealings with Mary. Rather it was Luther's dislike of what seemed papist superstition, his desire to make the pardon of God through Christ unique and freely accessible to every Christian; this stands behind his considerations of Mary.[32]

The Protestant principle of *sola scriptura* has what George calls the "pruning effect of the scriptural principle."[33] For him, this is one element that accounts for the curious phenomenon whereby evangelical Protestants "remember the Reformation critique of Marian excess but not the positive appraisal of Mary's indispensable role in God's salvific work." He keenly observes, for instance, that

> Luther closed his commentary on the Magnificat with a prayer of intercession addressed to the Virgin Mary. But already in Zwingli's Sixty-Seven Articles of 1523, it was claimed that, because Christ is our only mediator, no mediators other than Christ are needed beyond this life. Luther too gave up Marian intercession when he could find no explicit scriptural warrant for it in the Bible.[34]

As the conflict between them escalated, Protestants and Catholics eventually weaponized the figure of Mary. On the Protestant side, there was a Marian iconoclasm that O'Meara describes as "a byproduct of the Reformation which Luther strictly forbade."[35] On the Catholic front, there was what Blancy et al. called a Counter-Reformist "triumphalist Mariology"[36] characterized, as if to spite the Reformers, by the multiplication of Marian titles and feasts and an unprecedented growth in Marian devotional practices: "Beginning with the Thirty Years War (1618–48) and the fierce interconfessional struggle associated with it,

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[32]O'Meara, *Mary in Protestant and Catholic Theology*, 122.

[33]T. George, "Evangelicals and the Mother of God," *First Things* (February 2007).

[34]George, "Evangelicals and the Mother of God."

[35]O'Meara, *Mary in Protestant and Catholic Theology*, 124.

[36]Blancy et al., *Mary in the Plan of God and in the Communion of Saints*, 46.

these tendencies developed further and were strengthened both in their importance and in their exaggerations.…"[37]

Such reactive attitudes make no positive contribution to ecumenism and lead only to the development of hardline positions that make dialogue exceedingly difficult, if not almost impossible. George compares this, on the part of Protestantism (although it is certainly true as well for certain segments of Catholicism), to the medical condition of atherosclerosis, which of course is extremely dangerous and potentially fatal. He says that

> beyond the theological constraints of a biblical religion, however, there was also what might be called an *ecclesiological hardening of the arteries* within the Protestant and evangelical traditions. To be an evangelical meant not to be a Roman Catholic. To worship Jesus meant not to honor Mary, even if such honor were biblically grounded and liturgically chaste.[38]

Indeed, there are those who continue even today to oppose initiatives toward mutual Mariological self-examination and dialogue that aim for greater ecumenical understanding, as is the case with the Southern Baptist theologian Mohler, of whom Biema writes:

> He is underwhelmed by the Scripture-based reconsiderations of people like Gaventa. "Insofar as Evangelicals may have marginalized Mary's presentation in the Bible, it needs to be recovered," he concedes. "But the closer I look at the New Testament, the more convinced I am that it does not single her out for the kind of attention that is being proposed. We have not missed the point about her. To construct a new role for her is simply overreaching."[39]

Mohler was also quoted in the same article as saying, in rather absolute terms, that

> Mary is held forth as the maternal face of God, some dimension that is fundamentally absent from Scripture. God's love is presented in biblical terms without any need for Mary as an intermediary. To suggest that

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[37]Blancy et al., *Mary in the Plan of God and in the Communion of Saints*, 37.

[38]George, "Evangelicals and the Mother of God" (emphasis added).

[39]D. Biema, "Hail, Mary," *Time* (March 21, 2005).

> need, even as "symbolic" instead of doctrinal … is the Reformation in reverse. It's simply profoundly unbiblical, and it leads to the worst excesses of Marian devotion.[40]

No dialogue is possible with such a disposition.

In Search of Balance

Paul VI already recognized the importance of these divergences in Marian doctrine and devotion as early as 1974:

> We realize that there exist important differences between the thought of many of our brethren in other Churches and ecclesial communities and the Catholic *doctrine* on Mary's role in the work of salvation. In consequence there are likewise differences of opinion on the *devotion* which should be shown to her.[41]

At the same time, he expressed hope that these differences would not remain insurmountable and eventually be resolved:

> Nevertheless, since it is the same power of the Most High which overshadowed the Virgin of Nazareth (cf. Lk. 1:35) and which today is at work within the ecumenical movement and making it fruitful, we wish to express our confidence that devotion to the humble handmaid of the Lord, in Whom the Almighty has done great things (cf. Lk. 1:49), will become, even if only slowly, not an obstacle but a path and a rallying point for the union of all who believe in Christ.[42]

Such a move to recognize rather than deny the presence of a problem is a decisive first step toward its resolution.

Around the same time, and curiously enough, O'Meara observed an interest on the part of Protestants to rethink their position on Mary. He remarked—and this was as early as the 1960s—that "in our time,

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[40]Biema, "Hail, Mary."

[41]MC no. 33 (emphasis added).

[42]MC no. 33.

we have seen the reaction: a call by Protestants to reconsider Mary."[43] The Ecumenical Society of the Blessed Virgin Mary (ESBVM) was thus established in 1967, and continues until today. Hence, within the move propitious ambient of a more sober time that followed the intense and heated reactions immediately after the Reformation, there has been growing room for openness and dialogue, even on what has been the highly contentious and divisive topic of Mary. As O'Meara says by way of an invitation, "Today we should drive away the clouds of polemic and mistrust. Theology may appear only to clarify and to deepen radical cleavages between Christians, but eventually it will unite."[44]

As a starting point or common ground for ecumenical dialogue about the Mother of Jesus, an International Mariological Congress initiated by Roman Catholics was held in Santo Domingo in 1965 with the very apropos theme "Mary in the New Testament." Since then, twenty-three other International Congresses on Mary have been held every four years at various centers of Marian devotion across the globe, the last one being at Fatima in 2016. Jelly highlights the import of these congresses, particularly of the ones held in Zaragoza and Malta:

> At Zaragoza (1979), there was agreement that: 1) all Christian praise, including that of Mary and the saints, is praise of God and Jesus Christ; 2) imitation is an important aspect of devotion to Mary, particularly of her spiritual attitude in responding with complete openness to the Word of God; 3) the distinction between the veneration due the Mother of God and the adoration due to God alone remains vital for all of us; and 4) while the precise meaning of invocation, not practiced in all the Christian churches, is in need of further elucidation, there is a common belief that those in the communion of saints in glory, among whom Mary holds the first place, do pray for us sinners upon earth—which intercession in no way affects the unique mediatorship of the risen Lord. At Malta (1983), there was added in the ecumenical statement the consensus that Mary prays *with* the Church, as she once

[43]O'Meara, *Mary in Protestant and Catholic Theology*, 137.

[44]O'Meara, *Mary in Protestant and Catholic Theology*, 12.

> did in preparation for Pentecost (Acts 1:14), and we are to unite our prayers with those of the heavenly liturgy, especially *with* Mary's prayer.[45]

John Paul II, in light of these developments in Marian ecumenical dialogue, taught in his catechesis on November 12, 1997 that "Mary's universal motherhood, even if it makes the divisions among Christians seem all the sadder, represents a great sign of hope for the ecumenical journey."[46] The Pope even went as far as to say that disagreements about Marian doctrine are, at least when it comes to the Orthodox and Catholic Churches, "perhaps more a question of formulation than of content and must never make us forget our common belief in Mary's divine motherhood, her perpetual virginity, her perfect holiness and her maternal intercession with her Son."[47] Indeed, it is not impossible to find significant common ground even when it comes to other Christian denominations.

A new and more recent resurgence of interest in Marian ecumenical dialogue has also been observed as of late. The March 21, 2005 cover of *Time* magazine, for instance, carried an image of Mary with the headline "Hail Mary: Catholics have long revered her, but now Protestants are finding their own reasons to celebrate the Mother of Jesus," and an extended article by Biema inside that particular issue surveyed recent developments in the ongoing Mariological conversation among Catholics and other Christians. George also noted in 2007 what he described as "growing evidence of fascination with Mary among evangelical Protestants."[48] This is demonstrated, according to him, by a widening celebration of Advent among evangelicals, the publication in 2006 of two books dealing with the subject—Tim Perry's *Mary for Evangelicals* and Scot McKnight's *The Real Mary*, the enthusiastic reception of the film *The Nativity Story* among evangelical audiences,

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[45]F. Jelly, "Mariology and Ecumenism: Reflections Upon 1965–1990," *Marian Library Studies* 17:1 (1990): 551.

[46]John Paul II, General Audience.

[47]John Paul II, General Audience.

[48]George, "Evangelicals and the Mother of God."

and the establishment of a study group known as *Evangelicals and Catholics Together*.

Using the modern imagery of television, Butler compares Catholics and Protestants in terms of display and sound:

> The Catholic seems to Protestants to be wholly in technicolor with no commentary, or at least if there is commentary, it is highly uncritical, with little reference to Scriptures as they have been interpreted in the Protestant tradition. The Protestant seems to the Catholic to have been concerned only with commentary, usually being a totally biblical and totally critical commentary with no regard for the history of the Church down the centuries, nor for the worship life of the Church which is its very lifeblood.[49]

Nevertheless, he concludes that "as far as the Blessed Virgin Mary is concerned, we Protestants have not yet managed to have her in full color but at least we are beginning to see a black and white picture, which is better than having no picture at all and far superior to just having the sound."[50] Indeed, such an attitude of epistemic humility and openness to growth can move the dialogue forward.

This is the "rapprochement" proposed by Weeden. It necessitates, first of all, an honest self-examination of the underlying causes of our conflicts which, as we have said earlier, may not actually be intrinsic or fundamental. He writes that

> a path toward *rapprochement* lies in looking deep beneath the surface features of our Marian theological differences to examine the subterranean theological forces that drive those differences and, then, to determine whether those forces are as crucially significant and possess the same determinative power and relevancy as once was the case.[51]

More concretely, he advocates the possibility of this deeper *rapprochement* of Marian theological differences between Catholics and reformed Christians from a double vantage point—first, a hermeneutical

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[49]Butler, "The Blessed Virgin Mary in the Protestant Tradition," 72.

[50]Butler, "The Blessed Virgin Mary in the Protestant Tradition," 67.

[51]See Weeden, "Mary: A Protestant Perspective," 85.

rapprochement from the mutual acknowledgement that both Scripture and Tradition are important, leading to the sharing of even more common ground, and second, a reexamination from both sides of the ontology of sin and grace, paving the way for a new paradigm with Mary as the symbol, being as she is the "prototype human, the re-presented *imago Dei*."[52]

In line with this, Carter upholds the "Scriptural 'balance' of teaching about Mary" as a possible model for ecumenical dialogue that can be emulated today. He observes that "Scripture implicitly warns about making too much or too little of her; it could be argued that it testifies both against Protestant tendencies to ignore her and tendencies in popular or Orthodox piety to overexalt her."[53] Such a pursuit of balance can pave the way for the growth of both sides in becoming more faithful to the Gospel. Indeed, George was on point when he asked,

> So why should evangelicals participate in and celebrate the Marian moment that seems to be upon us? The answer is: *Precisely because they are evangelicals, that is, gospel people and Bible people*. Mary has a pivotal and irreducible place in the Bible, and evangelicals must reclaim this aspect of biblical teaching if we are to be faithful to the whole counsel of God.[54]

All Christians, for that matter, are called to be evangelical and can only profit from an ecumenical Mariological dialogue. As O'Meara succinctly put it: "It is not a matter of Christ or Mary, but of both in proper balance."[55]

Conclusion

Before his death on the Cross, Jesus entrusted Mary to his beloved disciple (cf. Jn. 19: 25–27). Yet he was not simply entrusting his mother

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[52]Weeden, "Mary: A Protestant Perspective," 94.

[53]D. Carter, "Mary, Servant of the Word: Towards Convergence in Ecclesiology," in McLoughlin & Pinnock, eds., *Mary is for Everyone*, 158.

[54]George, "Evangelicals and the Mother of God" (emphasis added).

[55]O'Meara, *Mary in Protestant and Catholic Theology*, 346.

to his one friend for practical purposes because he stayed behind; rather, he was bequeathing his own Mother to become the Mother of his disciples. All Christians, while contemplating the figure of Mary today, are thus invited by the Gospel to do likewise: "Behold your mother."

Christians themselves, then, often sense the absence of someone important, if not essential, to their faith when they omit the figure of Mary. As Miller-McLemore says, "with Mary, Protestants experience powerfully the presence of an absence. That is, Mary is most present in her absence."[56] Pope Francis expressed this on a similar note:

> When a Christian tells me that it's not that he doesn't love Our Lady, it is just that he does not seek out Our Lady or pray to Our Lady, I feel sad. I remember one time, almost 40 years ago, when I was at a conference in Belgium, there was a couple who were catechists, both university professors with children, a beautiful family. And they spoke about Jesus Christ so well. At one point I said, "And devotion to Our Lady?" "But we have passed that stage. We know Jesus Christ so well, that we have no need of Our Lady." And what came to mind and into my heart was "Oh … you poor orphans!" Am I not right? Because a Christian without Our Lady is an orphan.[57]

May the ongoing ecumenical dialogue today help clarify misunderstandings and correct excesses so that present and future Christians need not feel estranged from Mary, she whom the Gospels uphold not only as a model of faith but as a mother for all believers. As John Paul II rhetorically inquired,

> Why should we not all together look to her as *our common Mother*, who prays for the unity of God's family and who "precedes" us all at the head of the long line of witnesses of faith in the one Lord, the Son of God, who was conceived in her virginal womb by the power of the Holy Spirit?[58]

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[56]B. Miller-McLemore, "Pondering All These Things," in Gaventa & Rigby, eds., *Blessed One: Protestant Perspectives on Mary*, 110.

[57]Francis, Address to the Young People of the Diocese of Rome Involved in Vocational Discernment (June 28, 2014).

[58]RM no. 30.

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