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EDITOR'S PREFACE

The theme of spirituality casts a wide net; thus the three essays in the present issue speak of diverse aspects of spirituality.

The first by Eligio Santos articulates a spirituality of work based on the life and thought of St. John Bosco. It traces the influence of the humanism of St. Francis de Sales and describes the Salesian approach to work in terms of the following three elements—creation, the Christ-event and community. Such an articulation proves valuable when read against the changing nature and context of work in our world today.

Oliver Dy's contribution is a technical discussion of the Rules for Discernment of Spirits in the *Spiritual Exercises* of St. Ignatius. These so-called Rules are intended to help those attentive to their spiritual life as they contend with many and often opposing thoughts and feelings. Dy's essay begins with the work of Ignatian scholar Michael Buckley on the structure and dynamics of the Rules and expounds on their nature and application at different points in one's spiritual journey.

The spirituality of leadership is a much-discussed theme today because of the recent emergence of leadership as a field of academic and professional interest. Theoretical studies and training programs do not only center on what knowledge and skills a leader needs but also on what kind of inner disposition is required of those in leadership roles. Karel San Juan's essay answers this question

using Bernard Lonergan's thought. It explicitates the spirituality of leadership on the basis of Lonergan's understanding of the human person as transcendence. This spirituality, it argues, lies in the coherence of interiority and exteriority in the leader.

The final essay in this issue by Maria Alem Coching analyzes the seven "I am" sayings in John's Gospel. Each one's context and meaning are clearly explained through textual analysis and secondary sources. The essay concludes by relating these sayings to the self-revelation of Jesus.

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ST. JOHN BOSCO'S SPIRITUALITY OF WORK

Eligio R. Santos, S.D.B.

The writer, a Salesian, has some experience in ministering to workers. Questions about the spirituality of work and work ethics have been persistent in his mind. The researcher has been instrumental in establishing the office ministry in Makati, Metro Manila in the 1980s. The author has been with the Brotherhood of Businessmen and Professionals in Makati, Metro Manila; Bacolod, Negros Occidental, and Cebu City, Cebu, and was a chaplain of several companies. Victorias Milling Company, Victorias, Negros Occidental, was one of them.[1] He had been invited to the Bishops' Businessmen Conference in 2002 in its effort to evaluate whether their member dioceses and companies lived according to the values that the group upholds. These experiences have challenged him to simplify the approach to the evangelization of work.

The author understands that theology is not just an intellectual esoteric science. It is also an organic and rational study, in the light of faith, of human values. These values also enter directly or indirectly

[1]The Brotherhood of Christian Businessmen and Professionals is a charismatic group which began in 1980 and meets once a week to share the message of Christ for the marketplace.

into the economy of salvation. The nineteenth century dealt with the morality of work and the mystique of work. The twentieth century had Marie Dominique Chenu, a Dominican theologian, who pointed out that work has its own unique value. After him, many other authors like Peter Schoonenberg, Yves Simon, Louis Savary, among others, spelled out this theology of work. They looked at work from the perspective of penance, incarnation-redemption, transformation of the world, and eschatology until the penning of *Laborem Exercens* by Pope John Paul II in 1981. After this encyclical, other authors like John Houch, John Haughey, Jose Luis Llanes, Dorothee Soelle, Richard Gilett, and Joe Holland, among others, continued to explore the other areas of work.

In the Church, great importance is given to work. The popes often addressed the topic of work in their social encyclicals. Leo XIII in *Rerum Novarum* described it as an activity of the mind and body done to support the family and to contribute to the community. Pius XI in *Quadragesimo Anno* stated that work would entail hardship and toil to dominate the earth. John XXIII in *Mater et Magistra* said that work is an expression of the human person (MM 18). Paul VI, in *Populorum Progressio* mentioned that work is a rational and an intelligent activity (PP 27). John Paul II wrote in *Laborem Exercens* that work is at the core of the social question and proposed the elements for a spirituality of work (LE 3, 24).

As a Salesian, the author has been asking how one can rationalize the ministry among workers in the Philippines when most of the ministries of the Salesians in the Philippines are school-oriented. It is in this quest that the author found out that Don Bosco has something to contribute. Don Bosco's impact on work had been acknowledged by no less than Pope John Paul II during his pastoral visit to Turin at the centennial of the saint's death:

> Don Bosco showed an extraordinary interest in the world of work. He had a farsighted concern to give the young generations a professional competence and an adequate technical training. Notable also was his concern to promote a more discerning education to social responsibility

> based on an increased personal dignity to which the Christian Faith gives legitimacy but also energy.[2]

Egidio Vigano, the seventh superior general of the Salesian Society, challenged the members with the following words:

> There is a compelling need for the Salesians to teach progressive work techniques so that people can tackle the gross problems of economic injustice and better their conditions of life. Evangelization should make use of all possible ethical means to retrieve technology and work organization from selfish people and put them at service of humanity. One must strive hard to imbue this important human activity with ethics and charity: placing work in a setting of love. One should train consciences and help restore work in its proper moral ambience so that it will be guided and enlivened by love and sustained by the power of the Holy Spirit. There is the need of evangelization of work.[3]

Adriano Bregolin, the Vicar of the current general superior, Pascual Chavez, summarized Don Bosco's spirit to the Don Bosco Alumni in Turin, Italy. The Alumni received an education centered on the primacy of the individual in social and economic life; linked to the world of work, where the professional approach is an element in the educative process.

Aware of the context today, characterized by technological evolution and economic globalization, Bregolin challenged those who are aware to be witnesses to a concept of work that is liberating and evangelical. The vicar proposed some common practical lines of action.

> First, all Salesians and alumni need to make a constant effort to be informed, to be discerning and to keep a critical eye on the world of work, particularly about the working classes and needy youth, at a time when emphasis on technical developments had led this world to be organized and developed without reference to human and religious values.

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[2]Pope John Paul II, "Discourse at the University of Turin," *L'Osservatore Romano* (October 10, 1988), 4.

[3]Egidio Vigano, "The Salesian Mission and the Workers' World," in *Acts of the Superior Council of the Salesian Congregation* 307 (January–March 1983), 6–7.

> Second, there is a need to develop a systematic and serious social formation that ensures a more open and supportive way of thinking and a greater ability to become involved in issues of justice.
>
> Third, faced with the great challenge of poverty, the Salesian XXIII General Chapter indicated the formation of the young to a social dimension of charity as a fundamental task so as to make education to the faith more concrete and credible.
>
> Fourth, educators should accompany the young with a knowledge of the complex socio-political situation, beginning from those nearest and more immediate to them.
>
> Fifth, the educator should ensure a complete and systematic presentation of the social teaching of the Church, as the key to understanding this situation and as an indication of the ideal aims Salesians desire to achieve.
>
> Sixth is to introduce the young to situations where solidarity and help are called for, above all in the world of work and to promote with them specific and practical projects of solidarity.[4]

These words are the marching orders of Filipino Salesians and their students and those connected with them in the Philippines, to continually find ways of defining, enhancing, and empowering the workforce of today in their respective areas. As Salesians or as recipients of the educative system of Don Bosco, sensitive to the young, they should develop the pedagogy of work in an integral human formation. Many young people are suffering from a bad experience with personal, family, or social relationships. Salesians are to welcome the young and the unemployed to their places and provide them with useful experiences so as to re-integrate them in a positive way in the world of work. This welcoming and healing experience will allow the young person to acquire self-esteem again, discover one's own abilities and capacities and be motivated to develop them. Vocational training, education towards self-employment and work scholarships are signs of the interest and concern not only of the Salesians, but also of groups of the alumni who have become involved in this ministry.

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[4]*Letter to the Past Pupils,* www.sdb.org (accessed May 12, 2005).

When one looks at the Church teachings about work, one observes the importance of self fulfillment and excellence in production as part of the creative element, the concern for the bigger picture; finding meaning in pain and difficulties and the vision that draws them all together: the new heavens and new earth. Egidio Vigano, as mentioned earlier, noted there is the need for Salesians to promote the "evangelization of work." Adriano Bregolin pointed out certain tasks for Salesians in the world of work. These lead to the statement of the problem: "What is the contribution of St. John Bosco and the Salesian Spirituality towards the evangelization of work in the Philippines?"

This article will present and analyze the Salesian spirituality of work under three analytical elements: creation, Christ-event and community. It will expound the work ethics of St. John Bosco as presented by Salesian authors. It will use materials from the Philippines, within the time frame of 1981–2003. It hopes to contribute to and enhance the Salesians' manner of working in the Philippines.

The study uses the three analytic elements of creativity, Christ-event and community as a prism to refract the various elements of Don Bosco's spirituality of work. These three analytic elements can be used to assess whether work furthers the Kingdom of God or not. Through these three analytic elements work becomes a humanizing, redeeming and unifying factor in God's plans. A person becomes a co-creator in one sense of the word: that is, one is actively influencing and transforming creation through one's labor.[5] Created in the "image and likeness of God" (Gen 1:26, 27 NAB[6]), persons are planned by God to "rule over the fish, birds, livestock over the whole earth" (Gen 1:26, 28). Persons show this creative element in self-expression, which results in the production of goods and services, which transform the world (LE 27). In expressing oneself, there are changes that occur

[5]Oliver F. Williams, "Introduction," *Co-Creation and Capitalism: John Paul II's* Laborem Exercens (Washington, D.C.: University Press of America, 1983), 6.

[6]New American Bible.

within the person that bring about the second aspect of the creation element: self-fulfillment (LE 6, 9). One's work also transforms the person closer to the image and likeness of God.[7] Work then becomes a humanizing factor. This creative aspect also includes the caring stewardship of creation itself.

With the Christ-event, work becomes a redeeming activity. The Christ-event shows the effect of the Incarnation and Redemption of Jesus Christ on work (LE 26). Although work was affected by sin, Jesus' life, death and resurrection elevated work and its suffering and pain, which came in due to sin, as part of the paschal process (LE 27). The Christ-event is the vision inspiring and drawing all these elements together and moving them forward. There is also an eschatological thrust: the new heavens and new earth and the new person in Christ.

The creation and Christ-event elements of work presuppose and bring about work with others, which in turn build communities (LE 10). Persons participate in creation and imitate God through work, but one's "creation" is also a sign of one's relatedness and shared existence. Through work one enters into the continuous process of giving and taking, teaching and learning that characterizes all good work. Unfortunately, unhealthy competition is stressed today in work instead of relationships.[8] Work unites people, its social power builds up community (LE 20). Solidarity, a virtue that builds up community, is that firm and persevering determination to commit oneself to the common good (SRS 38). Persons have a common nature, the *imago dei*, and common needs, thus they should see the other as neighbor, helper and sharer in the banquet of life to which all are invited (SRS 39). Through this virtue, persons seek to go beyond the self, leading to a new vision, reflecting God's triune life leading to communion

[7]Marie Dominique Chenu, *The Theology of Work: An Exploration* (Dublin: Gill & Son, 1963), 8.

[8]Dorothee Soelle and Shirley Cloyes, *To Work and to Love: A Theology of Creation* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1984), 94.

(SRS 40). Work then is not only a humanizing and sanctifying or a redeeming activity, but it also becomes a pivot of socialization.[9]

These three elements are present in the spirituality of work of St. John Bosco, inspired by the spirituality of St. Francis de Sales. We will see how this is lived out by the Salesian priests and brothers, the lay adults and the youth.

The spirituality of St. John Bosco has nine elements which lead to being attentive to the presence of the Spirit in the life of the young, while one is doing one's daily work with temperance, and united with Jesus as a friend and Mary as guide, so that one's life and work may be lived with joy. This is done within the community of the church where everyone is welcomed in a kind and friendly way so as orient all towards service of the kingdom.

The Life of Don Bosco

Don Bosco was born in the hamlet of Becchi, Castelnuovo d-Asti, Piedmont, north Italy, on August 16, 1815 to Francis Bosco and Margareth Occhiena. At the age of nine he had a dream that deeply influenced his life and mission. In this "dream" the boy found himself fighting a large crowd of rowdy lads who were rowdy and cursing, refusing to listen to his voice. Suddenly, a Man appeared, who motioned to John and said, "Not with blows will you help these boys, but with goodness and kindness!" "Who are you?" gasped the astonished lad. Then a Woman appeared. Putting her arms around him, she said, "Watch what I do, John." John looked. The boys changed into a pack of snarling wild animals whose growls sent terror to his heart. Then the Woman put out her hand. The beasts changed again, to a frolicking flock of lambs. "But what does it all mean? I'm just a farm boy. What can I do?" He burst into tears. The Lady's answer came to him, ever to resound in his heart, to be repeated audibly several times

[9]Chenu, *The Theology of Work*, 11.

in his life. "This is the field of your work. Be humble, steadfast, and strong!"[10] "If you wish to win over these boys do not hit them: be kind and appeal to their better selves.[11]" Pietro Stella surmised that this dream could have been around the Feast of St. Peter, when he heard the gospel injunction "Feed my lambs, feed my sheep," which so affected the life of Don Bosco that even Pius IX in the first audience in 1858 asked him to give a minute account of everything that had the slightest appearance of the supernatural.[12]

Ordained a priest for the diocese of Turin on June 5, 1841, Don Bosco began his pioneering work for boys with a "Hail Mary" and a short catechism lesson to Bartholomew Garelli on December 8, 1841. He envisioned the youth to be honest citizens and good Christians. He had another dream in October 1844 wherein he saw himself standing in the middle of wolves, goats, lambs, ewes, rams, and dogs. The noise they made was frightening. A lady dressed as a shepherdess asked him to accompany her and the flock. They made three stops along the way and at each stop, many of the animals were turned into lambs. Finally he found himself in a field where all the animals grazed together peacefully. As they continued to walk he found himself in a large courtyard with porticoes around it and at one end of which was a church. By this time, most of the animals were already lambs. Suddenly, many of the lambs were transformed into shepherds who took care of the others.[13] This dream would indicate that later on in his ministry, he would empower his own boys to continue his apostolate for youth, oratories, popular schools, workshops, youth associations, hostels, colleges, boarding schools for priestly and religious vocations,

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[10]Giovanni Battista Lemoyne, *The Biographical Memoirs of St. John Bosco* 1 (New Rochelle: Don Bosco Publications, 1989), 95–96.

[11]Lemoyne, *Biographical Memoirs* 1: 316.

[12]Pietro Stella, *Don Bosco: Life and Works* (New Rochelle: Don Bosco Publications, 1996), 8–10.

[13]John Bosco, *Memoirs of the Oratory 1815–1855* (New Rochelle: Don Bosco Publications, 1989), 209–10.

editorial activities and the apostolate of the press, building churches, reconciliation and spiritual direction, founding of two religious orders, for the missions, and positions of responsibility in the Church and for the Church. He died on January 31, 1888, was beatified by Pope Pius XI in 1929, and canonized a saint by Pius XI on Easter Sunday, 1934. Don Bosco's educational system, "the preventive system," was to be his means to sanctify himself and others.

The "preventive system" of education essentially means to prevent a boy from becoming bad. It is based on Christian charity. Its triple foundations are reason, religion and kindness. Reason implies a sense of understanding between teacher and pupil, engendered by daily contact, friendly chats, and an interest that is felt. Reason includes the humanistic approach to education: respecting yet guiding human nature as created and given by God. Religion implies that the life fostered by the sacraments of Reconciliation and the Holy Eucharist is enhanced and developed in one's active membership in the guiding and nourishing Church. According to the saint, where other systems of education have failed, this system of kindly understanding and sincere religion has more than succeeded.[14] The system is not new, though in Don Bosco's hands it achieved a freshness all its own. While it compensates for errors committed by youngsters who are often changeable and always forgetful, the system does not condone the errors; instead, it uses them as entry points to the formation of a solid character, permeated by Christian principles. This system can be used not only in school but also as an environment for work.

The Influence of St. Francis de Sales upon Don Bosco

Don Bosco's effort to live for the young was strengthened with his knowledge about St. Francis de Sales. He had been well acquainted

[14]Giovanni Battista Lemoyne, *The Biographical Memoirs of St. John Bosco* 5 (New Rochelle: Don Bosco Publications, 1989), 36–37.

with St. Francis de Sales right from his seminary days at Chieri. He had looked to Francis de Sales and Charles Borromeo as his models. Furthermore, St Francis de Sales (together with St. Aloysius Gonzaga, S.J.) was recommended as a specific model for all the clerics. In the seminary, the feast of St Francis de Sales ranked among the most important solemnities of the year, marked by inviting noted and distinguished preachers.

This devotion to St. Francis was part of a popular tradition. Since the seminary library at Chieri where John Bosco studied did not have the copies of the works of St. Francis, it would appear that the young clerics were not encouraged to read his works. In spite of this, Don Bosco had recourse to this saint in the early stages of his active apostolate and chose him as titular and patron. In 1844 Don Bosco named his first oratory after Francis; in 1852 he built his first church and dedicated it to the same saint. Two years later, in 1854, he named his first disciples Salesians. Furthermore, his Cooperators too were likewise listed under the same Salesian nomenclature, and their mouthpiece was the Salesian Bulletin.[15]

Don Bosco made it clear why he had chosen Francis de Sales as patron and model. In 1844, when he was appointed chaplain to the institution of the Marchesa Giulia di Barolo, the latter agreed to give him the use of two large rooms. Don Bosco transformed them into his "first Oratory church." In the saint's own words, the name St. Francis de Sales was given for the following reasons:

> First, because the Marchesa di Barolo had in mind to found a Congregation of priests under this title and with this intention had a painting of this saint that even today hangs at the entrance of the building; and
>
> Second, since our ministry demanded great calm and kindness, and had therefore been placed under the protection of this saint. We wanted

[15]Peter Brocardo, "Francis, Our Titular Saint and Patron," in Joseph Aubry, *St. Francis de Sales and St. John Bosco*, http://www.sdb.org (accessed January 24, 2006), 1.

> Francis to obtain from God the grace that would help us to imitate him in his remarkable gentleness and zeal for souls.
>
> A further reason was to place ourselves under his protection, so that he would help us from heaven to imitate him in his combating the adversaries of the Church, who were gaining numbers in Italy and especially in Turin.[16]

In his Regulations of 1847 Don Bosco was to speak of the imitation of Francis "in his charity and kindly demeanor," an attitude so necessary for the success of his educative work. Who was this patron saint of John Bosco?

Francis de Sales was a spiritual director, a writer, a preacher, a correspondent with people from all walks of life, a reformer, a theologian, a bishop, and an advocate of lay devotion, which is called lay spirituality today. He dedicated himself tirelessly to celebrate, sanctify and govern always for the good of his people, regardless of their social standing. It was as a bishop that he guided many, even women, along the path of devotion, living up to his episcopal motto: "Chosen by God, assigned to his people."[17]

Francis was born on the twenty-first of August, 1567 in the family castle of Sales, in Thorens in the duchy of upper Savoy. He was the firstborn child of twelve children of Francis and Frances De Boisy. After his university education in law, theology and rhetoric, he was ordained priest on the eighteenth of December, 1593. As a young priest, he was able to bring back to the faith the district of Chablais. On the twenty-fourth of March, 1599, he was appointed coadjutor bishop at the age of thirty-one. In 1602, he was assigned in Paris to bring the Gex area back to the Catholic faith. Francis became the bishop of the diocese on the eighth of December, 1602. He visited his 450 parishes and organized the further formation of his clergy, proclaiming that

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[16]Giovanni Battista Lemoyne, *The Biographical Memoirs of St. John Bosco* 2 (New Rochelle: Don Bosco Publications, 1989), 196–97.

[17]Brocardo, "Francis, Our Titular Saint and Patron," 12.

learning was the eighth sacrament for a priest. He reformed monasteries and emphasized the catechesis of the young.

In the midst of these activities he found time to publish in 1608 his *Introduction to the Devout Life* (Philothea—a woman who wanted to live a holy life amidst the daily ordinary work at home) and in 1616 his *Treatise on the Love of God* (Theotimus—a lay or religious who wanted to mature in holiness). In 1604, he met the Baroness Jane Frémyot de Chantal, who was thirty-two years old, a widow, and with four children. Together with her, Francis founded an order of contemplative sisters on the sixth of June, 1610. The Visitation sisters would at the same time care for girls and widows, and visit the sick and the poor. However, in 1618, all aspects of the external apostolate were suppressed. Francis died on the twenty-eighth of December, 1622. He was canonized on the nineteenth of April, 1665 by Alexander VII. Pius IX declared him a Doctor of the Church in 1877.[18]

Francis presented Christian life as a movement. The initial step of love is respect and admiration for the divine perfections ("Our Father who art in heaven"); second follows the love of benevolence, that is, the "love of goodness" ("hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come"). Finally one learns to love, submit to and obey God's laws ("Thy will be on earth as it is in heaven"). The perfection of love is to seek only His Will, to submit to it and fulfill it. This is the love that transforms. The one who helps a person love in such a way is Jesus. Thus, the *leitmotif* of Salesian spirituality is "live Jesus," the imitation of Jesus, gentle and humble, in the circumstances of one's state of life, whatever it may be. Even before Vatican II, he was exhorting lay people to carry out all their activities, unifying human, domestic, and professional tasks in one vital synthesis together with the religious graces. These should be done with one's heart, out of love, according to one's state of life. Spiritual direction was a way of guiding persons and empowering them to work for the kingdom of God. He would unite all those whom he directed into various confraternities. These or similar communities

[18]Brocardo, "Francis, Our Titular Saint and Patron," 2–3.

were needed for one's total formation. The cream of the intellectuals he united in the Florimontane Academy.

Francis de Sales accepted that every person is unique. A person is loved by God at every moment, and should encounter Him just as one is. The spiritual director must work on each one in one's unique situation. This is the humanism of Francis de Sales, who understood that in this journey there is progress and regress, time for resting and time for forging ahead, time for fast progress and time for slowing down. God's love envelops and graces the pilgrim on the move. The dialogue between God and the soul is always a personal affair in which the unfathomable mystery of divine predilection is at work. The important thing is to forge ahead and not stagnate in mediocrity.[19]

Francis de Sales was convinced that God sees humanity as a great and varied garden, each person beautiful in his or her uniqueness. The various callings of life (soldier, prince, widow, married woman) are like the various flowers of the field. God loves them all. Through his or her own calling, each person can find a way to a deeper friendship with his or her Creator. Francis approached people with genuine respect and gently guided them to recognize the unique path they would take in life. He made the journey to God joyful and possible for everyone to make. Above all, he advised against despair and the burden of fear.[20]

Francis de Sales saw that it is the "heart" that matters since the heart was made for God. In the *Treatise on the Love of God* Francis wrote: "Man is the perfection of the Universe, the spirit is the perfection of man; love is the perfection of the spirit, and charity is the perfection of love. This is why the love of God is the goal, the perfection and the excellence of the universe …. If our thoughts contain some reference to God, we immediately sense a certain congenial emotion of the heart,

[19]Brocardo, "Francis, Our Titular Saint and Patron," 7–8.

[20]Francis de Sales, http://www.oblates.org (accessed January 25, 2006).

which shows that God is the God of the human heart."[21] There is in each one, a readiness and a profound longing for the love of God. The very meaning of human affairs, and the destiny of every person is in the loving encounter with God. The tragedy is simply that persons can fail to recognize (even repress) their most profound hunger and turn away from God. In Francis' words, "The heart is the sanctuary and source of love."[22] Deep in one's heart there is the free capacity to love, which at times does not distinguish its object. Francis calls this "the very nature of the heart."[23] It is here that God encounters the person.

In the Salesian psychology, freedom is the power of the will to choose what shall be the object of its love. The heart is the actual person who makes a decision. If the heart chooses God and lives united to Him, love will permeate one's whole being and enliven it. In this way, Francis exalted human sensitivity. In this love of God one can be tender-hearted to love cordially, compassionately, and affectionately as St. Francis loved even those who were against him.

> The will does not love unless it chooses to love; and among the many loves that present themselves, it can bind itself to the one it chooses. Judgments and decisions must take account of passions and both sensitive and sensual appetites. It is in the depths of our hearts, where God is to be found in faith. It is precisely there that one encounters the war that we experience every day of our lives.[24]

Francis de Sales understood that charity affects the other virtues in different ways. He pointed out that "virtues that must enrich with

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[21]Francis de Sales, *The Love of God* (Bangalore: Asia Trading Corporation, 1982), 70–72.

[22]de Sales, *The Love of God*, 60–61.

[23]de Sales, *The Love of God*, 65–66.

[24]de Sales, *The Love of God*, 48–49.

their qualities the acts of all the other virtues."[25] "We must prefer the virtues that fit in best with our personal situation and the duties of our state of life, the better ones, not the most noticeable ones."[26] In *Introduction to the Devout Life*, he dedicated four chapters on humility and the awareness of one's deficiencies and frailties.[27] He underscored gentleness, which is humility towards one's neighbor and the flower of fraternal charity.[28] He also gave importance to simplicity and the important virtues of obedience, chastity, and poverty. The love of God lifts the human heart into the realm of a living and active faith. In the diversity of situations and virtues one needs to guard this love carefully, to preserve it and perfect it, for it is love that guarantees the true value of one's actions. This is the important principle of uprightness of one's aspirations, the purification of one's intentions.

> We do not generate and achieve perfection by means of a multiplicity of efforts; rather what matters is the perfection and purity of the intention we have when we carry them out. We do not always have to cope with important things in our lives; but we always have the ability to carry out our small duties extraordinarily well, that is, with great love. The holy man who, for the love of God, slakes the thirst of a poor and thirsty wayfarer with a glass of water does a very small thing, or so it seems! The intention, the kindness, the love that animates one's action changes the simple glass of water into the water of life, and life eternal.[29]

In another portion Francis mentions: "To suffer a rebuke with two grams of love is far more meritorious than to suffer martyrdom with only one gram of love."[30]

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[25]Francis de Sales, *Introduction to the Devout Life* (Bangalore: SFS Publications, 2002), 137.

[26]de Sales, *Introduction to the Devout Life*, 138.

[27]de Sales, *Introduction to the Devout Life*, 149–64.

[28]de Sales, *Introduction to the Devout Life*, 164–70.

[29]de Sales, *Introduction to the Devout Life*, 417–18.

[30]Francis de Sales, *Spiritual Conferences* (Bangalore: SFS Publications, 1998), 165.

Don Bosco, influenced by Francis de Sales, understood mankind and human affairs as good and open to the best. He centered his convictions on love which for him is the most positive and decisive reality that exists. Love is the totality of God and it must become the totality of man. "This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you. … He who loves remains in God and God remains in him. … If I have not charity I am nothing. … God is love … love comes from God. … Let us love one another … for love is of God. … Love is patient and kind …. Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things …. Love never ends. … God is love, and he who abides in love abides in God, and God abides in him" (Jn 4; Jn 15:12; 1 Cor 13:4, 7–8). Francis lived this life of love in a more reflexive way. Don Bosco did it in a more intuitive way. Francis was called the "Doctor of Love," and Pius XI called Don Bosco a "giant in charity."

The God they adored and preached is the Father so full of tender mercy, and Jesus the Good Shepherd who gives His life for His sheep. The *Treatise on the Love of God* tells the story of this patient divine love. Don Bosco taught his young charges, "You are the light and the love of the God who created you and who created you for your happiness."[31] The last of Don Bosco's labors was to build the Church of the Sacred Heart in Rome, as though to proclaim that all his work had the sole aim of being an expression of divine charity. The two saints considered charity not only at the beginning and the end. It constituted the process by which they toiled and fulfilled their pastoral work, the means and the form of their apostolate. The bishop, the priest, the educator must above all else love "with deeds and in truth" (1 Jn 3:12) those to whom one is sent. Before being translated into action, the apostolate must be a personal relationship of love. This conviction prompted Francis de Sales and Don Bosco to exhibit a number of attitudes that could be called typically Salesian.

[31]Giovanni Bosco, *Il Giovane Provveduto* (Turin: Paravia, 1863), 25.

A quality of Salesian love is that of a good shepherd who loves the sheep and seeks to be loved by them so as to lead them the more easily to God. There is this unique relationship which Don Bosco summed up in the term "kindliness," a sublime respect for each person, including the poorest and the least likeable ones. The initial experience must be a pleasant, welcoming smile, a kindness that in all humility tries to be affable, a sense of humor, infinite patience and forbearance in the face of faults and ingratitude, and an invitation to friendship. In this way Francis de Sales and Don Bosco surrounded themselves with an aura of extraordinary pleasantness and congeniality. They were remarkable among all the saints as those who had an aura of attraction, and who were loved by all.

Salesian charity is expressed in a practical realism and a dauntless courage. True love is romantic and realistic, full of practical wisdom. It accepts others as they are, and tries to give them what they need here and now. It adapts itself to circumstances. Both Francis de Sales and John Bosco in their apostolate ran a course of popular apologetics in their preaching and writing. Their propositions were well balanced, their language simple, their presentation imaginative, and their style engaging and practical. They did not expect from their flock a holiness that was immediate or austere. They encouraged people to draw nearer to God in a steady, practical, and unexaggerated practice of virtue. They sought to instill in them a conviction of daily fidelity.

In all their apostolic efforts they never ceased to be impelled by love. They kept up to date and had no fear of trying out new approaches, calmly discussing various aspects of contemporary thought and action. Francis, in his Chablais mission, used leaflets and pamphlets slipped under the doors of his parishioners, and would later be proclaimed the patron of journalists. Don Bosco put up a popular press and was truly a staunch champion of the Catholic printing press. Today, both could be considered patrons of social communications, for both had great confidence in the value and progress of the media. In their own lifetime their own principal works went through multiple editions. Later on, the founding of the Visitation Sisters and the Salesian Society both surprised

the authorities in Rome. The launching of the numerous Salesian missions must have seemed, humanly speaking, foolish acts.[32]

These two men of action initiated many enterprises, and generally with great success. Those who knew them were always struck by their interior calm, their constant serenity, their smiling tranquility, and their ability to deal methodically with matters, prompted only by their profound love of the God they wanted to serve. Obstacles did not discourage them: they expressed their fidelity in a patience that was certainly not resigned but very active. There was always about them serenity and that peace of God which surpasses all understanding (Phil 4:7).

The relationship between Francis de Sales and Don Bosco is evidenced in their common aim: they tackled the evils that afflicted humanity during periods of cultural, social, and religious crisis with the miraculous weapon of charity. For Francis in the sixteenth century, there was the Renaissance and the Council of Trent; for Don Bosco in the nineteenth century there was the nationalistic movement in Italy and the beginning of the Industrial Revolution. Francis had to grapple with the distorted vision of mankind proposed by Calvinistic pessimism, and Don Bosco rebutted Jansenism.

The Uniqueness of the Spirituality of Don Bosco

Although there is the strong influence of St. Francis de Sales' spirituality on Don Bosco, still one can see the marked differences. In St. John Bosco this spirituality finds a first formulation in the dream at the age of nine years. "Make yourself humble, steadfast and strong." The young John Bosco received in Mary a mother and teacher who was to be at his side in his mission for the young. Later in the oratory, under Don Bosco's inspiration, there flourished various expressions of holiness and life in the Spirit. The biographies of some of the students, like Dominic Savio and Francis Besucco among

[32]Brocardo, "Francis, Our Titular Saint and Patron," 15.

others, describe the youthful sanctity of the first Oratory; it has been officially recognized by the Church and is offered to all young people through the canonization of Dominic Savio and the beatification of Laura Vicuña.

Don Bosco presented the Preventive System as a spirituality project. The content and method of spiritual proximity and encouragement are found in the concept of "reason, religion and loving kindness," fused by the "grace of unity" into a single experience. The *Companion of Youth* and the various Regulations written for pupils in Salesian houses carry in the simple context of daily life what is called for by Salesian spirituality.[33]

The secret to Don Bosco's educative endeavors was his intense spirituality, or that inner energy which united in him inseparably the love of God and neighbor such that it set up a synthesis between evangelization and education.[34] In him one can find the following traits of attentiveness to the situation of the moment, response coming from love of God and neighbor within the Church, and using one's total capacity while working with others in the community for the education of the young, especially the poorer ones. These elements were outlined in the Special General Chapter (GC 20) which coincided with the efforts of the Congregation to revise the formulation of the Constitutions and Regulations from June 10, 1971 up to January 5, 1972. This gathering outlined the nine elements of the Salesian spirituality. There is attention to the Presence of God in daily life, in the Church, and in the young, and the Salesian works with them with kindness, work and temperance, joyfully in the spirit of service and strengthened by one's relationship with Jesus and inspired by the example of Mary. The Twenty-First General Chapter (GC 21, February

[33]Twenty-third General Chapter of the Salesian Society of St. Francis De Sales, *Educating the Young People to the Faith* (GC 23) (Rome: Direzione Generale Opere Don Bosco, 1990), n. 158.

[34]Society of St. Francis de Sales, *Constitutions of the Society of St. Francis de Sales of Don Bosco* (CSFSDB) (Rome: Direzione Generale Opere Don Bosco, 1988), n. 21.

12, 1978) describes the Salesians as Evangelizers of the Young. The Twenty-Third General Chapter (GC 23, March 4–May 5, 1990) applies the nine elements to the young educating the young in the Faith, also called the Salesian Youth Spirituality. For the young, there are five elements: daily life recreated by encounter with Jesus Christ, living in joy and optimism experienced in and with the Church, which in turn empowers the young to responsible service.[35] Later on this same spirituality was applied to the Adults in the Twenty-Fourth General Chapter (GC 24) called *Communion and Sharing in the Spirit and Mission of Don Bosco*. Who are these lay adults? They are the lay people who have gone through Salesian training like the Alumni of Don Bosco and the members of the Salesian Cooperators. The chapter proposes five elements: starting from one's daily life, one is challenged to keep a preference for the young, especially the poorer ones, provide them with an environment of relationship called the "family spirit," and while being with and in the Church, one lives by the educational approach of St. John Bosco called the preventive system.[36] It should be noticed that the lay adult living the spirituality of St. John Bosco is responsible for creating a community conducive for the youth to grow in and for providing a process of growth in the preventive system. From the responsible service of the young, one is challenged to live out and share the spirituality in which one has been formed. It is part of the process of empowerment that the Salesian priests and brothers share with the lay members.

Don Bosco institutionalized his work for the young at the Oratory in Valdocco, Turin. Don Bosco trained the young to exercise leadership among their companions in every sector of life, even to the extent that the youngsters were called by Don Bosco to be with him "founders" of a new Congregation. On their side they helped him to begin, in

[35]GC 23, n. 161.

[36]*Documents of the 24th General Chapter: Salesians and Lay People: Communion and Sharing in the Spirit and Mission of Don Bosco* (GC 24) (Rome: Society of St. Francis de Sales, 1996), 86–95.

the context of everyday experience, a new style of holiness tailored to the typical requirements of a young person's development. This spiritual commitment was born from an encounter of friendship. This friendship, due to one's Baptism, would be a continuous point of reference whose implications would be more deeply understood and which would be a source of encouragement as one matures in the faith. "I want to stay with Don Bosco" expressed the choice of a particular way of growing in the life of the Spirit: experience of Christian life precedes systematic reflection on it.[37]

The center of this spirituality is the Gospel, the Person and Heart of Christ, the apostle of the Father who wanted all to be saved which Don Bosco expressed in "give me souls take away all else."[38] There is this gratitude to the Father for the gift of the Divine vocation, predilection for the little ones and the poor, zeal in preaching, healing, and saving because of the urgency of the coming of the Kingdom, the preoccupation of the good Shepherd who wins hearts by gentleness and self-giving and the desire to gather disciples into the unity of brotherly communion.[39]

Creation and the Salesian Spirituality

After looking at the life and mission of Don Bosco and how Francis de Sales influenced him, it is good to go into the elements of work, creation, Christ-event and community and see how in St. Francis de Sales's and in Don Bosco's spirituality these would be present and how their followers would live out these elements.

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[37]GC 23, n. 159.

[38]*Twentieth General Chapter (Special) of the Salesian Society of St. Francis De Sales: Salesian Charism* (GC 20) (Rome: Direzione Generale Opere Don Bosco, 1978), n. 78–79; CSFSDB n. 10–11.

[39]CSFSDB, n. 11.

When one looks at these nine elements from the vantage point of creation, which means looking at work as self-expression, self-fulfillment, and care for the rest of creation, the Salesian looks at daily life, taking its measure from the young, especially the poorest, and finding the Holy Spirit present in their lives, engaging oneself in work and temperance. When the element of creation is applied to youth spirituality, one can include daily life in this bracket. On the other hand, when one looks at adult Salesian lay spirituality, one can again find the element of attention to daily life and the needs of the young.

Self-Expression, Self-Fulfillment, and the Salesians

The person created in the image of God and made for God is at the core of Don Bosco's humanism. He respected the innate dignity of all of God's children. Don Bosco was an optimist, with a radical confidence in the human person and his natural and supernatural capacity. He possessed a deep understanding of man, exalted human values and virtues, and made room for emotions, joy, culture, and progress in his system of education. He was certain of the usefulness and value of action, convinced that every person could be taken in hand and helped to develop his/her interior talents, intelligence, freedom, heart, and faith. Don Bosco referred to these activities as reason, religion and kindness. He was patient with setbacks, kept hope and kept trying in the face of failures.[40]

Influenced by Francis de Sales, Don Bosco saw persons as oriented towards God, destined for eternal joy, and capable of responding to His love. The core of a person is the heart, and one's vocation is to love. The purpose of a person, of the universe, of human affairs, and of every personal destiny is the loving encounter between God who seeks the person and the person who seeks God, and from this love there flows the willing encounter with one's neighbor. Genuine education then is the initiation to true love; salvation begins when love begins, and to love there is no need to wait for extraordinary

[40]Brocardo, "Francis, Our Titular Saint and Patron," 14.

occasions: it is possible always and everywhere, in one's duties and in one's daily encounters.

If one looks at the life of Don Bosco one would find that attentiveness to the present, the work at hand, and to the needs of people, yet he was always guided by the vision he had at the age of nine. In 1840, the slums of Turin were overrun by the poverty that resulted in sweatshop factories with their hazardous machinery, child labor, and starvation wages.[41] Construction work was seasonal usually from April to December. During the winter lay offs, most apprentices and migrant workers returned to their families. Though the 1840s figures were not so clear, later in 1886 there were 1,481 bricklayers, 81 plasterers and white washers, 61 pavers, 38 roofers, and 23 building painters.[42] Regardless of their work, those who came from out of town were naturally those most at risk in the city, most likely to be preyed upon by unscrupulous bosses, landlords, or gangs, and least likely to have friends or family close by or to feel comfortable in church or catechism activities.[43]

At the beginning of his priesthood, Don Bosco would go with the other priests from the Convitto, a post-graduate formation center for priests, to catechize the inmates of the prison in the city of Turin. He abhorred this work but was prevailed on by the Scripture passage "I was in prison and you visited me" (Mt 25:36). He was shocked by the presence of young prisoners. John would approach them with words of kindness, faith and cheerfulness. As he continued to visit the prisons with Father Cafasso, his guide at the Convitto, his vocation seemed to be confirmed: "These boys were not bad once. Take care of them before they fall into crime—that is my task!" He wrote:

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[41]Giovanni Battista Lemoyne, *The Biographical Memoirs of St. John Bosco* 3 (New Rochelle: Don Bosco Publications, 1989), 33.

[42]Stella, *Don Bosco: Life and Works*, 102.

[43]Bosco, *Memoirs of the Oratory*, 199.

> Little by little, I instilled in them self respect and then made them understand the reasons of earning one's daily bread by honest toil and not by thievery. No sooner had I made some religious and moral principle clear to them that their hearts filled with an inexplicable joy that prompted them to mend their ways. In fact not a few reformed while still in prison and others after their release so conducted themselves as not to return to their gang.[44]

When they would be released, Don Bosco followed them up by assigning them to families or laypersons that could rehabilitate them, only stressing they attend mass on Sundays and Holy days. With this experience, he strengthened his resolve to approach the young with kindness and was again reminded on the necessity of good companions and good family relationships, yet he thought of sheltering them in some institutions.[45] As one goes through the anecdotes and life of Don Bosco, one has to take note of what Pietro Stella cautioned:

> Don Bosco by temperament found it difficult to systematize his thoughts and intuitions about realities: he could only keep on going back and making revisions. Don Bosco's writings are like his constructions, institutions, and organizations. He moves in stages. There is ongoing change in every matter, under the impetus of various factors, which we cannot always pinpoint today. Don Bosco had his absolute values and his constants, but working in the concrete he never turned into an absolutizer. What he did and left undone was inspired by the circumstances. It suited him to follow his decision and his inner life and it works as they move along.[46]

From this prison ministry, Don Bosco gradually formed the Oratory, the boarding house, the school, the professional school, the printing press and later on set up the Congregation of the Salesians of St. John Bosco, all because of this sense of mission. However, at his death bed, he too was surprised at all that he had done and was heard to say, "Had

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[44]Lemoyne, *Biographical Memoirs* 2: 83.

[45]Giovanni Battista Lemoyne, *The Biographical Memoirs of St. John Bosco* 4 (New Rochelle: Don Bosco Publications, 1989), 84.

[46]Stella, *Don Bosco: Life and Works*, xviii.

I more faith, I could have done more." He was looking at the present and finding God's guidance and moving on step by step.

Don Bosco gave these simple rules for these young workers at the Oratory of St. Francis of Sales regarding work:

1. My dear sons, man is born to work. God put Adam into the earthly paradise to till it (2 Thess 3:10).
2. Work means fulfilling the duties of one's state of life, whether they consist in studying or in learning an art or a trade.
3. Remember that by working you will contribute to the welfare of your country and your church. You will also benefit yourself spiritually if you offer your daily occupations to God.
4. Give priority to tasks demanded by obedience. Make it a rule never to neglect duties in favor of other optional tasks.
5. Give glory to God for whatever learning you may have for He is the author of all good. Do not glory in any success for pride is a worm that gnaws away the merit of our good works.
6. Remember that youth is the springtime of life. He who does not accustom himself to work in his youth will become an idler to the shame of his soul since idleness will nurture all other vices.
7. He who does not do the work that he is supposed to do steals from God and those over him. At the end of their lives, idlers will suffer the greatest remorse for lost time.
8. Always begin your work, your study period and your class with the Actiones and the Ave Maria. At the end of the day, say the Agimus and the Ave Maria. Say these little prayers well so that Almighty God may guide you in your work. Thus will also gain the indulgences granted by the sovereign Pontiff to those who say these prayers devoutly.
9. Commence your work in the morning with the Angelus and say it again at noon and at the close of day. In the evening add the De Profundis for the souls of the faithful departed.[47]

[47]Lemoyne, *Biographical Memoirs* 4: 553–54.

At first glance one can see the right orientation of Don Bosco about work which is similar to what one finds in *Laborem Exercens*. Work is coming from God and allows one to support one's self and others. Work is a good habit to develop, and one should always integrate it with one's prayers. A worker is supposed to express oneself in one's work. That is why it is not enough to have a good intention for one's activity. It is also important to ask the help of the Creator to fulfill it. This also shows that ordinary life is the place where one could be a saint, just like the spirituality of St. Francis de Sales.

The followers of Don Bosco look at 1) daily, ordinary life as the meeting place with God and, attentive to the Spirit and doing everything out of love for God, one becomes a contemplative in action.[48] This attentiveness to God in the daily life calls the Salesian to be a realist, attentive to the signs of the times with initiative and flexibility, as Don Bosco was, ever ready to adapt to the circumstances.[49] 2) They take their cue from the situation of the young, especially the poorest of them, and discover the action of the Spirit in their heart so as to collaborate in its development.[50] 3) The Salesian gives oneself to the mission with tireless energy, taking care to do everything with simplicity and moderation, knowing that one is participating in the creative action of God and cooperating in the building the kingdom.[51]

For the adult lay Salesian, the spirituality of daily life and of work is living in the presence of God in work. Daily life is constituted for the natural setting of perfection, the place to respond to the human and Christian vocation. The value of daily life leads one to see the whole creation as a gift of God. Life, nature and material things produced by man are seen as blessings to be used properly. One should be a steward

[48]CSFSDB, n.12.

[49]CSFSDB, n.19.

[50]CSFSDB, n.14.

[51]CSFSDB, n.18.

of interpersonal relationships. Sharing the joys and difficulties of the social context while seeking the sign of God's will are all part of the daily regimen for holiness. Time should be spent on useful tasks for personal or communal life in a healthy, educative, and creative form. Lay Salesians, like Don Bosco, should be imbued with the spirit of enterprise and hard work.

Don Bosco's school of work is where the pedagogy of duty is developed. Work, perceived as an integral part of God's plan for all, leads to defend the dignity of all work and of man as its subject. With the characteristics of one's specific vocation is demanded a professional approach—the greatest possible perfection in one's work. Jose Prellerzo states "at a time of economic depression, when little public attention was paid to professional instruction, the Salesian workshops offered many boys from peasant families or from working class backgrounds the chance to better themselves. There was a steady increase of artisans or professional students from 1880 (90) to 1887 (195)."[52] This implied that there was a generous acceptance of the toil involved, along with the constant commitment and ongoing formation that went with it. This also involved discipline and a sense of duty which beckoned one to a path of ascesis. The ministry became a concrete measure of spiritual maturity.[53]

For the adult, the spirituality in sharing in the heart of God, the disciple of Don Bosco has a better understanding of the importance and urgency of one's own vocation to render present to the young Christ's love for them. Prompted by this love, one dedicates oneself totally to the integral education of the young in one's family, community or workplace. Charity is the means and fundamental method of the mission. One gives added weight to the important values of Salesian spirituality like generosity, solidarity, simplicity, gratitude, fidelity,

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[52]Jose Manuel Prellezo, "Don Bosco and Professional Schools," in *Don Bosco's Place in History*, eds. Patrick Egan and Mario Midali (Roma: Libreria Ateneo Salesiano, 1992), 363.

[53]GC 23, n. 91–92.

joy, and optimism even in dark moments, expressing in this way the paschal dimension of Christian life.[54]

The Salesian employs the "Preventive System" which was defined earlier. One of the three elements of this system is using reason in dealing with the young. There is fairness and persuasion in contrast to repression and imposition. By employing reason, one evaluates everything with a critical sense and discerns the authentic value of earthly realties, respecting their autonomy and secular dignity. Reason enables the great endeavors of mankind to be discovered and shared in the continual and laborious process of personalization and socialization. The use of reason implies a solid humanism and genuine appreciation of the reality of created things. This makes the preventive system an open one rich in human hope and able to come to grips with different cultural situations. The use of reason implies a particular attention to contexts, a previous assessment of the situation, and effective arrangement of intervention. Using reason balances the process of avoiding minimalism and going to the other extreme of rushing ahead and imposing responsibilities which cannot be sustainable.[55] What has been discussed as the function of reason in the educational system of Don Bosco has been emphasized by the Vicar General at the introduction of this work when he mentioned the need for (1) being critically attentive to the present; (2) the formation of oneself (self fulfillment); and (3) knowledge of the socio-political context. This is called mindfulness to the situation. It is the effort to look at the situation in an objective way. This implies natural and learned skills in analysis, comparisons, and evaluation of the situations and circumstances workers find themselves in.

In 1988, during the centennial celebration of Don Bosco's death, Pope John Paul II emphasized this as the authentic view of Christian humanism:

[54]GC 23, n. 86–87.

[55]GC 23, n. 93–94.

> The value of the individual, of conscience, of human nature, of culture, of the world of work and of social living, are all accepted as needed by persons in their family, and in civil and political life. Reason invites the young to an attitude of sharing in the values they have understood and accepted. Reasonableness is accompanied by understanding, dialogue and unfailing patience through which the difficult practice of reasoning finds expression. It implies an updated and integral anthropology free from ideological oversimplification. Emerging values like peace, freedom, justice, communion and sharing, the advancement of woman, solidarity, development and urgent ecological demands all derive from reason.[56]

For the young, the spirituality of daily life is the effort with the help of faith to transform experience of life into gospel experience. One does not have to leave normal life to find God. One should live life integrally. This needs the grace of unity. This is to live the beatitudes even in adverse situations in life in a joyful way. When the Salesians live pastoral charity and produce a family setting in which "the need and joy of sharing everything is experienced," they facilitate the production of this harmony and raise up in young people the desire for happiness.[57] The first pages of the *Companion of Youth*, a prayer book produced by Don Bosco for the young, point out this requirement of youth: "I want you to be happy."

He had this profound respect for what God had created. He said that there were no bad boys, only misguided ones, and when given the proper environment, they could also become good and can become saints. Such was his awe at God's imprint in each person. He treated even the young with the respect they demanded as children of one Father. Furthermore, he trusted that God as Creator and Father would see to his needs and that of the young entrusted to his care. "Let us do what we can and Divine Providence will do the rest."[58] However, this image of God in the young has to mature and grow. This is where

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[56]John Paul II, "Discourse at the University of Turin," 4.

[57]GC 23, n.162.

[58]Lemoyne, *Biographical Memoirs* 2: 534.

one sees the ingenuity of Don Bosco's catechism lessons. Today this is called education in the faith.

This education in the faith is done in the context of freedom. The strong emotions of the young workers, influenced by their personal development and their weak will, make them think twice in the face of norms of conscience. Through the catechism, they gradually know right from wrong. They have accepted the "new humanism" (GS 55) and its values: the sense of freedom, the absolute dignity of the individual, the sense of one's personal life-plan, the need for authenticity and autonomy which are all Gospel-based. Unfortunately, other influences confuse them. The possibilities of choice, offered them from all sides, are overpowering and make it difficult to live by a harmonized set of values learned in school, training centers, and seminars.[59] This formation of conscience began at the Oratory but it was followed up in the work places. This was the reason why Don Bosco was visiting the factories of his students which eventually inspired him to set up his own production line.

Don Bosco understood that conscience is the inviolable sanctuary of personal encounter between man and God. A distorted conscience gives one a false vision of God, His Word and His Salvation. Conscience formation will empower the workers to confront differing values and harness these to human, Gospel, and Church laws. Conscience formation implies that the workers have, first of all, a sufficient capacity for judgment and ethical discernment. The young should not only be able to discern good from bad, sin and its structures, the action of God in one's person and in history; they should also exercise their autonomy and responsibility. In this process, openness to objective truth is a precondition. Don Bosco presented the moral principles faithfully, as adapted to the practical situation of the workers. Second, there is a critical formation concerning cultural models and certain norms of social life that are in contrast with Christian values. This would allow the workers to see through the ambiguities arising from

[59]GC 23, n. 183.

false rationalizations, current ideologies, or superficial judgments of events. Failure to live out one's religious commitment is oftentimes caused by a faith that has not been inculturated or by a non-integral technological progress.[60] The Word of the Lord contains within itself indispensable criteria for the expression of judgment on human actions. The Gospel must enter the life of the individual and provide one with a vision of the reality which has at its center the Father and Son. A swift condemnation on anything that is new or does not correspond to previous practice is not enough. Only with the word of God can one face them with competence.[61] Don Bosco understood all these and bequeathed this mission of conscience formation as a work of Salesians to guide the young in their path of self-fulfillment and self-expression. Conscience formation harmonizes with the challenge of Adriano Brigolin to the whole Salesian family to be critically attentive to the present socio-political context, to know how to evaluate it and identify the opportunities for evangelization.

Stewardship

Although one cannot talk about stewardship of creation as we understand it today, Don Bosco had a special love for nature. For eighteen years (1847–1864) he would lead a group of his boys to his family home at Becchi each October. At the beginning, there were only a few boys, around sixteen to twenty-seven of them. Later on the number swelled to sixty and to about a hundred. Initially, these summer walks were for those who had no home during the vacations. In the long run, he allowed others who would otherwise be affected by bad influences at home. In the mid-1850s these summer outings became rewards for those who excelled in their conduct and study. These outings were organized before the feast of Our Lady of the Rosary (first Sunday in October in those days). These had the spirit of pilgrimages. He would coordinate with the parish priest so that there

[60]GC 23, n. 186–87.

[61]GC 23, n. 188.

would be Masses in this place with the rosary. Later during their stay, the boys would hike to other nearby places.

These encounters with nature were for his personal vacation since he never thought of vacationing without doing anything. They were occasions when Don Bosco could visit his brother Joseph. The outings became an integral part of a total educational plan and method. The country trips integrated the sense of God, of religion, of study, of work and apostolic venture, and of joy that Don Bosco had learned from his mother and labored to instill in his sons. They were occasions of doing apostolate for the parishioners of the locality and their pastor. They were also chances for recruiting new students. Finally, they were a way of thanking his benefactors.[62]

It has been shown how Don Bosco respected the human person as God's creation. He allowed a person to express one's goodness through work in his teachings. In his own life, he was sensitive to God's presence in daily activities. As he looked at the dehumanizing effects of the processes of industrialization and urbanization on the young workers, he did not condemn the two processes as such, but allowed the power of God with the cooperation of the individual to transform these situations into something better. Instead of allowing the young workers to wallow in despair and slavery to forces around them, he shared with them the Christian vision and God's plan for human beings and trained the workers to become part of the transformation of their workplace and the city as a whole. He found ways to allow the young to use their power to become honest citizens and good Christians. Don Bosco "used" nature as a complementary way of experiencing God's refreshing care.

The Christ-Event and the Salesians

When one looks at the Christ-event, one notices that the Salesian enjoys friendship with Jesus, guided by Mary, while being challenged

[62]Bosco, *Memoirs of the Oratory,* 332–38.

to live out one's mission in Easter joy. These three have Jesus at the center. There would be no joy, and no devotion to Mary, if Jesus were not present. It has been seen that for Don Bosco the Christ-event is more salient and prior to everything. When considering the adult spirituality, the educational approach of St. John Bosco, the preventive system can be included. When one considers youth spirituality, one can include the friendship with Jesus and joyful living due to the resurrection of Jesus.

Already at the dream at nine years old Don Bosco was so impressed by the majesty and goodness of Jesus. What was important for Don Bosco was really the Christ-event. Even those around him who knew him understood the reason why he was working for the boys. This is succinctly expressed by Pius XI who, in an audience during the process of beatification, mentioned:

> At the core of what Don Bosco was doing was to study, meditate well and constantly on the mystery and work of our Redemption. He had received a specific mandate, a particular mission, namely, to continue the work of the Redemption, to expand and distribute more widely and in greater abundance the fruits of this Redemption. Think of all the souls that he led to share in the Redemption of Jesus Christ during his lifetime. Think of those souls, which have been called to share in Christ's Redemption by his *longa manus*, his sons and his cooperators. *Da mihi animas coetera tolle* (give me souls take the rest away).[63]

Incarnation and the Salesians

Pietro Stella, an authority on Don Bosco, observed that, rather than focusing on the mysterious manner of the incarnation and Christ's divine and human life, Don Bosco's attention turned to three more practical areas: the divine Person of Jesus, the mysteries of his life on earth, and the Christ who is at the disposal of a humanity weakened by sin. The mystery of the Trinity is not one of the truths on which Don Bosco dwelt on, but he encouraged the young to aim at being in

[63]Eugenio Ceria, *Biographical Memoirs* 19 (New York: Salesian Publishers, 2003), 217–218.

paradise. His focus was on a personal God, the supreme Good Who will assuage the thirst of happiness in the human heart. Creatures cannot satisfy that thirst precisely because the human being is made for God. Don Bosco did not offer contemplation or considerations that go beyond mere affirmation.[64] There were four ways through which Don Bosco stressed the presence of Jesus, which presumed and included the Incarnation, the most important of which is the Eucharist. The other favorite themes of Don Bosco were: Jesus as a model or example, Jesus as Divine Savior and Jesus as Judge.

The human condition of Jesus reveals the fact that God is presence, immanence and that God affirms life's transcendence. Jesus the Man, God's Sacrament, teaches that the place to meet God is in human reality: one's own and that of others, daily and throughout history. Human life inserts one in the event of the Incarnation.[65] If Jesus is in one's daily life then one has to love the ordinary aspect of existence. This is where the Father works. This means accepting the challenges, questions and tensions of growth; gathering life's fragments into the unity realized by the Spirit in Baptism; working to overcome the ambiguities present in daily experience and to leaven every option with love.[66]

Jesus in the Eucharist dominated the life of Don Bosco and his milieu. It is the Jesus of the Eucharist with all the elements that form part of worship of Jesus by the individual and the community. This is the Jesus with whom Don Bosco himself conversed in his daily afternoon visit in Church. This is the Jesus before whom he placed his boys in prayer, when he asked charity for his boys. When he dealt with Jesus in his later years he was no longer able to control himself. Don Bosco's Masses were celebrated in tears.

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[64]Pietro Stella, *Don Bosco: Religious Outlook and Spirituality* (New York: Salesiana Publishers, 1996), 108.

[65]GC 23, n. 163.

[66]GC 23, n. 164.

The Christ who dominated the whole existence of Don Bosco was, by preference, Jesus alive and present in the Eucharist, the "master of the house" (as he used to put it), the center towards which everything converged, the "bread of life," the "Son of Mary," Mother of God and of the Church. Don Bosco lived by and in this Presence, which was always close at hand. When he spoke of God, it was often in terms of Jesus in the Eucharist, true man and true God, who came down from heaven to redeem mankind. This is the Jesus who died on the cross and Who is still living on altars and in tabernacles. Nothing could be more easily accessible. To have Jesus in the house, in fact, meant that one could go and meet Him whenever one wished, take part in His death and resurrection, have a heart to heart conversation with Him, receive Him in Communion and be transformed by His Spirit for the mission.[67]

The life of Don Bosco, right from his early boyhood, and the history of the first Oratory constituted a hymn of praise to the Eucharist. His pupil St. Dominic Savio remarked:

> When I pass close to him (Jesus in the Eucharist), not only would I cast myself in the mud to honor him; I would even throw myself into a furnace so as to share in some way in that infinite fire of love which drove him to institute this great Sacrament.[68]

Behind the young saint there was his spiritual guide, Don Bosco, who passed on to him his own Eucharistic ardor.

> When Don Bosco preached on the extent of Our Lord's love for us, he would often weep and bring tears to the eyes of his hearers. Even during recreation time, if the conversation turned to the subject of the Holy Eucharist, he would beam with holy ardor, and he would frequently say to the boys: 'My dear boys, love Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament with all your hearts, and you will be truly happy!' His words made the boys more convinced than ever of the truth of the real presence of Jesus

[67]Bosco, *Il Giovane Provveduto*, 129.

[68]Giovanni Bosco, *Opere e Scritte di Don Bosco* 4, ed. Alberto Caviglia (Turin: Societa Editrice Internazionale, 1977), 37.

> Christ. He was truly happy when he managed to have a good number of the boys take turns in receiving holy communion each day."[69]

"The sacrifice of the altar," wrote Don Bosco, "is the glory, the life and the heart of Christianity."[70] On another occasion he told the boys:

> One cannot imagine anything more holy and precious than the Body, Blood, Soul and Divinity of Jesus Christ, and so when you go to Mass, I want you to be convinced that you are doing something which is the greatest and holiest thing you could possibly do, something which gives greatest glory to God and is most useful for your own soul. Jesus Christ comes himself in person to apply to each one individually the merits of his adorable blood which he shed for us on the cross of Calvary.[71]

Even more eloquent than his words was his example.

> He was recollected, attentive, devout and exact in his celebration of Mass; he pronounced the words with clarity and feeling; he visibly enjoyed distributing holy communion, hardly able to conceal his inner fervor. But in it all there was no trace of affectation or serving the eye; without either haste or undue lingering he proceeded from start to finish in a calm and natural manner. This is how the early Salesians saw him, and this too is how he appears to us, the latest arrivals.[72]

His union with Christ in the celebration of the Eucharist reached sublime heights: "occasionally his face would be bathed in tears …. It also happened that at times he looked so ecstatic after the elevation that he appeared to be seeing Jesus Christ with his own eyes."[73] This very touching way of celebrating the Eucharist occured with greater

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[69]Lemoyne, *Biographical Memoirs* 4: 317.

[70]Giovanni Bosco, "Il Cattolico Istruito nella sua Religione" (Turin: Letture Cattoliche I: 9, 1853–54), 191.

[71]Bosco, *Il Giovane Provveduto*, 85.

[72]Eugenio Ceria, *Don Bosco con Dio* (Asti: Colle Don Bosco, 1947), 97–98.

[73]Lemoyne, *Biographical Memoirs* 4: 314.

frequency during his last years.[74] His manner of celebration was of one who deeply believed, and people came from afar to join him in his celebration of the Eucharist. His great educational concern was to help the boys grasp the sacramental reality of the Mass:

> Understand well, my children, that when you assist at holy Mass it is just the same as if you were seeing our divine Savior coming out of Jerusalem and carrying his cross to Calvary where he is crucified and sheds the last drop of his blood. When the priest celebrates holy Mass, this same sacrifice is renewed, but in a bloodless manner.[75]

The Eucharist was always the central point of the feasts celebrated by the boys, and was prepared with great solemnity with music, singing and participation. People used to come to Valdocco from other parts of the city to take part in the festive Eucharistic celebrations.

The reception of Communion is another focal point in the spirit and action of Don Bosco. He spoke of the Eucharist as "essential to the smooth running of the house."[76] This sacrament is "the column which supports the material and moral world."[77] Jesus' presence in this sacrament is "the strongest moral support of the young and the foundation of vocations."[78] The one receiving Communion experiences personally an intimate encounter with Jesus Christ, who incorporates a person into Himself and makes one an apostle by the power of the Holy

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[74]Eugenio Ceria, *Biographical Memoirs* 17 (New York: Salesian Publishers, 2002), 558–59.

[75]Bosco, *Il Giovane Provveduto*, 84–85.

[76]Giovanni Battista Lemoyne, *The Biographical Memoirs of St. John Bosco* 7 (New Rochelle: Don Bosco Publications, 1989), 466.

[77]Giovanni Bosco, *Collected Letters,* ed. Eugenio Ceria (Turin: Societa Editrice Internazionale, 1955), 299.

[78]Giovanni Battista Lemoyne, *The Biographical Memoirs of St. John Bosco* 6 (New Rochelle: Don Bosco Publications, 1989), 77.

Spirit. One can detect a distant echo of this in the words with which Don Bosco concluded the conference he gave at Rome in 1876:

> Grant us, O Lord (the Church prays), that by participating in the merits of your Body and Blood sacrificed on the cross, we may be deserve to be included among your members. As members of the most Sacred Body of Jesus, we must keep ourselves closely united with him, not in an abstract but in a concrete manner, in believing and in our actions.[79]

For Don Bosco, a well made Communion was a source of happiness: "What joy it is to receive our Divine Redeemer into our hearts, that same God from whom we must draw the strength and constancy needed every moment of our lives."[80] The biographies of Louis Comollo (Don Bosco's classmate at the seminary who died), and his students in the Oratory—Dominic Savio, Michael Magone, and Francis Besucco—all contain references to the Eucharist, to Holy Communion and to Viaticum which transforms the fear of death into a loving embrace of Jesus. Don Bosco would encourage the students:

> If I want something important, I go to Communion and receive the Sacred Body, Blood, Soul and Divinity of Jesus, offered for us to his eternal Father on the cross. What else do I need to be happy? Nothing in this world, but just to be able to see face to face the God I adore in faith on the altar.[81]

Don Bosco, the promoter of frequent Communion, helped young men achieve growth in faith, and through the Eucharist, scaled the heights of sanctity. Significant in this connection is the insertion in his *Companion of Youth* of the translation of a text from the Council of Trent:

> It would be highly desirable that every faithful Christian should keep himself in such a state of conscience that he could receive holy Communion each time he assists at Mass, and that this Communion

[79]Eugenio Ceria, *Biographical Memoirs* 12 (New York: Salesiana Publishers, 1980), 641.

[80]Ceria, *Biographical Memoirs* 12: 18.

[81]Bosco, *Opere e Scritte di Don Bosco* 4: 35.

> should be not only spiritual but also sacramental, so that greater fruit may be reaped from this august and divine Sacrament.[82]

He was also one of the strongest supporters of making the First Communion at an early age: "Avoid as a plague the opinion that the first communion should be deferred to a late age."[83]

The fourth devotion of Don Bosco for the Eucharist is adoration. The awareness of the living presence of Christ in the consecrated Host is a stimulus to an attitude of adoration. This was a characteristic of the Catholic piety in the nineteenth century, and especially at Turin, city of the Blessed Sacrament. At the Valdocco Oratory this kind of piety flourished in the Eucharistic heart of Don Bosco, and this also from the conviction that he was able to inculcate among the boys that Jesus lived in the house with them. Jesus was present there with His infinite love to be their daily Friend. The expressions of Eucharistic piety lived at the Oratory were those of the time: hours of adoration, Eucharistic triduums, benediction of the Blessed Sacrament, processions, and individual and group visits. Don Bosco knew how to motivate the young from an educational and sanctifying approach. If Jesus, with his permanent presence, is at the center and heart of every community, He cannot possibly be forgotten. Don Bosco sought to cultivate various expressions of contemplative piety in the life and activity of his followers and boys. He encouraged the young to visit Jesus frequently in the Blessed Sacrament, to ask Him for spiritual and material graces, to talk with Him, to think about His death and resurrection, to spend time with Him. One of his recurring exhortations is "Remember, my sons, that Jesus is in the Blessed Sacrament with lots of graces that He wants to give to those who ask for them."[84] In another occasion he said, "I also recommend visits to the Blessed Sacrament: Our gentle Lord Jesus Christ is there in person. The Cure of Ars suggested that

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[82]Bosco, *Il Giovane Provveduto*, 108.

[83]Giovanni Bosco, *Il Sistema Preventivo* (Turin: Paravia, 1847), 2.

[84]Bosco, *Il Sistema Preventivo*, 103.

if time is limited, let us at least kneel before the tabernacle and say a Pater, Ave, and Gloria. This alone will steel us against temptation."[85] Once he insisted:

> There are two things the devil is deadly afraid of: fervent Communions and frequent visits to the Blessed Sacrament. Do you want Our Lord to grant you many graces? Visit him often. Do you want him to grant you only a few? Visit him but seldom. Such visits are a powerful defense against the attacks of the enemy. Visiting the Blessed Sacrament, my dear boys, is essential if you want to overcome the devil. Therefore make frequent visits to Jesus; if you do that, the devil will never prevail against you.[86]

There is no doubt that Don Bosco's spirit and pedagogy gave importance to adoration as a manner of practicing friendship with Christ present in the Eucharist. Dominic Savio, Magone, and Besucco all made good use of this method; and if the same cannot be said of all the boys at the Oratory, the majority went for these adorations.

This centrality of the Eucharist went hand in hand with an educative practice that aimed at the integral formation of the young. In this program, the primary human, material needs (food, lodging and clothing), and the intellectual, moral and cultural ones, were supplied so the young are empowered to play their proper role in society. Inspired and healed by the Eucharist, the other needs of the young, such as self-affirmation, the correct use of freedom ("let them have full freedom to run, jump and make as much noise as they like"), the fostering of recreational activities, theatre, music, and others were provided. This is the educational quality of Don Bosco, one that is full and joyful, yet its secret is seen to be youthful hearts centered on the Eucharist (Mass, Communion, and Adoration). The Eucharist is Jesus who is alive and present, and whom they know, love, and visit as

[85]Giovanni Battista Lemoyne, *The Biographical Memoirs of St. John Bosco* 9 (New Rochelle: Don Bosco Publications, 1989), 167.

[86]Giovanni Battista Lemoyne, *The Biographical Memoirs of St. John Bosco* 8 (New Rochelle: Don Bosco Publications, 1989), 32.

their Friend. The influence of the Jesus present (Emmanuel) produces kindness, commitment, and joy among the young.[87]

Don Bosco wanted the Eucharist to be celebrated in an atmosphere of solidarity and friendship, in a festive way, full of symbolism and expressions, to be a significant moment of spiritual growth. From the Eucharist, the young learn to reorganize life in the light of Christ who gives himself through love. One learns to submit one's life to the requirements of communion, overcoming selfishness and introversion, leading one to the generous donation of oneself, open to the needs of others and to apostolic activities suited to one's age and Christian maturity. This encounter is extended to the visit and prayer before the Blessed Sacrament.[88] Don Bosco capped this devotion with a heroic task he accepted because of a devotion inseparable from the Eucharist, that of the Sacred Heart of Jesus. He expressed this in the building of the Church of the Sacred Heart in Rome as his culminating work. He said himself that "devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus includes all the rest" and that the source of this devotion is to be found precisely in the Blessed Sacrament. "Keep always before your minds, the thought of the love of God in the Holy Eucharist."[89] Inspired by God, Don Bosco lived and handed on to Salesians an original style of life and action: the Salesian spirit.[90] This spirit "finds its model and source in the very heart of Christ, apostle of the Father,"[91] and to this one may add that for Don Bosco, this reality of living and sharing the deep redemptive concern of the Heart of Jesus was intensely concentrated on the great mystery of the Eucharist.

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[87]Egidio Vigano, "The Eucharist in the Apostolic Spirit of St. John Bosco," *Acts of the Superior Council of the Salesian Society of St. John Bosco* 324 (December 8, 1987.)

[88]GC 23, n. 176.

[89] Eugenio Ceria, *Biographical Memoirs* 16 (New York: Salesian Publishers, 1995), 152.

[90]CSFSDB, n. 10.

[91]CSFSDB, n. 11.

The second image of Jesus is as an example or model. Don Bosco preferred to focus his attention on the earthly mysteries of Jesus and the teaching He imparted through His actions and discourses. In the *Companion of Youth*, Jesus is presented as the model of obedience or meekness, Jesus making clear how much He loves young people.[92] Jesus is presented as Teacher by virtue of His sayings, His Sermon on the Mount, and His parables. His teachings emphasize detachment from the things of earth, love for God, the need to surrender to God to win salvation and freedom from sin, prudence, humility, meekness even in the face of contradiction or mistreatment, and charity without bounds that manages to ask pardon even of one's killers. This is also found in the homilies and reflections he gave the Salesians.[93] At the beginning of the original rule and Constitutions he wrote:

> Just as Jesus Christ began to work and to teach, so the members will keep trying to perfect themselves by practicing inner and outer virtues and by acquiring knowledge[;] then they will set to work for the welfare of their neighbors.[94]

Don Bosco also wrote in his Spiritual Testament:

> Although your first director is dead, our true superior Jesus Christ will never die. He will always be our Master, our Guide, and our Model. But remember He will also be our judge when the time comes to reward our faithfulness.[95]

Don Bosco was working with the young who had no friends in the city and who needed persons to emulate. Thus Jesus as friend and model, a martyr of the way of the cross, became important in the Salesian education. Don Bosco did not dwell on Jesus as a youth or as a worker

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[92]Bosco, *Il Giovane Provveduto*, 42.

[93]Stella, *Don Bosco: Religious Outlook and Spirituality*, 102–3.

[94]*Constitutions of the Salesian Society of St. Francis of Sales* (London: The Salesian Press, 1949), n. 1–2.

[95]Eugenio Ceria, *Biographical Memoirs* 17: 258.

at Nazareth. In His last hours Christ showed the fullness of His love for persons and made Himself worthy of being loved. However, more often Don Bosco saw Christ as Master and model than as companion and friend.[96] He is the master of wisdom. "He said about Himself that He was the only Son of God, the Savior promised to men who came from heaven to earth to show them the road to salvation."[97] The savior is a Teacher. Don Bosco preferred Christ's moral teaching on penance and forgiveness of injuries, detachment from riches, and the denial of self-love. When Don Bosco wrote his *Stora sacra* he chose the Lost Sheep, the Prodigal Son, the Ten Virgins, the Rich Man, and Lazarus. These are stories which have immediate practical applications. For him the whole life of Christ was a lesson to ponder and imitate. In the Salesian Constitutions he wrote that "by imitating the virtues of Our Divine Savior," the members of the society will perfect themselves. He wrote in another booklet:

> The model which every Christian has to copy is Jesus Christ. No one can boast that he belongs to Jesus Christ if he does not endeavor to imitate Him. Consequently in the life and actions of a Christian the life and actions of Jesus Christ himself should be revealed.[98]

Certain aspects of the mysteries of Christ were more important for Don Bosco as shown in his topics. They are the obedience of Jesus, His humility, and His constant poverty, from the crib to the cross. This was part of the spirit of the age that looked to the suffering Christ, broken, under the weight of the sins of the world. Don Bosco added one more image later on: the gentleness and kindness of Christ who looks for the wandering sheep and who caresses little children.

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[96]Francis Desramaut, *Don Bosco and the Spiritual Life* (New York: Don Bosco Publications, 1979), 83.

[97]Giovanni Bosco, *Maniera Facile per Imparare la Storia Sacra* (Turin: Paravia, 1877), 59.

[98]Giovanni Bosco, *La Chiave del Paradiso* (Turin: Paravia, 1857), 20.

> Every one who reads the Gospel knows that Jesus Christ was born of the Virgin named Mary by the sole power of the Holy Spirit[,] that he was born in a stable, that he lived by the work of his hands and that he possessed all the virtues especially kindness and gentleness.[99]

Peter Stella observed that Don Bosco would present his principles and beliefs through the stories he wrote about his pupils (Savio, Magone, Bessuco). His effort to live up to the gentleness of Jesus was shown in how he dealt with the boys. There were three classes of them at the Oratory for the first ten years: 1) Those who came from other regions to find seasonal work and opportunities in the city. After 1850, these became fewer in number as the city grew. 2) The second group consisted of those who lived in the tenements of industrial zones where there were no schools and few parishes. They were often dirty, smelly, ill, and unsupervised. Even if they lived with responsible parents these might be working ninety hours a week during peak times. 3) Finally, there were those who attended the Catholic elementary schools for the poor, run by the Christian Brothers. They were the most consistent element of the Oratory in attendance, the better instructed and generally the most easily guided.

The first two categories were the poor and abandoned youth who were Don Bosco's first concern. They would not find jobs or were idle on Sundays and Holy Days. They tended to form gangs (bad companions) and get into trouble legally, morally, or both. Their attendance at the Oratory fluctuated a great deal depending on the season, work and other factors. After some training, the boys in the third group were to leaven the mass. These led the singing and reading which were important for all.[100] These young associates were valuable. Since most of them lived in the same neighborhood as the others, Don Bosco was also using prevention in their case. The youth who were frequenting the Oratory were generally not young boys but adolescents and young men. About three quarters were between

[99]Giovannni Bosco, *Storia Sacra* (Turin: Paravia, 1877), 285.

[100]Lemoyne, *Biographical Memoirs* 2: 71.

eleven and fifteen; many were in their late teens and a few in their early twenties. After the establishment of the oratory hospice in 1850, the average age came down.[101]

To help him in ministering to these boys, Fr. Louis Guala and Fr. Joseph Cafasso, professors at the Convitto, offered their services for confessions and were so generous with prizes to attract the boys to the Oratory.[102] These two priests also asked the other priests to help out in the work of the Oratory when the boys were numerous.[103] They allowed the boys to use the premises of the Convitto at first, then loaned the lot adjacent to the institute. Fr. Cafasso and Fr. Guala also provided funds for celebrations and feasts.[104] Don Bosco received other goods from other benefactors but he used all of these for the boys. He retained very little for himself.

At the beginning, the Oratory had no fixed place. Despite this, its membership grew daily. There was no place to meet because in those times people were afraid of a large group of two hundred working boys who were enjoying a day's freedom from the imprisonment of a factory.[105] Every Sunday they would meet in a different spot: a city church, a cemetery chapel, or an empty lot. Don Bosco would hear their confessions and celebrate Mass for them. An hour of religious instruction would follow. This would be plain, homely talks coming from the heart and embodying the solid truths of the faith. Then the priest would take his gypsy band into the country for an all-day outing of games. A final talk would close the "Oratory day," and the tired bunch would trail into Turin, scattering to their homes along the way.

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[101]Stella, *Don Bosco: Life and Works*, 234.

[102]Lemoyne, *Biographical Memoirs* 2: 72.

[103]Lemoyne, *Biographical Memoirs* 2: 108.

[104]Lemoyne, *Biographical Memoirs* 2: 110.

[105]Lemoyne, *Biographical Memoirs* 2: 71.

During the week, Don Bosco used to tour the city shops, checking on his boys, making sure they had not forgotten his instructions to work hard and work well. The employers welcomed the priest's visits. The employers were happy to give work to the apprentices who were cared for in a fatherly manner on Sundays and weekdays. Due to this religious training, the boys became more punctual and faithful in their work.[106] The growth of his Oratory was of course due to his prayers, his kindness and gentleness, not only in dealing with the boys but also with their employers and his benefactors. Most of these were done because Don Bosco made Jesus the Companion at work and a Model of all the virtues.

It should be noted that this problem of young workers in Turin at that time was part of the migration spawned by industrialization (1844–1848). Don Bosco was not alone in his concern. In 1845 there were two other schools that were catering to the needs of young workers: a school of mechanics under Charles Guiullio, and a school of industrial chemistry under Ascanio Sobrero. Young laborers were also flocking to the Brothers of the Christian Schools to take lessons sponsored by the government agency that provided vocational training for the poor. In 1847, the number of would-be students surpassed six hundred, most of whom were amateurs and only seventy were qualified workers. Everything grew from this desire to help the young workers.

The Salesian priests and brothers took the examples of Don Bosco and practiced this spirituality of friendship and personal relationship with the Lord Jesus, whom they know through prayer, the Eucharist, and the Word.[107] This friendship brings about an Easter spirituality of joy in action that develops a positive attitude of hope in both the natural and supernatural resources of the person, and presents Christian life as a path to happiness.[108] This friendship with Jesus does not stand alone.

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[106]Lemoyne, *Biographical Memoirs* 2: 74.

[107]CSFSDB, n. 12, 34.

[108]CSFSDB, n. 17.

For Don Bosco this was closely knit with a Marian spirituality where one entrusts oneself simply and trustingly to the maternal help of Mary, the mother of Jesus.[109] The adult lay Salesian lives this closeness with Jesus and Mary in what is called the "preventive system" of education. It is a way of constantly listening to God and to man. For Don Bosco, a fully educated person is one who is able to educate one's self and others. This is a criterion of spiritual maturity. This system uses three elements: reason, religion, and kindness.

Reason has been dealt with in the section for creation. Kindness will be included in the community. The third element of the preventive system is the faith, which had been accepted and responded to. Religion represents the meeting point between the mystery of God and mystery of persons linked with faith of one's history and culture, but also inspired by God's call. Faith invites one to imitate God's patience, and to meet people at their current stage of freedom. This faith does not impose itself on others. Faith helps people to discover the countenance of Jesus. Listening to the Word, the celebration of Sacraments, Eucharist and Penance, commitment to charity and witness, and the happiness of living under the gaze of a loving Father can be proposed within an ecumenical approach. Here what is meant is a daily attitude, which is neither simple human love nor supernatural charity alone. Loving kindness encourages the others to form bonds of close friendship with Jesus and His Project. This degree of relationship with Christ opens up in the workers the radicalism of the Gospel with commitment and generosity. The terms that Don Bosco used for Jesus—Friend, Teacher, and Savior—are the terms that describe the centrality of the person of Jesus in the spiritual experience of the young. The personal dimension of the relationship "Jesus is my friend and companion" is a spur to knowledge of the totality of the mystery of Christ, who died and rose again.[110] Don Bosco's constant concern was to educate to the faith, walking "side by side with the young so

[109]CSFSDB, n. 20, 34.

[110]GC 23, n. 167.

as to lead them to the risen Lord," so that they might grow "into new men." For Don Bosco "education is a matter of the heart." The journey of spirituality requires a new heart. This contact with the Risen Lord produces a deep and enduring conversion leading to an intense love for life.[111] Don Bosco called this the Oratorian heart.

Just like in the Salesian priest and brother, the encounter with the risen Jesus brings about joy in the life of the young workers. Don Bosco was the saint of the joy of living the daily life. He said, "Holiness consists in being very happy."[112] To the marginalized young workers of his time, Don Bosco put the possibility of living life as a feast, and faith as happiness. Music, the theatre, outings, sport, the joyful daily rough and tumble of a playground have always been valued in Salesian pedagogy as educative elements of primary importance. These activities generate a lot of energy for doing good, which will be channeled, in due time, into a commitment of service and charity. For a Salesian, a feast is not just a relief, nor is it forgetting of hard realities. It is rather a means for building friendship, for developing whatever is positive in young people. This style of holiness does not play down the gospel demands and educational obligations. For Don Bosco, the source of joy is the life of grace which obliges the youngster to undertake a difficult apprenticeship in ascesis and kindness.[113] The influence of the Christ-event allows the Salesians and the young workers to experience the joy and transforming power of Jesus' love. This experience of being loved empowers the individual to be sensitive to charity and to transform society into a more loving one. This experience implies the guidance of the community through the Church's teaching. This experience of Jesus in the sacraments and in the community answers the challenge of Bregolin to share the love of Christ with others.

[111]GC 23, n. 168.

[112]Stella, *Don Bosco: Life and Works*, 31.

[113]GC 23, n. 165.

In missionary territories, one finds ways of educating to the faith which is gradual and specific. In a secular setting, religion will start from the experiences of transcendence and the demands arising from sense of life and death, pain and love, but without concealing the beam of light which comes from faith. Amongst great monotheistic traditions and religions, the first educative dialogue will be with the lay people who are nearest, to recognize with them the grace present in such religions, encourage the desire for prayer, and maximize the fragments of gospel and of educative wisdom present in culture and life experiences of people. But with people of goodwill who do not manifest any specific religious attachment, the system aims at finding and welcoming the spark of truth deposited in every human heart, at fostering the dialogue of life, especially in the concern for human life and in promoting the dignity of women which prepares the way for more profound exchanges.[114]

Redemption and the Salesians

The third image of Jesus for Don Bosco was Jesus as Divine Savior. This image of Jesus stands out in Don Bosco's historical comments, in his apologies, in his catechism, and in his preaching. This is Jesus who came down from heaven to redeem persons from the bondage of sin and save them from eternal death. Don Bosco wrote, "Jesus Christ taught us all that is necessary for us to believe and to do for our salvation."[115] Don Bosco saw salvation as identified in an institution, like the Church. The Divine Savior is viewed as the Institutor, Founder, and Legislator, and He is venerated and heard in those who are His vicars and representatives:

> Our divine Savior who came down from heaven to save us, willed to establish a means that would ensure the deposit of faith by the founding of a spiritual kingdom on earth. This kingdom is His Church, the congregation of the Christian faithful all over the world.

[114]GC 24, n. 94–95.

[115]Bosco, *Storia Sacra*, 158.

> They profess the teaching of Jesus Christ under the leadership of its legitimate pastors, of the Roman Pontiff in particular who is its God appointed head.[116]

In addition to the traditional understanding of Jesus as Savior, Don Bosco also used the term "Divine Savior" since during his times there was a flood of errors, indifferentism, and blasphemous irreligion. "Divine" affirmed a faith that was being combated and repudiated by many people. "Savior" meant something special given the spiritual dangers that souls and the Church were going through as they aspired for the safe haven of eternity.[117]

This salvation of Jesus is expressed in the sacrament of Reconciliation. This sacrament celebrates the love of God. The sacrament enhances interpersonal relationships and creates conditions for the fulfillment of one's duties. This sacrament, in the system of Don Bosco, sustains the on-going conversion and renewal of heart, so that the young can give oneself to God totally. For Don Bosco, the sacrament was extended in spiritual direction. This would strengthen adherence to God through a joyful sharing of life. Don Bosco saw that when the young are sustained by a love which is understanding and forgiving, they find the strength to recognize their own sinfulness and weakness, and their need for support and guidance. They resist the temptation to self-sufficiency, and offer pardon in exchange for the reconciliation they have received. The young are educated to a respect for other persons, and form a right and consistent conscience. The regular encounters with Jesus in the Sacrament of Reconciliation can accelerate the process of conversion and renewal.[118]

When Don Bosco started gathering the young workers, he called it "the Oratory," a term which suggested prayer and organized recreation.

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[116]Giovanni Bosco "Redemption," in *The Month of May* (Turin: G.B. Paravia, 1857), 33.

[117]Stella, *Don Bosco: Religious Outlook and Spirituality*, 107–8.

[118]GC 23, n. 175.

The primary purpose of the Oratory was to teach boys to go to Church and pray (encounter Christ in the Sacraments). Its objectives were the practice of religion and virtue, the boys' moral education, and the salvation of their souls; recreation, entertainment, singing and schooling, which followed, were only the means. This was for boys who had recently been released from prison, who were in moral danger and in need of religious instruction. The Oratory boys included stonecutters, bricklayers, road pavers, plasterers, and others who came from distant villages. They were not church goers and had few friends, and so they were more susceptible to temptations.[119]

> On feast days I gave all my time to my youngsters[;] during the week I would go to visit them at their work in factories and workshops. Not only were the youngsters happy to see a friend taking care of them, [but] their employers were pleased gladly[,] retaining youngsters who were helped during the week and even more on feast days when they were in greater danger.[120]

Jesus as Divine Savior gives this strong message to the young workers that there is help for them especially in the community of the Church, through whom Jesus acts to save them. Jesus is the Truth that saves them from ignorance. He is Life to save them from meaninglessness and lack of power. He is the Way to save them from confusion. This is experienced in a powerful way in the sacrament of Reconciliation.

Jesus' powerful aid in the Eucharist is given to those who believe in Him so that they too, like Him, may carry their own cross and afflictions after Him. He wrote to a sister professing with the Daughters of Mary Help of Christians: "You should be happy of any disturbance and uneasiness that you might feel for the way of the cross will lead you to God. Glory is attained only by great effort. We are not alone but

[119]Bosco, *Memoirs of the Oratory*, 195.

[120]Bosco, *Memoirs of the Oratory*, 198.

Jesus is with us."[121] In the evening of November 11, 1875, when he was sending the first batch of missionaries to South America, he insisted, "Go then. You will have to face all kinds of trials, hardships, and danger. Do not be afraid: God is with you."[122] As he taught his followers to live the paschal mystery of suffering towards a better life, Don Bosco showed his own way of carrying a particular cross. He was not in good graces with his own Archbishop for some unfounded allegations but when the chance to publish something against Archbishop Lawrence Gastaldi came, he still defended the Archbishop. His permission to hear confessions in the Archdiocese was not renewed for flimsy reasons. Don Bosco assured the rest: "it is far better that we suffer a little, bow our heads and keep our peace."[123]

Don Bosco considered Jesus in the Eucharist as Someone who would be there everyday in the midst of difficulties and sufferings and help to carry them. This is well described in a talk he gave to the novices on December 13, 1875:

> When we follow our Divine Master, we must be prepared to endure everything for His sake. Whether this means cold or heat or discomfort, tasteless food, or anything else, we should still be glad that we are able to suffer a little for Jesus, who suffered so much for our sake. We must suffer, in fact, we must be crucified with Jesus. The cross is His banner, His standard. How do you expect to be a disciple of Jesus if you whimper and cry because of the food, or because the work assigned seems too hard? Let us meditate often on the crucifixion of Jesus. Let us think of the intense suffering He endured for our sake. If we remember how Jesus was obedient, we will not find obedience burdensome. Being poor will not be a burden when we recall Jesus died on the cross in extreme poverty.[124]

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[121]Eugenio Ceria, *Biographical Memoirs* 11 (New York: Salesiana Publishers, 1964), 338.

[122]Ceria, *Biographical Memoirs* 11: 362.

[123]Ceria, *Biographical Memoirs* 11: 449–59.

[124]Ceria, *Biographical Memoirs* 11: 482–83.

Father Mauro Ricci, Superior General of the Piarists, vouched for the importance of the crosses in the life of Don Bosco:

> In meditation before the crucifix he drew that mighty spark which enabled him to make up for so much religious and moral damage and replace it with durable institutions which had in themselves the power to reach out to all the world. Today, we explain many things by blaming the environment, but Don Bosco built his own ambience on the inspiration that came from God.[125]

Eschatology and the Salesians

Jesus in the Eucharist is the One who loves human beings: God-with-us, benign, patient, full of love and enkindling others with His love. His presence gives one the strength to carry daily difficulties with perseverance and serenity. Jesus as judge evokes the last things. Don Bosco presented the Christ of the last things as a fearsome and awesome Christ, the Christ of wrath and punishment. The time of mercy will come to an end after death. This was influenced by the poplar devotion at that time. He wrote in his prayer book for youth *The Companion of Youth*:

> Your soul will look for help to the Divine Mercy, and there will no longer be any mercy for it because the time of mercy ends with death. Your soul will look for help to the angels, the saints, and Mary most holy. In the name of them all she will reply, "Now you ask for my help? You who did not want me for your mother in life. Now I no longer know you for my child. Finding no escape, the sinner will cry for the mountain and rocks to cover him but they will not move. He will invoke hell and see it open. At that moment the exorable Judge will deliver the terrible sentence 'Faithless child get far away from me. My heavenly Father has cursed you, I curse you be off into eternal fire.'[126]

The young, the layperson, the Salesian who heard such a sermon would be afraid and anxious to ask for pardon immediately. We do not use

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[125]Ceria, *Biographical Memoirs* 12: 456.

[126]Bosco, *Il Giovane Provveduto*, 42–46.

such an approach today, but it was effective during their times. What was important is that for Don Bosco, Jesus as Judge was a potent challenge for conversion. The aim of Don Bosco was to make the listener pray:

> My Jesus, grant me the grace to be one of those blessed ones. Most Holy Virgin, help me, protect me in life and in death and especially when I will present myself to your Divine Son to be judged.[127]

Don Bosco set young workers on the road to a simple, serene and happy form of holiness, bringing together in a single vital experience the playground, serious study, and a constant sense of duty, all leading the young to growth and transcendence. He offers today, as a faithful response to the love of God, an invaluable rereading of the Gospel in the spirit of the beatitudes. The beatitudes manifest God in the life of the young, and what a believer should commit towards the construction of the Kingdom. While doing one's duty joyfully, one is challenged to take up the cross and follow Christ as the paschal dimension of the evangelical option. This contributes to human development according to the stature of Christ who died and rose again. Outside this journey of faith, one's growth becomes difficult.[128]

The young people would be reminded that rebuilding their lives in the light of the Gospel requires detachment even from good things. Freedom, justice, solidarity, and materiality often bring a young worker to decide: either to stay with Jesus, the Lord, and accept the hardships associated with faith, or to choose to live his life outside Christ's influence. This is a crucial moment. It is a difficult but necessary decision that has to be made so as to reach the integration of living with the Lord of life and history.[129]

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[127]Bosco, *Il Giovane Provveduto*, 43.

[128]GC 23, n. 165.

[129]GC 23, n. 166.

The encounter with Christ Incarnate in the Eucharist, redeeming persons from sin and evil structures, and leading them to the fullness of life, is part of the whole process of an education to love. The education in faith includes not only conscience formation but also this education to love. Love is a fundamental dimension of the person which gives sense to existence, opening it to understanding and oblation. When this love is in a muddled context, it is not open to the future. Since it is blinded by present feelings, it impedes one's own growth and that of others. Happiness will be equated with pleasure. The environment created by people who live with similar experiences creates a kind of generalized culture which encourages them. An authentic understanding of love is only seen against the background of God. It is God who has willed the reciprocal relationship between men and women, and calling them to a deep communion able to signify the very reality of God himself.[130]

The mystery of Christ, His Incarnation, Redemption, coming back in glory, and the events of one's life provide the full revelation of true love. For the young to experience this, they need an educative environment wherein communication and affective exchanges challenge them to be better. The experience of acceptance, recognition, esteem, and love is the best lesson on love itself. The integral education of the person and the sustaining power of grace can bring the young to appreciate the authentic values of respect for themselves and others. This grace-laden education allows the young to recognize the dignity of the individual, transparency in relationships, fidelity, and self-giving. In living this way, they proclaim the Kingdom and denounce every form of exploitation and slavery.[131] Friendly encounters at work, when lived as moments of mutual enrichment, can initiate dialogue and concern for each other. In this process each one discovers the other, accepts them as they are, and respects their dignity as persons.

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[130]GC 23, n. 194.

[131]GC 23, n. 196–97.

The examples of persons who live this kind of love has the force of witness. If this witnessing is shown by a friend, as Don Bosco wants his followers to be, then the impact is stronger. In this situation, the young workers would find themselves, God in their work, and their specific calling in the work place. The witness of the Salesian priest, lay adult or youth leader who lives, in a clear and happy manner, the offering of oneself in one's work will definitely impress others. The young worker staying at the side of the Salesian will begin to wonder about the Lord of life who can fill the heart of a creature completely. From this experience of love in the Eucharist, in the community, the young worker will be clear about the meaning of life. Fraternal service to the poor and the "little ones," guided and gradual contact with situations of suffering due to injustice, will lead to gratuitous love. Careful catechesis will lead young workers to understand the reality and dimensions of this love; it will lead them to the acceptance of the plan of God who is Love and the source of all love, and it will prepare them for its realization in Christian ministry and even marriage.[132]

This section has shown how the Christ-event was present in Don Bosco's work and work for the young. He did not have deep thoughts about this topic but what was important for him was the practical side of the Incarnation. One should see Jesus as a companion and model in the Eucharist, which was celebrated everyday in his schools and institutions. This presence of Jesus accompanying the young is still extended through the visits to the Blessed Sacrament and adoration. The good Christian example of the Salesian priest, brother, lay or even youth leader becomes part of incarnation. Jesus is present today with the young workers. Don Bosco also saw Jesus as Savior of the young from their weakness and sins. Don Bosco wanted the young to experience this salvation in the Sacrament of Reconciliation, which he took pains to offer as frequently as possible. Redemption will also be part of the Salesian priest, brother, adult and even youth leaders when they have to undergo difficulties for the sake of their mission amongst

[132]GC 23, n. 201–2.

the young. Finally, Don Bosco understood that the eschatological way of looking at Jesus was as Judge at the end of time. This seemingly "frightful" presentation of Jesus often brought conversion for the young to be honest citizens and good Christians. If in terms of creation the educative work with the young is conscience formation, in the Christ-event the young workers are allowed to experience the great love of God and are challenged to live out this love. This encounter with Jesus as incarnated, as redeemer, and as judge at the end of time brings the young in loving communion with the Trinity and with the rest of the community.

The Community and the Salesians

The Community element means working for and with others. One can point out the approach of kindness in the family spirit as part of initiating community. Bringing one in full communion with the Church is obviously included in this element. Empowering one to responsible service stemming from one's Christian vocation is another item under the heading of community. When one looks at youth spirituality one can include life within the church and responsible service. When one looks at adult lay spirituality, one finds the insertion into the Church and the approach of kindness in the family spirit as items which can contribute to community life. Although one can notice that there are some elements which could also fall under Christ-event like ecclesial communion and responsible service, all inspired by Jesus, the author has decided to include them under community since service builds up the community, and the Church is part of the larger community of humanity and country.

Francis de Sales and Don Bosco loved and served the Church. Both had constantly devoted their efforts to defend sound doctrine, to encourage other shepherds, and to venerate the successor of Peter even in difficult situations. More than once they both paid dearly for their loyalty and obedience with varied and harsh sufferings. Both had to cope with the instability brought about by political problems. In delicate situations, both were always outspokenly true ministers of Christ.

One appreciates the ministry of Don Bosco with workers as a response to the need of the times. His efforts to rehabilitate and to prevent as much as possible harm inflicted on the young workers inspired everything. There was the early phase where his main concern was to find jobs and decent employers for his boys. This was to ensure that their terms of employment were fair. He visited them in the shops or workshops where they were employed, even when this involved mounting the scaffoldings of houses that were being built. He placed the boys with good Christian employers in an environment that would not make them immoral or even bring them to prison. His prison visits had shown how boys could end up. He stipulated the terms of their contracts so as to prevent the exploitation that was then so common, especially in the case of apprentices.

There were two types of contracts of apprenticeship as preserved in the Salesian Archives, both signed by the employer, the apprentice, the father, and Don Bosco. These were in November 1851 and February 1852. The employer promised to teach the boy the trade, to instruct him as required, to impose fair rules, to correct the boy kindly and not with blows should he fail in some way, and not to demand services that lie outside his trade. The boy must be free on all Sundays and days of obligation and must be given suitable weekly wages, with half yearly increments. The employer is to behave towards the boy not like a master but a father. For his part, the young apprentice promises to be attentive, willing, diligent, docile, respectful, obedient, and to repair any damage he may cause. The contract was to run for two to three years.[133]

The second phase came about when Don Bosco saw how his boys in the workshops of Turin were in constant danger. He wanted to prevent young workers from listening to dirty talk, the ridiculing of religion, and bad language. He gradually got the idea of setting up

[133]Silvio Tramontin, "Don Bosco and the World of Work," in Patrick Egan and Mario Midali, eds., *Don Bosco's Place in History: Acts of the First International Congress on Don Bosco Studies* (Roma: Libreria Ateneo Salesiano, 1993), 253–54.

workshops in his own house. He opened workshops for shoemaking and tailoring in 1853, bookbinding in 1854, woodwork in 1855, a print shop in 1861, and a metal works shop in 1862.[134] The structure of workshops was pre-industrial, with the crafts masters, workers and apprentices all working together. They were not considered as true trades schools where investments were made for purely social reasons, but rather as craft businesses. Craft businesses produced marketable goods, which were needed by the workers. They would produce more than they needed and sold them. However, unlike in the craft businesses, the produce of the oratory benefited the artisans so they would not have to be subsidized so heavily out of the boarding fees of the students. This approach was something new. These were not professional schools in the strict sense, but found their way in the world of labor and production without the concomitant danger of depersonalization and exploitation. The Oratories were not just convenient pools of workers, craft factories or new industries; they were genuine unions of workers.[135]

In this second phase of serving young workers, Don Bosco encountered a serious problem. He could not rely on some craft masters who would leave their jobs without any previous warning. In this situation, Don Bosco saw it was preferable for the more advanced among the apprentices to instruct the others, even if the end product was less perfect. Out of this situation grew the idea of having "coadjutor or lay brothers." This name was used in 1854, when one out of thirty-nine of the young or slightly older lay people performed domestic duties in the house or in the workshops. They were odd job men, sweepers, waiters on table, or assistants to the craft masters in charge of the workshops. These evolved into the Salesian coadjutors, with or without vows, who became themselves real craft masters. This ensured the continuity of instruction and provided a higher degree

[134]Pietro Stella, *Don Bosco: Nella Storia Economica e Sociale 1815–1870* (Roma: Libreria Ateneo Salesiano, 1980), 505.

[135]Tramontin, "Don Bosco and the World of Work," 255.

of care for the pupils. This arrangement lessened the young workers' exposure to dangers from apprenticeships with employers who were morally doubtful. In addition, this provided both moral and material help, created friendships and collaboration, and inspired some to join the religious life as coadjutors.[136]

The third phase was the setting up of professional schools. This was again in answer to certain needs of specialization and a more complete formation. As the method of production changed, a corresponding change in worker training was called for. The demand was not for changeless simple products. People wanted variety. Years of assiduous preparation were needed, combining study and practical work, so that planning and openness to new ideas progressed with the acquisition and the perfection of manual skills. More workshops were turned into professional institutes of arts and trades. This happened sometime in 1876 and was discussed in the Third and Fourth General Chapter.[137]

Just to show what Don Bosco instituted, and the communities and network that he formed, Giovanni Agnelli, when he welcomed religious and civic dignitaries to Fiat in 1929, said:

> The disciples and followers of Blessed Don Bosco, this great Piedmontese that Turin particularly venerates and celebrates today, will feel pulsing in this place a rhythm of life that would not have displeased the Beatus who was [a] noble hero of charity as well as a most enthusiastic apostle of human labor. He was a man who released exceptional energies and discovered untapped forces, a tireless founder of workshops and factories.[138]

Don Bosco did not only bring together abandoned boys in order to prepare them for jobs by founding workshops and professional schools. He forged closer links with labor by his entrepreneurial enterprise in setting up and developing printing houses.

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[136]Stella, *Don Bosco: Nella Storia Economica*, 123–99.

[137]Tramontin, "Don Bosco and the World of Work," 257.

[138]Tramontin, "Don Bosco and the World of Work," 257.

In addition to rebutting the inroads of other sects and to ensure the Catholic education of the young and their families, and to ensure that the young workers had a safe community environment in his premises, Don Bosco set up the printing press. Reading materials affected the faith of the young people and workers in those days. He was author, compiler and proofreader, and at the same time he was following up his boys.[139] He appreciated the importance of the printed word. His first published book was *Cenni storici Sulla vita del Chierico Luigi Comollo*. Three thousand copies were printed and sold at a modest price of thirty cents. He also printed devotional books like *Giovane Provveduto*, which in 1847 ran to one thousand copies. There were school texts like *Storia Ecclesiatica* and *Storia Sacra*. His more famous periodical among others was *Letture Cattoliche*, which began in 1853. He was printing them with different establishments like Pravia, Marietti and De Agostini, but by 1853–55 he started thinking of founding his own printing works for greater freedom and more savings. This materialized in 1862. Socially speaking he became an entrepreneur who was investing his capital in the cause of philanthropy. The printing house became the dynamic center of the Valdocco workshops. Don Bosco invested much in improving machinery, starting a book binding shop and binding press works, and opening a bookshop that by 1891 employed two hundred people. He displayed a flair for management.[140]

In April 1884, during the National Exhibit for Science, Industry and Art in Turin, Don Bosco was given a pavilion all his own. The pavilion was identified with a banner: "Don Bosco's Paper Mill, Print Shop, Type Foundry, Bookbinding Establishment and Salesian Bookstore." It was out of place since in those days a priest was not considered an exhibitor in the Labor section of the national exhibit. The work and the laborers of the pavilion impressed the visitors. The laborers were all boys of varying ages who won over the admiration of all the visitors because of their dedication to their task, their

[139]Stella, *Don Bosco: Life and Works*, 119.

[140]Stella*, Don Bosco: Nella Storia Economica,* 351–69.

concentration, and their competence. He not only proved that the clergy too could be concerned with arts and progress. He also gave a good example on how to sanctify Sundays since all the machines were at standstill on Sunday.[141]

Another offshoot of Don Bosco's concern for workers and to build community was the Mutual Aid Society organized on July 1, 1850 at the Oratory chapel. This was inspired by the work of the guilds or confraternities. This Society assisted the members in fulfilling their religious duties and at the same time provided them with adequate apprentice training, employment, and savings, and helped the sick and aged. It also loaned money to the young, married men, and the necessary funds for sacred services. It was to combat La Giardiniera, a sort of workers association, which was the hangout for thieves and usurers. The members could enjoy the benefits after six months of admission. Those admitted should be members of the St. Aloysius Sodality. The spiritual director of the Sodality was the official visitor who would bring the subsidy to the sick, as well as spiritual advice and the Sacraments.[142] The members were to pay one soldo or five cents each Sunday, and after having been members for six months were subsidized to fifty cents a day if one were ill or unemployed. The cash reserve was augmented by voluntary contributions of benefactors, as was common with such societies at that time. The contributions made by the members taught them to save. This also educated them in the spirit of solidarity. In this respect Don Bosco was an innovator. He anticipated health insurance, indemnity against accidents and a community chest. Don Bosco did much for the youth of his time. One question which was troubling him was who would continue this follow up or work side by side with young workers and assist the young to be honest citizens and good Christians? Thus Don Bosco was inspired to put up the Society of St. Francis de Sales.

[141]Ceria, *Biographical Memoirs* 17: 219–24.

[142]Lemoyne, *Biographical Memoirs* 4: 518–20.

Don Bosco's times were unsuited for a new religious congregation. However, his friend and benefactor Archbishop Fransoni, the bishop of Turin at that time, encouraged him to put one up to keep up the apostolate for the young workers.[143] Those already in existence were being torn down by a destructive campaign of political radicals and self-styled freethinkers. It was a liberal-minded politician who had closed convent doors who first suggested the idea of a new religious congregation to Don Bosco. "Start a new order and have you suppress it in its cradle?" smiled the saint. "No, your case is different. You work for the poor. Your schools really belong to the working classes. No one will resent what you do. Make sure your religious keep their status as citizens, and we won't touch you."

Pope Pius IX suggested that he put up a congregation in such a way that the government cannot interfere with it, and with more than simple vows.[144] In the second audience on March 1858, Pope Pius IX instructed John Bosco to "write down these dreams and everything else you have told me minutely and in their natural sense. He had to save all this as legacy for your congregation so that it may serve as an encouragement and norm for his sons".[145] John Bosco had something prepared for the occasion, which the Holy Father appreciated.[146]

Still under Blessed Mary's guidance, Don Bosco set about the task. His own boys were the best material: little Michael Rua, who idolized him, tough Johnny Cagliero, hardworking Johnny Francesia, self-willed Paul Albera, and several others. They would be the pioneers in this experiment of a new religious congregation. "Would you like to stay with Don Bosco?" he asked them. "I'll do the work of four!" was Cagliero's stalwart answer. The others agreed. The Congregation

[143]Lemoyne, *Biographical Memoirs* 4: 21.

[144]Lemoyne, *Biographical Memoirs* 4: 561.

[145]Lemoyne, *Biographical Memoirs* 4: 577.

[146]Lemoyne, *Biographical Memoirs* 4: 637–44.

of St. Francis de Sales was born on the night of December 18, 1859. The painstaking work of organization, based on experiment and experience, and of drawing up rules for the Holy See to approve followed suit. It required a genius in the delicate art of human relations. The Congregation was approved in 1869, and five years later, so were the Constitutions. Later on, under the inspiration of the same dream, he instituted the Daughters of Mary Help of Christians to do for girls what the Salesians were doing for the young men. In September 1876, during a retreat, Don Bosco narrated a dream where he saw the vast work of Salesians. He was given this advice: "Take heed[;] you must have these words engraved on your coat-of arms as your watchword, your badge. Note them well: Work and Temperance will make the Salesian Congregation flourish."[147]

It was his policy to do things tactfully and in such a way as to make them gradually attractive and voluntary rather than burdensome. The first Salesians were mostly young clerics and priests. Besides pursuing their own studies, they were teaching and supervising classes. From the middle of August to the middle of September during summer time, they would handle the make-up courses for those who had back subjects. During this hot season these priests and clerics could find their ministry more taxing because they would have to take the boys on more frequent and longer walks to make their stay more pleasant. In the middle of all this, they were busy winding up the past school year in August. These founding priests and brothers would have a lot to do in September and October to be ready for the new school year.[148]

In 1876, when accused that he was killing his collaborators with work, he replied:

> For each one of us who might die of overwork a hundred others would be drawn to the Congregation. Yes, it is true and I am ever proud to say: we work hard. But this has nothing to do with the priests who

[147]Ceria, *Biographical Memoirs* 12: 338.

[148]Lemoyne, *Biographical Memoirs* 8: 198.

> died in our community as victims of overwork. Each of them suffered from illnesses which doctors diagnosed as incurable. But how glorious a death it would be to die from overwork. Our congregation will keep growing as long as we work hard and are ruled by temperance. But I also see a marked tendency towards comfort, which frightens me.[149]

In another occasion, he remarked:

> There are three things that bring about the fall of religious congregations. The first is idleness, too little work. We must set to work more than we can actually do and then, who knows, we may manage to do all we can. The second cause is being fastidious about food and drink. Once one has eaten he must take a nap. The body may rest, but the imagination and passions grow strong. The third cause of decline is egoism or a spirit of reform or grumbling. It's all the same to me. When a subordinate does not agree with his superiors' actions, he complains, suggests other policies and demands that things be done to suit him.[150] There is bread in my house, and Divine Providence provides us with it day by day. There is work and everyone has to work for free. There is Paradise because those who eat and work for God are entitled to a little corner of heaven.[151]

At the annual conference in February 1877, Don Bosco again reiterated that the best way to attract more students to the institutions would be a good reputation due to the unchallenged widespread conviction that moral behavior is above reproach. The preventive means of maintaining this would be frequent confession and communion, and constant vigilance. The other ways to keep good behavior would be to keep the young men busy at all times, and to encourage them to avoid certain types of friendships.[152]

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[149]Ceria, *Biographical Memoirs* 12: 274–75.

[150]Ceria, *Biographical Memoirs* 17: 225.

[151]Ceria, *Biographical Memoirs* 12: 274–76.

[152]Eugenio Ceria, *Biographical Memoirs* 13 (New York: Salesiana Publishers, 1983), 65.

These statements should be taken in context. It has been shown earlier that Don Bosco was bringing the boys and the Salesians to his place outside the city for summer. Earlier it has been mentioned that Salesians should have the motto of "work and temperance." This temperance includes the balance of work and rest. In 1863, in a confidential directive and clarification to directors, Don Bosco wrote:

> For yourself: avoid austerity in food. Be mortified in diligently fulfilling our duties and patiently bearing annoyances. Both for your own health and that of your subjects take seven hours of rest at night, with a one hour lee way for reasonable motives. Let charity and patience be your steady guide in commanding or admonishing. Concentrate your efforts on the spiritual, physical and intellectual well being of the boys entrusted to you by Divine Providence.
>
> For teachers: See that teachers have the necessary food and clothing. Be thoughtful of their work load and when they are sick or indisposed have someone substitute for them. Talk with them often, either individually or as a group; see if they are overworked, if they need clothes or books, if they are physically or morally worn out or have disciplinary or scholastic problems with some pupils. Do your utmost to provide for any need you discover.
>
> For coadjutors and domestic personnel: If arguments or friction should arise among domestics, assistants, pupils or others, listen kindly to everyone, but as a rule give your opinion privately so that one may not hear what you say of the other.[153]

Don Bosco understood that the call of God for him was to work with the young and the workers in a holistic way. He led them to Jesus Christ, and then to concern for each other in the community, and then trained them to work for the kingdom of God. All these are summarized in his aim in education: "honest citizens of this world and good Christians."

Don Bosco insisted that communion with God should be shown in one's unity within and with the Church. The Salesian priest and brother is an advocate of communion, lived in groups in the Church,

[153]Angelo Amadei, *Biographical Memoirs* 10 (New York: Salesiana Publishers, 1977), 447–48.

and above all in the educative community. The educative community in turn unites young people and their educators in familial surroundings, around a project of integral education of the young.[154]

To encourage this journey towards communion, the Salesian educator should be kind. The Salesian makes the first approach and welcomes others with kindness, respect, and patience. This is done in family spirit where there is welcome, mutual trust, forgiveness, and sharing where everyone is responsible for the common good.[155] Don Bosco started his work for those whose parents were in the farms while their young men were flocking to the city for work. They needed a community, for which the Church is an example and pattern. Once the Salesian priest and brother show this responsible service for Church and humanity, the young people and adults are influenced in their apostolic commitment. This becomes a vocation, a call to the Christian transformation of the world.[156]

The kindness, respect and patience of the Salesian who follows the growth of the young, and the unconditional welcome of the community, allow the young to experience the God who loves them and walks along with them. This can offset the negative experiences of absentee fathers, or hurting family relationships, and allow the young to look at the world in a different way. This approach will emphasize that at the origin of life, there is a call of God. "To love life, not as something fragmented but planned as a vocation, means accepting the appeal to become involved in the building of a humanity of justice and peace; to love it in a far-reaching way, open to culture and ideals, ready to share and work in solidarity, able to dream courageously, as Don Bosco did, of new worlds and new men."[157]

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[154]CSFSDB, n. 13, 35.

[155]CSFSDB, n. 15, 16.

[156]CSFSDB, n. 32.

[157]GC 23, n. 164.

The educator and young people work together for a project giving preference to the poorest, to promote their growth to the fullness of life after the measure of Christ the perfect man.[158] The educators stay alongside the young workers and share their experiences to help them unite faith and life. "Love what the youngsters love," Don Bosco repeats to the Salesians in the present-day situation, "so that they will come to love what you love."[159] Pope John Paul II succinctly described this approach of Don Bosco:

> Loving-kindness is expressed in practice in the commitment of the educator, adult, and lay, as a person entirely dedicated to the good of others especially the young, ready to accept sacrifices and hard work in the fulfillment of one's mission. All this calls for a real availability to the young and others, a deep empathy and the ability to dialogue with them. The true educator shares the life of the young, is interested in their problems, tries to become aware of how they see things, is ready to intervene to solve problems, to indicate criteria, and to correct with prudent and loving firmness defective judgments and behavior. In this pedagogical presence the educator is not looked upon as superior, manager, supervisor but as a parent, kin and friend.[160]

Loving-kindness is an unconditional acceptance, constructive and positive rapport, sharing joys and sorrow, and the ability to manifest educative love by signs. It invites the educator to be cordially and faithfully present among the people, committing the community to the creation of an authentic family spirit. This new educative culture finds the ways and means for bringing this relationship into public life in the world of culture, politics, and social life. This can be part of the new education open to the new evangelization. This is important to help families shed light on modern problems and an inspiration to

[158]GC 23, n. 160.

[159]GC 23, n. 96.

[160]Pope John Paul II "Discourse at the University of Turin," 4.

create an environment of joy, dialogue, and solidarity, transforming them into authentic domestic churches.[161]

For the adult lay Salesian, together with the Salesian priests and brothers, friendly relationship is also called the "family spirit" that is expressed in serene and welcoming human relationships. Based on self-control, "to be a friend of Don Bosco" was the aim of all in the School of Don Bosco. Charity, patience, and kindness were the relational virtues Don Bosco learned from St. Francis de Sales. The right atmosphere for dialogue is friendship or rather "service" which brings about affective balance and self-giving fidelity. Personal encounters build a formative and stimulating environment. These encounters encourage group processes and accompany the young as they mature in their vocation.[162] The adult layperson should create an atmosphere for communion and community.

Together with the Salesian priests and brothers, the lay adult should be committed in the Church for the world. This is summarized in *Da mihi animas*. This commitment indicates rapport with God, relations with one's neighbor, and a unique intervention in history. It includes contemplation and action, the will to do good, and the determination to find the necessary means in inculturating the Gospel (an aspect of the new evangelization). It obliges social, civil, and political sensitivity. It gives the same attention as Don Bosco did to movements and cultural changes. Through work, carried out conscientiously and with competence, with the enhancement of one's culture, and with joyful faith, one strives to make all, equally, children of the same Father. Some elements are urgently required today like the family as the sanctuary of life, respect for the dignity of the person and one's rights, the spreading of a culture of peace, human advancement leading to more just living conditions, and the defense of the ecological balance. The participation of lay people in public life must be reasserted and sustained. It must be

[161]GC 23, n. 87–89.

[162]GC 23, n. 87–89.

lived with a spirit of service and to give growth to justice and fraternity, directing attention to the poorest and most abandoned.[163]

For the young, spirituality is living daily life with Christ joyfully, as found in the Church and community. Christ, the Salesian educator, and other friends want to be together to share and celebrate the joy of living, and to help each other. As such, the group can be the leaven in the midst of other young people. Creating groups, linked to varied interests of their lives, institutionalizes this friendship, from games, to culture, and to religious commitment. Groups often share the same ideals and values, relationships often develop among them, and in this way they tend to become a movement of and for the young.[164]

Don Bosco was a man of communion. The personal relationship with the risen Christ and the group experience led to his filial relationship with the Church. He taught the young to live the mystery of the Church which enshrines, despite its human weakness, the invisible grace of the presence of God. Don Bosco's personal daily witness and the family environment he created in the Oratory produced in the youngsters a sense of collaboration and shared responsibility. Today, the diverse interests, gifts, and values shared in the educative community testify to the presence of the Lord who unites all in one heart and one soul. This family spirit is an effective sign of the Church, which all want to build together, for a fraternal service to those in greater need.[165]

During Don Bosco's lifetime, the young people at the Oratory flourished in concrete expressions of love for the Church and catered to Her needs. Communion continually urges the young to align themselves with all those working for the salvation and the building of the Kingdom of God. This communion is expressed in esteem

[163]GC 23, n. 89–91.

[164]GC 23, n. 169.

[165]GC 23, n. 170.

for, and convinced adherence to, the teachings of the Holy Father and all the leaders of the Church at different levels. This communion allows the young to cooperate with all who work for the common good. This communitarian sense seeks for understanding and dialogue with those responsible for pastoral work in the vicinity, following a mature vision of faith, and capable of understanding and accepting the human aspects of the Church, with its limitations, plans, pains, and projects, and making them one's own. It is open finally to the problems of adults and the youth, which arise in various situations. Spirituality grows and can be measured by reference to the history of the individuals concerned.[166]

It is important to note that in the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, the sacraments are placed within the context of the Church as the foundational sacrament instead of positioning this within the element of friendship with Jesus. However, in Don Bosco's pedagogy of holiness, the meeting and relationship of friendship with the risen Christ is lived in a special way in the celebration of the sacraments.

Don Bosco's prayer was that of the good Christian: simple and popular, rooted in life. It was a festive and personal dialogue with God. It was expressed in brief and spontaneous expressions drawn from the Word of God and the liturgy. Don Bosco used to speak more frequently of "piety" (devotion) than of "prayer." "Piety" expresses the awareness of being immersed in the "fatherhood of God" and is less concerned with words than with the loving gestures of one who wants to please the Lord in everything. As each generation finds its own style of prayer in fidelity to tradition and a courageous relationship with culture and related problems, Salesian prayer, in the spirit of Don Bosco, is able to accept new styles which help youngsters to meet the Lord in daily life. Prayer is flexible and creative, and attentive to the Church's guidelines for renewal.[167]

[166]GC 23, n. 171.

[167]GC 23, n. 176.

Salesian youth spirituality reserves a special place for the person of Mary who "infuses hope," and suggests to them some typically gospel attitudes: listening, fidelity, purity, self-donation, service.[168] Mary, invoked and honored under the title of "Helper," is for them a "sign of certain hope and comfort" (LG 68). Once they have acquired a well-motivated Marian devotion, the young discover the horizons that Mary Help of Christians opens before them: a burning apostolic zeal in the struggle against sin and against a view of the world and mankind opposed to the Beatitudes and the "new commandment."[169]

This encounter with Christ in the Church would challenge the young to live for others. Don Bosco called on his boys to become "honest citizens and good Christians." The young believer, prompted by the Spirit, is at the service of mankind. Gradually, like the Church, one should be an expert in humanity. Service is a yardstick for the journey of spirituality. The synthesis of the two elements is the mature fruit of youth spirituality.[170] To be an upright citizen implies at the present day for a young person the promotion of personal dignity and the rights that go with it, in every context; living generously in the family and preparing himself to form it on the basis of reciprocal donation; fostering solidarity, especially among the poor; development of one's own work with honesty and professional competence; promoting justice, peace and the common good in the political arena; respecting creation; fostering culture (CL 37, 44).

It has been seen how Don Bosco responded to the needs of young workers. Today new fields of service are opening up for the youth. There is the educational and cultural animation of their neighborhood to overcome marginalization and spread a culture of sharing. There is also civil and missionary volunteer work for collaborating with other

[168]CSFSDB, n. 34.

[169]GC 23*,* n. 23, 177.

[170]GC 23, n. 178.

institutions for human advancement and evangelization.[171] Love for life, a sign of the Spirit and the style of Don Bosco, can find adequate ways to harness the energies of the young and be challenged to continue Don Bosco's mission. Vocations are born from a meaningful experience of service for the poor, in catechesis, in an oratory, in visiting the sick, in voluntary work, or in educational initiatives. In these communitarian experiences the workers ask: "Where can I express my love for life and the Lord of life?" For many the call will lead to profession and raising of a family, lived as a responsible service to the Church and mankind. For others it might be a call to the priesthood or religious life. In any case, under the guidance of the Spirit and animated by the values of Salesian spirituality, the young welcome and live out their life as a vocation.[172] For the young, spirituality starts out with daily life—work lived with joy because of Jesus' presence and inspiration, lived within the Church, through responsible service in and beyond the Church. This responsible service for the community is what Bregolin mentioned at the beginning of this research. Through life in the community, the young workers are gradually involved in projects of solidarity. One's vocational orientation grows from the experience of love and unity in community where the young are empowered to form other communities.

In summary, Don Bosco's work of catechism or formation is supposed to introduce the young to Jesus Christ who will transform them. This is called "education in the faith." This education has three moments: the formation of conscience, the education to love, and showing the young the social dimension of charity.

Eucharistic Spirituality and the Salesians

In 1987, the seventh successor of Don Bosco, Egidio Vigano, beginning from the Presence of Jesus in the Eucharist, proposed

[171]GC 23, n. 179.

[172]GC 23, n. 180.

that it is Jesus who challenges the Salesians to be present among the young as a good Shepherd. The Salesian is more inspired with deeper reflections of the sacrifice of the Eucharist. Vigano stressed that in the Salesian spirituality, the Eucharist brings in the different aspects of cult, sanctification, profession of faith, self-sacrificing witness, apostolic commitment, deepening of truth, and the triumph of love. The Eucharist is presented in its full originality in the gift of self in love which has become sacrifice: the ability to make a joyful offering of the concrete and generous commitment of one's love. As a Christian Passover, the Eucharist aims at the fullness of charity, directing a person simultaneously towards its two objectives, God and Man, through an intrinsic "grace of unity" which springs from the heart of Christ where the love of the Father is the cause, the source and the strength of love for neighbor, for the poor, for the young, and for those in need.

This sacrifice underscores the value of suffering in life when it brings about an increased love through the giving of oneself in sacrifice just like Christ. Through this union with Jesus, an educator in the faith restores morality, nourishes virtues, consoles the afflicted, strengthens the weak, and proposes one's own example to those who come to him. One's sacrifice becomes educative and redemptive at the same time.

In Holy Communion, one's assimilation into Christ makes one united with His Body in order to continue His redeeming mission. With this, Eucharist becomes the secret force behind all the kindness and activity and the real significance of the Salesian educational plan. There is need to cultivate among the young workers the centrality of the Eucharistic mystery.

Hence Salesians cannot be satisfied with seeking in the Eucharist something new about God or about man. Salesians cannot stop at a simple introduction to rites (though this is necessary); nor will it suffice to celebrate mere human, youthful or social values. What is called for is a true introduction to the mystery of Christ. In this way the Eucharistic celebration will appear as a genuine meeting between existence and faith, between daily life and the Gospel, between the saving truth and current problems. When this is done, together with

the "paschal memorial," one will grow in the discovery of love and the precious nature of life. Sacramental sensitivity with its original and symbolic richness will be developed and the attitude of contemplative adoration will be intensified. Pastoral pedagogy will be concerned in fostering active participation, the awareness of being sons in Christ, the peculiar Christian values of gratitude, the settings of solidarity, and the historical requirements of the mission.

Introducing the young "to a conscious and active participation in the Church's liturgy" then would mean, in practice for the Salesian, introducing the young to the paschal mystery. In Don Bosco's method of education it meant building up an awareness of faith and friendship, of living with Jesus Christ in the Eucharist.[173]

In this letter, Vigano mentioned six important elements of the Eucharist which Salesians should cultivate:

1. Conversion: without a sense of sin, [it] is impossible to understand the central and indispensable place of Christ. On the other hand, without a deep understanding of the truth of love, sin will be incomprehensible.

2. Enlightenment by the Word of God: only the light of the Gospel can provide a valid response to life's pressing problems.

3. Awareness of the "real presence" of Christ in the New Covenant: we cannot insist too strongly on the need to make known and understood the wonders of the sacramental character of the Church in the celebration of the sacrifice of the Mass.

4. Living incorporation into Christ means that the sacramental communion is the true cradle of the new Man. It should be continually presented and inculcated as the source of deep convictions and as strength for courageous Christian behavior.

5. Mission is taking part in the saving activity of Christ. Being the Body of Christ in the world requires the daily commitment to our educational work, that of introducing young people to the apostolate.

[173]Vigano, "The Eucharist in the Apostolic Spirit of Don Bosco."

6. Finally, the friendship of "adoration" should be encouraged without forgetting its reparation aspect.[174]

Don Bosco gave special importance to the fact of having Jesus in the house, close at hand and available to us; the inculcating of the Emmanuel mystery banishes the depression of feeling lonely, and ensures that each one has a strategic starting point for the revival of his appreciation of the good of his own existence.

This relationship with Jesus in the Eucharist not only intensifies His Presence and Sacrifice but it challenges Salesians to create community as well. This sacred meal creates community among the Salesians and this empowers the mission among the young.

> The hearing of the Word finds its privileged place in the celebration of the Eucharist. This is the central act of every Salesian community: it is a daily festive celebration in a living liturgy. There the community celebrates the paschal mystery and unites itself to the immolated body of Christ, which it receives so as to build itself in him into a fraternal communion and renew its apostolic commitment. For us sons of Don Bosco the Eucharistic presence in our houses is a reason for frequent encounters with Christ. From him we draw energy and endurance in our work for the young (CSFDS 88).

> We labor in economically depressed areas and for poor youth. We educate them to a sense of moral, professional and social responsibility. In this way we contribute to the development of both people and environment .... While not getting involved in ideologies or party politics, we reject everything that encourages deprivation, injustice and violence. We cooperate with all who are trying to build a society more worthy of man's dignity. The advancement to which we dedicate ourselves in the spirit of the Gospel makes tangible the love of Christ, which makes men free, and is a sign that the Kingdom of God is among us. (CSFDS 33)

Don Bosco's contribution to the young is the education in the faith. This education would include the three elements of conscience formation, education to love, and the social dimension of charity. All these are

[174]Vigano, "The Eucharist in the Apostolic Spirit of Don Bosco."

found in the Eucharist where one encounters Jesus, the Teacher, who is the Truth, the Word made flesh, who would enlighten the young person. From the experience of the sacrificial love of Jesus one learns how to love others and not use them for one's own advantage. One is taught to appreciate and respect the dignity of the other person. Finally, in the Eucharist one is challenged by Jesus' presence and mission to work for unity.

Conclusion

In this study, we have seen how the three elements for analyzing work can be found in the spirituality of St. Francis de Sales who inspired Don Bosco and his followers, Salesians priests and brothers, lay adults and the young. St. Francis de Sales's contribution was his great respect for human nature, knowing that no human being was basically bad. They were only misinformed or the person had a traumatic experience. Starting with kindness and touching the heart of the person who is ultimately created for God, and through the process of education in the faith, one allows the person to go back to the Creator and live the fullness of life that Christ won for the person. This is partly what this paper understands by creation. The sub-elements of self-expression and self-fulfillment are found in the efforts of St. Francis de Sales and Don Bosco to see the goodness of each person and the possibilities in one's life provided one is guided and helped by the community and strengthened by God. Francis de Sales saw how God was guiding him in his work for his constituents, especially empowering women in their relationships with God, and how he saw in all things, even in the obstacles (i.e. people not attending his masses), instances where he could do something better. In Don Bosco, one can find this creativity in caring for young prisoners, teaching them, and preventing them from getting into trouble again, so that they become honest citizens and good Christians. Don Bosco saw the importance of daily life wherein he gradually understood God's call for him from the prison ministry to the Sunday gatherings. During these occasions, he just provided the sacraments of Reconciliation and Eucharist, catechism, and games for the young workers. Don Bosco, inspired by the need of the young, decided to establish a boarding house and school for them.

Don Bosco finally had his own shops for production. Don Bosco founded a Congregation of Religious to follow up this ministry for the young. This is what the Salesian priests and brothers, the Salesian sisters, his disciples, do as they look to the presence and challenge of God in the life of the young workers. This is shared by the lay partners and the young themselves.

As these young workers learned the truth about themselves and about God, they gradually found out that they were co-creators (modern term not used during Don Bosco's times) and the work that they did as honest citizens is part of continuing the work of God. As they worked, they discovered their unique capabilities and continued to grow as God wanted them to be. They discovered their vocation in the process. Many became good workers and fathers of their families. Many, too, became priests and brothers, some in the Salesian Congregation. Don Bosco underwent the same process. He did not know what he was really going to do and to be, except for the challenge of the dream when he was nine years old. However, step-by-step Don Bosco continued until he found himself marveling at what God had done through him.

The Christ-event apparently has been seen as more important in the life of Don Bosco and his followers as his dream at nine gave him a vision and mission for life. However, as has been shown through this section, Don Bosco had his own way of looking at Christ. He was more practical in stressing four aspects of Christ. They are Jesus' presence in the Eucharist, as companion and model, as Savior, and as Judge. These have not been expected by the author but they are valid since the Incarnation can be expressed in the relationship of the young worker and the Salesian with Jesus in the Eucharist in four ways: Holy Mass, Holy Communion, adoration, and regular daily visits to the Blessed Sacrament. This was a way of being close to Jesus daily, He who was Companion and Model. The young worker can look at Him as a guide in life, to do as He had done. Don Bosco stressed Jesus more as model than as a companion in one's daily life.

Jesus as Savior or the Redeemer would come in when the individual sees one's tendency to be selfish, lazy, and dishonest at work. Don

Bosco added the sacrament of Reconciliation. Jesus in this sacrament not only forgives and heals the sin but empowers the individual to persevere in the process of conversion. That is why when the work is difficult, one's baser self would tempt the worker to stop all together, to take an improper short cut or just waste one's time. When it is the environment or the context that makes work impossible, Jesus' example of struggling, suffering, and being victorious comes in.

During the time of Don Bosco, the reminder of Jesus as Judge would intensify the challenge to the young workers to do good in spite of adverse circumstances. This is the fourth image for John Bosco and this would approximate the eschatological part of the Christ-event. While not diluting this aspect of the end times, Salesians today, would use the "new heavens and new earth" as encouragement at work, the new things that will come about with human beings' decision and participation and God's grace.

Don Bosco did not begin with work itself but with the Catechism. The Oratory was a place where the young workers prayed. If ever playing was introduced it was to attract them. "Love what the boys love, and they will love what you love," Don Bosco would say. This encounter with Jesus is through the catechism lessons, which would move on to the sacraments. The two sacraments of Eucharist and Reconciliation were the mainstay of his educational approach called the "preventive system." This encounter with Jesus allows for conversion, which would result in peace and joy in whatever one would do. "Run, shout, play but do not sin." This is identified as the "joy in the Risen Lord." This encounter with the Sacramental Jesus also brings about healing of traumatic experiences of the young regarding relationships. This healing will allow them to move on to improved relationships with others in the community. It is the encounter with Christ, through the intercession and example of His Mother, Mary, that allowed Don Bosco and his followers to work unceasingly to improve oneself and others, and thus hasten the kingdom.

Finally it has also been shown that Don Bosco had a passion for communion not only with God but within the Church. This invitation to communion is facilitated by the family spirit: a warm,

human, understanding, friendly relationship with the young and with others. The result of this encounter with Christ, which leads one into community with others, allows one to work for the betterment and empowerment of others so they, too, may find fullness of life. In his life, Don Bosco was keen on working in obedience to the Holy Father and even told his boys: "the wish of the Holy Father is a command for us." He built the Shrine of the Sacred Heart in Rome not only because of his love for Jesus but also because the Pope requested him to do so. He obeyed the bishops even if he was unjustly asked to do certain things like not recruiting vocations in their dioceses and not celebrating the Sacrament of Reconciliation in their places. Don Bosco stressed that the needs of the Church become the work place of the Salesians. He formed good Christians within the Church. He formed honest citizens who knew how to work with their hands in society.

In this study we have seen the contribution of St. Francis de Sales' sound humanism and kindness to Don Bosco's approach towards the evangelization of work and the young. This humanism centers on the goodness of persons as given a "heart" that is made for God. This is discovered and matures through the "preventive system" of Don Bosco. In this system, three elements had stood out: reason (respect for and enhancing the human condition and capacity), religion (encounter with Jesus in the Sacraments), and kindness (family spirit). These three elements of the system can approximate the three elements of the spirituality of work: Creation, Christ-event, and Community. Another way of putting these three would be seeing them in the light of education in the faith. Conscience formation would influence one's reason and allow a person to find one's proper place in creation and act accordingly. Love is experienced in a most unique and perfect way in Christ's love for humanity. This Christ-event as taught and lived in a religious setting forms the young in the real way of loving. Finally, the social aspect of charity is deepened and expanded when one experiences community life in the proper way.

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THE STRUCTURE AND DYNAMICS OF IGNATIUS' RULES FOR DISCERNMENT*

Oliver G. Dy, S.J.

> When he went to bed, often great ideas would come to him, great spiritual consolations, in such a way that they were making him lose a lot of time that he had allocated for sleep, which was not much …. That led him to begin to doubt if these ideas were coming from the good spirit. — *Autobiography of Ignatius, 26*

The section of the *Spiritual Exercises* (SE) customarily entitled the Rules of Discernment (#313–336) can be understood as a systematic codification of the lessons in discernment that its author, Ignatius of Loyola, underwent in his personal faith-life. As such, it is no mere random assembly of spiritual insights about the charism of discernment that is ever-present in the life of the Christian community. The Rules are a carefully mapped-out text that not only appropriately instruct the retreat director, given a particular kind of directee, but also subtly describe the paradigmatic interior journey of an exercitant undergoing the *Exercises*. Michael Buckley already alludes to this in his own investigation into the internal structure of the Rules of Discernment when taken as a single literary unit. With the aid of

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other existing commentaries in English, Buckley's analysis is further developed in this article.[1]

The Two Sets of Rules

The Eighth Annotation (SE #8) located in the introductory part of the *Exercises* already indicates that the Rules are subdivided into two parts, namely the Rules for the First Week and those for the Second Week. The Ninth Annotation (SE #9) instructs the director that the first set of Rules is more helpful for "a person who has not been versed in spiritual things and is tempted grossly and openly" [*si es persona que en cosas spirituales no aya sido versado, y si es tentado grosera y abiertamente*] while undergoing exercises of the First Week. In this particular case, the Rules for the Second Week will also be harmful as they are "too subtle and too high" for the exercitant in such a situation [*le deñarán las de la 2ª, por ser material más subtil y más subida que podrá entender*]. On the other hand, the Tenth Annotation (SE #10) advises the director that the second set of Rules properly applies when the exercitant is perceived to be "assaulted and tempted under the appearance of good" [*batido y tentado debaxo de especie de bien*].

The Tenth Annotation also clarifies that the exercises of the First Week correspond to the purgative life while those of the Second Week to the illuminative life. According to Ganss, "the mention of the purgative and illuminative life clearly refers to the classic doctrine

[1]Michael J. Buckley, "The Structure of the Rules for Discernment," in *The Way of Ignatius Loyola: Contemporary Approaches to the Spiritual Exercises*, ed. Philip Sheldrake S.J. (London: SPCK, 1991), 219–37; Jules J. Toner, S.J., *A Commentary on Saint Ignatius' Rules for the Discernment of Spirits* (St. Louis: The Institute of Jesuit Sources, 1981; reprint, Anand: Gujarat Sahitya Prakash, 1982); George E. Ganss, S.J., *The Spiritual Exercises of Saint Ignatius: A Translation and Commentary*, Jesuit Primary Sources in English Translations 9 (St. Louis: The Institute of Jesuit Sources, 1992), 189–95; Herve Coathalem, *Ignatian Insights: A Guide to the Complete Spiritual Exercises*, trans. Charles J. McCarthy (Taiwan: Kuangchi Press, 1961), 243–78.

of the three ways (*viae*) or stages of growth in the spiritual life: the purgative, illuminative, and unitive ways."[2] In this regard, W.H. Longridge remarks:

> What is said in this [Tenth] Annotation (SE #10) refers not so much to the part of the Exercises upon which the exercitant is engaged, as to the habitual state of his soul. For it may happen that retreatants who are making the Exercises of the First Week are, as to the habitual dispositions of their souls, in the illuminative way, and consequently may need the rules belonging to the Second Week, even while they are engaged in the Exercises of the First. And, on the other hand, there may be some who, even when they have passed on to the Second Week, may still at times be subject to gross and manifest temptations which need to be dealt with by the rules belonging to the First Week. The truth is that souls are for the most part tempted in this way or that according to the progress they have made in the spiritual life, and the director must apply to them the Rules of the First or Second Week according to the character of their temptations, irrespective of the precise part of the Exercises in which they are engaged, whether it be the First Week or the Second, or even the Third or Fourth.[3]

In short, the first set of Rules applies to an exercitant in the purgative life while the second set to an exercitant located in the spiritual stage of

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[2]Ganss, *The Spiritual Exercises of Saint Ignatius: A Translation and Commentary*, 144. For more on the purgative and illuminative life, see also sources mentioned in 144–45. The difference between the purgative and illuminative stages cited here are for technical purposes only. See Philip Sheldrake, *Spirituality and History: Questions of Interpretation and Method* (New York: Crossroad, 1992), 181: "An overemphasis on separate, successive stages, with universal application, conflicts with a sense of the uniqueness of each person's spiritual journey as well as with the freedom of God and unpredictability of grace. Equally, the experience of spiritual guidance suggests that the characteristics which give names to the traditional three stages (purgative, illuminative, unitive), that is repentance, enlargement of vision, and growth in selfless love for God and neighbour, are present in different proportions at *every* point on our journey."

[3]W. H. Longridge, *The Spiritual Exercises of Saint Ignatius of Loyola* (London and Milwaukee: A. E. Mowbray, 1930), 13–14.

the illuminative life.[4] The labels of "First Week" and "Second Week" of the Rules do not strictly correspond to the exercises in the First and Second Week of the *Exercises* as such,[5] but rather to the "habitual state of the soul" of the exercitant undergoing the *Exercises*. Hence, the "First Week" and "Second Week" in each of the respective subtitles of these two sets of Rules for Discernment actually refer to the purgative life and illuminative life, respectively.

Furthermore, this also means that "the Second Week Rules need the First Week Rules as a building needs a foundation."[6] Just as a person has to pass through the purgative life in order to arrive at the illuminative life, so too do the Rules for the Second Week presuppose and build on those for the First Week. There is a certain hierarchical relationship between these two sets of Rules. Just as the illuminative life presupposes and builds on the purgative life, so too does the second set of Rules assimilate and develop the first set.

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[4]It is to be noted here that whatever applies henceforth to the illuminative life applies also to the unitive life which, according to the theory, is a more advanced stage of spiritual development.

[5]See Toner, *A Commentary on Saint Ignatius' Rules for the Discernment of Spirits*, 215–16: "Nothing whatever is said as to whether the second set of Rules should be reserved till the Second Week of the *Exercises*, or whether the first set or rules should be explained before the Second Week begins. Explain them or not, according to the need of the exercitant [SE #8]—that is the Ignatian rule from Annotation 8 by which one should guide oneself. Two conditions are set down which, taken together, indicate when the director should not bring up the second set of rules with a person engaged in the exercises for the First Week: (1) the exercitant is not versed in spiritual things and (2) he or she is tempted grossly and openly [SE #9]. When neither of these two conditions is present and the exercitant could profit by understanding the second set of rules, it is in accord with Ignatius' instruction to explain them."

[6]See also David Lonsdale, "'The Serpent's Tail': Rules for Discernment," in *The Way of Ignatius Loyola: Contemporary Approaches to the Spiritual Exercises*, ed. Philip Sheldrake, S.J. (London: SPCK, 1991), 165.

The Rules for the First Week

According to Buckley, there are three fundamental categories that have often been applied throughout history to describe religious experiences: preternatural influences, processes of human intellection, and attractions of human affectivity. Different individuals and traditions emphasize one or two of these factors in their particular approach to religious experiences. Not only was Ignatius one of those who accounted for all these three factors in framing his own spiritual experiences, but it was his genius to provide a general coordinating matrix where each of these finds its proper place. In Buckley's analysis, Ignatius erects in the Rules for the Discernment of Spirits "a tripartite division distributed into two contradictory schemes." By this, he means that there are three horizontal rows representing the three factors of preternatural influences ("Preternatural"), human intellect ("Thoughts"), and human affectivity ("Affectivity") traditionally used to describe religious experiences. Each of these rows is also split into two parts corresponding to the mutually opposing terms of good and evil. As will be visually presented in tables 1 and 2, "the first and second rules [of the First Week] set up the initial schematization of the three levels of religious influence, a matrix whose variables are affectivity, imagination or intellectual intentionality, and preternatural influences."[7]

This can be more clearly seen in the schema derived from the First Rule of the First Week (SE #314) that establishes the basic structure for understanding the entire text of the Rules, as seen in the diagram below:[8]

[7]Buckley, "The Structure of the Rules for Discernment," 219–24.

[8]Buckley, "The Structure of the Rules for Discernment," 222–23, 235.

Table 1. Buckley's Schema for the First Rule for the First Week

Good Spirit	Evil Spirit	(Preternatural)
↓	↓	
Judgment of Reason	Imagination	('Thoughts')
↓	↓	
Remorse	Sensual Pleasure	(Affectivity)

Here, the two terms from the left on the same horizontal level are also mutually opposed to each other. For example, there are three different sets of oppositions here: "Good Spirit" versus "Evil Spirit" on the level of preternatural influence, "Judgment of Reason" versus "Imagination" on the level of "Thoughts," and "Remorse" versus "Sensual Pleasure" on the level of human affectivity.[9] Furthermore, each of the three levels under the same column are also "intrinsically and causally connected." In the case of a person in mortal sin referred to by the First Rule of the First Week (leftmost column), the good spirit operates through the judgment of reason (or conscience) of the human intellect in order to cause remorse on the level of human affectivity. On the other hand, the evil spirit causes sensual attraction in the human affectivity through the imaginations produced in the human intellect of a person in the state of mortal sin (central column). In both cases, there is a line of causality that can be traced from the preternatural influence to the human intellect and finally to the human affectivity.[10]

The Fifth Rule of the First Week (SE #318) follows the schema of the First Rule (SE #314), but in this particular case, the "causal lines" are reversed:

[9]Buckley, "The Structure of the Rules for Discernment," 223–24.

[10]Buckley, "The Structure of the Rules for Discernment," 224.

Table 2. Buckley's Schema of the Fifth Rule of the First Week[11]

Good Spirit	Evil Spirit	(Preternatural)
↑	↑	
Thoughts	Thoughts	('Thoughts')
↑	↑	
Consolation	Desolation	(Affectivity)

The line of causality starts from consolation or desolation on the level of affectivity, and then moves up to the commensurate thoughts generated by such affective experience, and finally arrives at the proper preternatural source. The causal line is reversed because the Fifth Rule of the First Week deals with a person no longer in mortal sin:

> For a person moving through purification, the modes of temptation are dialectically reversed, and the instrumentality of evil is no longer imagination but thought. A higher level of human development is presupposed: a person no longer dominated by imagination and sensual pleasures but operating by reason and insight. Here the evil spirit through false reasoning brings about pain and sadness and a sense of futility, the reasoning devolving upon obstacles to a continuation of the process of conversion.[12]

As is visually presented in tables 1 and 2, "the first and second rules [of the First Week] set up the initial schematization of the three levels of religious influence, a matrix whose variables are affectivity, imagination or intellectual intentionality, and preternatural influences."[13]

Three things are to be noted with regard to table 2 above. First, whereas in the First Rule the movement is from the row of the preternatural influence to the human intellect and finally to the affective state, in the next set of Rules the movement of discernment in the line of causality from the level of affectivity to thoughts arises

[11]Buckley, "The Structure of the Rules for Discernment," 236.

[12]Buckley, "The Structure of the Rules for Discernment," 224–25.

[13]Buckley, "The Structure of the Rules for Discernment," 224.

from this state of affectivity, and finally to the preternatural influence. Thus, this general schematization of religious experience by Ignatius allows one to move from the preternatural source to a quality of thoughts down to resultant moods and emotions, or contrariwise from sets of feelings through a corresponding quality of thoughts and finally to their identifiable source under either an angelic or diabolical preternatural influence. Thus,

> … in these fourteen rules [for the First Week], a matrix emerges for synthesizing religious experience on three different levels: ultra-human, rational, and affective. This matrix provides both for the causal interrelationship among the three, and the contradictory antithesis between the evil and the good.[14]

Second, table 2 above shows that consolation and desolation are located exclusively on the level of human affectivity. According to Buckley, consolation and desolation are therefore not found on the levels of the preternatural agent or the thoughts in human intellect that proceed from the human affect. As affective experiences, consolation and desolation cannot be equated to preternatural influences external to a person, nor are they qualities of rational intentionality proper to the human intellect; rather, consolation and desolation are interior movements of emotionality, feeling, or sensibility. Consolation and desolation therefore refer to states of affectivity defined by the direction of their ensuing movement towards either the good spirit or the evil spirit as the respective causal agent.[15]

Third, there is commensurability between the affective-conditions, thoughts, and preternatural influences that belong to the same line of causality. The reason for this commensurability is that the Rules for the First Week are geared for an exercitant who is "tempted by obvious evil." The obviousness of evil is such that the reality of a temptation on the level of human affectivity can be easily identified through its phenomenological manifestation as evil on the level of the

[14]Buckley, "The Structure of the Rules for Discernment," 224, 27.

[15]Buckley, "The Structure of the Rules for Discernment," 225.

human intellect. This means that the consolation and desolation can generate their own respective commensurate thoughts in accordance with the Fourth Rule of the First Week: "The thoughts that spring from consolation (*que salen de la consolación*) are contrary to the thoughts that spring from desolation (*que salen de la desolación*)." Consequently, these thoughts "almost mechanically" correspond to their respective preternatural influence, as stated in the Fifth Rule: "As in consolation the good spirit leads and directs us by his counsel, so in desolation does the evil spirit." In other words, during the First Week, the preternatural influences appear to be what they really are. At both the level of the affect and intellect, the preternatural evil spirit really appears as evil, just as the preternatural good spirit also really appears as good. This is what is meant by commensurability between the three levels of preternatural influence, human thoughts, and human affectivity.[16]

The Rules for the Second Week

With regard to the second set of Rules for the Discernment of Spirits, Buckley claims that the general schema of the First Week is restated in the First Rule for the Second Week (SE #313). That is, the three levels of preternatural influence, thoughts, and affectivity are once again established along with the antithetical relationships between the two opposing vertical lines of causality. However, the original flow of the line of causality is modified by a *consolación sin causa* or a consolation without preceding cause (SE #330).[17] According to Buckley, a consolation without preceding cause is characterized by "the

[16]Buckley, "The Structure of the Rules for Discernment," 224, 227–28. See also *SE* #317.

[17]The phrases *consolación sin causa* and *consolación con causa* in Buckley's text do not exactly appear as such in the *Autograph*. Cf. SE #330: *Sólo es de Dios nuestro Señor dar consolación a la ánima sin causa precedente*. Likewise, SE #331: *Con causa puede consolar al ánima así el buen ángel como el malo*. Mullan translates the phrase *sin causa precedente* of SE #330 as "without preceding cause" and the *con causa* of SE #331 as "with cause." The phrases "consolation without previous cause" and "consolation without prior cause" are also possible translations of the phrase

total movement of affectivity and sensibility towards God without any proportional influence of imaginative or rational intentionality prior to the experience—whether this priority is conceived temporally or naturally."[18] It is marked by "the absence of any antecedent intentionality proportional to the drawing of affectivity into God."[19] It does not also have a preternatural influence as an agent. This means a good angel, much less a bad angel, cannot belong to the vertical line of causality proper to a consolation without preceding cause. Furthermore, unlike a consolation that can stimulate commensurate good thoughts (SE #318), a consolation without preceding cause has no intellectual intentionality as its commensurate object. It is instead a self-authenticating "movement of total affectivity and feeling towards God."[20]

Buckley provides no accompanying diagram for a *consolación sin causa*. Nevertheless, the skeletal structure of his basic schema can be readjusted in order to depict a consolation without preceding cause described in the Second Rule of the Second Week (SE #330):

Table 3. Buckley's Implied Schema for a Consolation Without Preceding Cause

God alone	
↓↑	
---	(Preternatural)
↓↑	
---	('Thoughts')
↓↑	
consolación sin causa	(Affectivity)

consolación … sin causa precedente. See Toner, *A Commentary on Saint Ignatius' Rules for the Discernment of Spirits*, 28.

[18]Buckley, "The Structure of the Rules for Discernment," 230.

[19]Buckley, "The Structure of the Rules for Discernment," 230.

[20]Buckley, "The Structure of the Rules for Discernment," 230.

This simply means that in a consolation without preceding cause, the line of causality proceeds from God alone and bypasses the preternatural influence and the processes of human intellection and goes directly to the area of human affectivity. Conversely, it also goes directly from the level of affectivity to God alone, skipping the levels of the preternatural and human thoughts.

In contrast to this is a *consolación con causa* or a consolation with preceding cause. Here, the level of the human intellect is activated under the line of causality involving this particular kind of consolation. The Rules for the Second Week also stress that there can be an actual disjunction between a consolation with preceding cause and the thoughts of the human intellect that *appear* to be commensurate with it. This means that the quality of commensurability between thought and affectivity cannot be guaranteed during the illuminative life. One cannot immediately and know for sure whether the good or evil spirit is influencing a thought (the level of human intellect) that leads to or arises from a consolation with preceding cause (the level of human affectivity). The discerner cannot initially ascertain whether the accompanying thought that precedes or proceeds from a consolation with preceding cause is really, actually, and necessarily good:

> When imaginative or rational intentionality either precedes affectivity or is commensurate with it, as thoughts spring out of consolation, the consolation is an equivocal experience. This *consolación con causa* can be either divine or angelic or diabolic, and the quality of its commensurate thoughts [does] not remove this ambiguity.[21]

In other words, what appears as good may not necessarily and truly be good in reality. There can be the phenomenon of subtle deception by the diabolical preternatural agent (the evil angel). One cannot therefore automatically correlate the manifestation of good at the levels of the human intellect and affect with a good preternatural influence.

[21]Buckley, "The Structure of the Rules for Discernment," 230.

This can be schematically depicted as follows:

Table 4. Buckley's Implied Schema for a Consolation with Preceding Cause[22]

God			
↑			
---	good angel	evil angel	(Preternatural)
↑	↑	↑	
		apparently	
truly good thoughts:	truly good thoughts:	good thoughts:	('Thoughts')
beginning, middle, end	beginning, middle, end	beginning and/or middle only	
↑↓	↑↓	↑↓	
consolación con causa	*consolación con causa*	*consolación con causa*	
("divine")	("angelic")	("diabolic")	(Affectivity)
↑	↑	↑	
	consolación sin causa		

Here, Buckley claims that there are three possible influences behind a consolation with preceding cause: God, good angel, or the bad angel—"this *consolación con causa* can either be divine or angelic or

[22]Buckley, "The Structure of the Rules for Discernment," 228–229. It can be seen from the broken line in Table 4 that a consolation with preceding cause can proceed from a consolation without preceding cause. In saying "rules three to eight [of the Second Week] deal with *consolación con causa*, and the last [Rule of the Second Week] combines both kinds of consolation into a single directive," Buckley considers the "afterglow" of a *consolacíon sin causa* (SE # 336) as a *consolacíon con causa*. For a different viewpoint, see Toner, *A Commentary on Saint Ignatius' Rules for the Discernment of Spirits*, 246–48. Toner distinguishes between the "afterglow" of a consolation without preceding cause and a consolation with preceding cause.

diabolic."[23] This means that the bad angel is the prompting agent behind a *deceptive* consolation with preceding cause while God or the good angel is the agent responsible for an *authentic* consolation with preceding cause.

Buckley however does not cite the specific Rule which supports his claim that a consolation with preceding cause can be attributed to God. When one examines the third Rule of the Second Week (SE #331) that specifically introduces the concept of a consolation with preceding cause, one can notice that the word *ángel* or "Angel" (angelic) and not "God" (divine) is explicitly used:

3ª regla. La terçera. Con causa puede consolar al ánima así el buen **ángel** como el malo, por contrarios fines: el buen **ángel** por prouecho del ánima, para que cresca y suba de bien en mejor; y el mal **ángel** para el contrario, y adelante para traerla a su dañada intención y maliçia.	Third Rule. The third: With cause, as well the good **Angel** as the bad can console the soul, for contrary ends: the good **Angel** for the profit of the soul, that it may grow and rise from good to better, and the evil **Angel**, for the contrary, and later on to draw it to his damnable intention and wickedness.[24]

On the other hand, when one examines the eighth Rule of the Second Week (SE # 336), one can also observe that the word "spirit" instead of "Angel" occurs in the text: "through the good **spirit** or through the bad, he forms various resolutions and opinions which are not given immediately by God our Lord" [*o por el buen* ***espíritu,*** *o por el malo, forma diuersos propósitos y paresçeres, que no son dados inmediatamente de Dios nuestro Señor*].[24] As will be shown later, the phrase "good spirit" here can mean either God or the good Angel. It seems that Buckley makes the claim that a consolation with preceding cause can be attributed to

[23]Buckley, "The Structure of the Rules for Discernment," 230.

[24]Boldfacings supplied.

God on the basis of the word "spirit" that appears on this eighth (and last) Rule for discernment.

A question may be raised in this regard: how does one distinguish between a *divine* and an *angelic* consolation with preceding cause? In response to this, Toner opines that

> … it makes no practical difference. Even when God alone gives consolation with previous cause, it is such that it could be given by him through a good angel; and when it is given through an angel, it is still from God principally and given for his purposes. The purpose of the good angel could not be other than what God intends. The ambiguity about God alone or God acting through an angel to cause such a consolation can never be resolved—nor is there any practical need for doing so.[25]

This functional principle is not explicitly stated in the original text of the *Autograph*. In any case, this is the unstated theological background that enables Buckley to reduce the causal agent in the Rules for the First Week to the preternatural influences which he describes as mediatory "personalities or realities which—while not divine—so transcend and influence the human that they alter thoughts or control destinies or marshal forces or tempt resolution or effect liberation or deceive intention."[26] By this, Buckley seems to imply that the Rules for Discernment for the First Week can be understood without formally attributing the "good spirit" to God. The good angel, insofar as it mediates and represents God, can sufficiently substitute for God insofar as the Rules for the First Week are concerned. This substitution of the good preternatural spirit (good angel) in place of God would not hamper the operational logic of the Rules for the First Week.

Consequently, this also means that the good angel ("Preternatural") can operationally replace God as causal agent without destroying the essential logic of the consolation with preceding cause described

[25]Toner, *A Commentary on Saint Ignatius' Rules for the Discernment of Spirits*, 219.

[26]Buckley, "The Structure of the Rules for Discernment," 221.

in the Rules for the Second Week. Just as a consolation without preceding cause is limited to God alone, so too can a consolation with preceding cause be operationally restricted to the preternatural agents. Seen from this perspective, the earlier schema of table 4 can be reconfigured as follows:

Table 5. Revised Schema for a Consolation With Preceding Cause

good angel	evil angel	(Preternatural)
↑	↑	
truly good thoughts:	*apparently* good thoughts:	
beginning, middle, end	beginning and/or middle only	("Thoughts")
↑↓	↑↓	
consolación con causa ("angelic")	*consolación con causa* ("diabolic")	
↑	↑	(Affectivity)
consolación sin causa ("divine" only)		

Based on tables 3 to 5, the difference between the consolation with and without preceding cause can be spelled out by looking at two correlative elements: the activity of thoughts in the causal line of the consolation, and the existence of the possibility of deception by the evil spirit in these thoughts. First, a consolation without preceding cause that occurs on the level of the human affect is not preceded by active thoughts that pave the way for such consolation. Commensurate thoughts do not also flow from it. In contrast, a consolation with preceding cause necessarily involves the processes of human intellection, whether as thoughts that generate or arise from such consolation. If thoughts in the human intellect are therefore actively present in the line of causality, then the kind of consolation is a consolation *with* preceding cause. Second, while there is absolutely no deception in a consolation without preceding cause [*quando la consolación es sin causa, dado que en ella no aya engaño*] (SE #336), a consolation with preceding cause cannot

exclude the possibility of deceit. This is so because the possibility of deceit is, insofar as Buckley's schematization is concerned, coupled to the presence of thoughts in the human intellect. Where there are no thoughts in the line of causality as in the case of a consolation without preceding cause, then no deceit is possible. However, if there are antecedent or ensuing thoughts in the causal line, then the possibility of deceit emerges concurrently with these thoughts. In other words, the distinction between a consolation with and without preceding cause pivots on the existence of the possibility of such kind of deceit. A consolation without preceding cause absolutely negates such possibility, while a consolation with cause cannot deny such possibility by default. In other words, a consolation with preceding cause may turn out to be a deceptive or false consolation, although this may not readily and initially be identifiable as such.

The dynamics of deception is arguably the thematic thread that binds together the Rules for the Second Week. Ganss favors the topical organization of the second set of Rules constructed around the theme of deception which he borrows from Toner.[27] Regarding the subtitle "and they help more for the Second Week" [*y conduzen más para la 2ª semana*] (SE #328) (Mullan's literal translation), Ganss remarks that the second set of Rules deals with "cases more likely to arise during the Second Week, especially emotions caused by the evil spirit using his deceptive tactics during the time of election … [and] chiefly with demonic deceptions."[28] The phrases "apparent reasons, subtleties and continual fallacies" [*razones aparentes, sotilezas y assiduas falacias*] (SE #329), "covert deceits" [*engaños cubiertos*] (SE #332), "usual deceits" [*acostumbrados engaños*] (SE #334), and "no deceit in it" [*ella no aya engaño*] (SE # 336) give supporting evidence to the presence of this kind of deceit during the illuminative life.

[27]Ganss, *The Spiritual Exercises of Saint Ignatius: A Translation and Commentary*, 193–94.

[28]Ganss, *The Spiritual Exercises of Saint Ignatius: A Translation and Commentary*, 194.

This is not the first time however that the subject matter of deceit is treated in the Rules. In the Rules for the First Week, the text already speaks of "apparent pleasures" [*placeres aparentes*] (SE#314), "false reasons" [*falsas razones*] (SE #315), "a licentious lover in wanting to be secret and not revealed" [*vano enamorado en querer ser secreto y no descubierto*] (SE #326) in reference to the enemy. These citations are already suggestive of the dynamics of deceit that can be operative from the very start. Given this, what is the difference, if any, of this kind of deceit in the Rules for the First Week from those for the Second?

The full text of Buckley is worth quoting here:

> The elaboration of discernment in the First Week is geared to people tempted by obvious evil. Now the much more difficult question obtains: how to respond to religious influences when the matter is much more subtle, when evil draws under the appearance of good? The First Week saw temptation as unified both as phenomenon and as real; evil appeared to be what it is. The Second Week takes up the disjunction between the two: when the phenomenon is good but the reality is actually evil.[29]

The dynamics of deceit in the Rules for the First Week are more obvious while those in the Rules for the Second Week are more covert or subtle. Furthermore, the subtlety of deceit in the Rules for the Second Week can only be fully grasped if obviousness of deceit in the Rules for the First Week are first understood. Because the purgative life is the foundation for the illuminative life, one of the prerequisites in the Rules for the First Week that is carried over to the Rules for the Second Week is "the knowledge that it is in the very nature of our resistance to the Spirit of God to be tricky and deceptive [SE # 139, 142, 325–7]."[30]

In this regard, Toner opines that the second set of Rules "are *directly* concerned only with two subtle diabolical deceptions that can hinder

[29]Buckley, "The Structure of the Rules for Discernment," 227–28.

[30]Lonsdale, "'The Serpent's Tail': Rules for Discernment," 166.

such discernment [i.e., deceptive consolation with preceding cause and deceptive thoughts during the "afterglow" of a consolation without preceding cause], deceptions which begin with one or other of the two kinds of consolation distinguished and described in the rules for the sake of understanding these deceptions." However, he also adds that "the distinction between consolation with and without preceding cause is nowhere else so much as mentioned in Ignatius' writings [and this] suggests its [consolation without preceding cause] unimportance to Ignatius outside this limited context."[31] This statement of Toner can be taken to mean that a consolation without preceding cause is useful only to the extent that it is a negative instance of deceit. It appears based on this position of Toner that it is not so much important to positively resolve exactly what a consolation without preceding cause is as to recognize it negatively as a spiritual experience that is absolutely and purely without the possibility of deceit.[32]

As such, an absolutely non-deceptive consolation without preceding cause due to God alone becomes the clearest background and point of reference against which a consolation with preceding cause is discerned as either angelic or diabolic (i.e., from the good or bad angel). The superlative degree of clarity of a consolation without preceding cause is the same degree of clarity towards which the process of the further discernment of an initially ambiguous consolation with preceding cause should aspire. In other words, the outcome of the discernment of a consolation with preceding cause should ideally reflect that same degree of epistemological clarity possessed by a consolation without preceding cause. At the end of the discernment process, a consolation

[31]Toner, *A Commentary on Saint Ignatius' Rules for the Discernment of Spirits*, 214.

[32]For an overview of the different positions regarding consolation without preceding cause, see Toner, *A Commentary on Saint Ignatius' Rules for the Discernment of Spirits*, 291–313; see also Ramon Ma. Luza Bautista, S.J, "Ignatian Prayer and Ignatian Discernment: A Critical Evaluation of Recent Literature in English on Two Key Aspects of the Spiritual Exercises of Ignatius of Loyola as a School of Love." Ph.D. diss. (Heythrop College, University of London, 1997), 182–225.

with preceding cause should clearly be identified as either angelic or diabolic just as a consolation without preceding cause is clearly genuine. It is through the process of discernment that a consolation with preceding cause is gradually moved from its original ambiguity to its eventual superlative clarity with regard to its preternatural source or cause. Thus, the initial tension between a consolation with and without cause involves the tension between epistemological ambiguity and clarity.

According to Buckley, the flow of the discourse of the Rules for the Discernment of Spirits for the Second Week addresses this initial ambiguity of a consolation with preceding cause that concurrently arises with this covert dynamics of deceit. A new feature is integrated here from the original schema for the First Week, namely the temporal dimension of the course of thoughts. This addition to the matrix for the Second Week is based on three instructions for the Second Week that safeguard against the deceit of the evil angel. First, the Fifth Rule (SE #333) directs the exercitant to examine the beginning, middle, and end of the course of possibly deceitful thoughts that contemporaneously arise in the intellect. Second, the Sixth Rule (SE #334) advises a review of the history of the course of deceptive thoughts once the deceit has been uncovered somewhere along the way. These two Rules suggest that the deceit behind a false consolation can only be recognized once the affective markers of the ensuing desolation emerge in the affectivity of the exercitant. Just as there is a difference between the affective features of consolation and desolation in the purgative life, so too is there the same distinction between false consolation in the illuminative life and the desolation that is likely to come after it. Only when a false consolation turns into a desolation can it be retrospectively identified as a *false* or deceitful consolation. It is the ensuing desolation that allows one to view the antecedent consolation as false. Without this desolation that comes afterwards, the false consolation experienced will be mistakenly perceived as a true consolation. This means that, "affectively" speaking, there is a difference between false consolation and desolation. False consolation leads to desolation but is not yet desolation as such on the affective level. Third, the Eighth Rule (SE #336) also cautions against attributing immediately to God the

apparently good "resolutions and opinions" that arise during the period of the "afterglow" (Toner) immediately following the duration of a deceit-free consolation without preceding cause.

Buckley also states that the Rules for the Second Week indicate "a pattern of progressive maturity in assimilating this kind of discernment." By this, he means that there are three Rules for the Second Week (SE #333–335) that correspond to each of the three temporal moments of "beginning, middle, and end" (SE #333) of "the course of thoughts" of a *consolación con causa*. Each of these three Rules in turn represents three different stages of spiritual progress for a person in the illuminative life. The fifth Rule (SE #333) deals with a person at the lowest level of spiritual growth in the illuminative life who realizes the deception only at the "end." The sixth Rule (SE #334) speaks about a person who uncovers the deceit somewhere in the "middle." Finally, the seventh Rule (SE #335) talks about a person who detects the deceit of a false consolation at the "beginning," that is, almost instantly. It is in this sense that the fifth to seventh Rules of the Second Week signify "a pattern of progressive maturity."[33] This means that the duration of time between a false consolation and the subsequent desolation that exposes it as deceitful is essentially dependent on the degree of spiritual maturity of an exercitant located in the illuminative life.

Furthermore, the spiritual maturity of the exercitant is also related to how he or she discerns whether or not a consolation with preceding cause is false. In the fifth and sixth Rules (SE #333–34), the manner of determining the existence of deceit is by examination at the level of rational intentionality (thoughts) or the level of affectivity. The fifth Rule refers to the least mature person in the illuminative life: if the course of thoughts "ends in something bad, of a distracting tendency, or less good than what the soul had previously proposed to do," or if "sensibility or the complex of human feelings has been weakened or made restless or so troubled that a previous peace and tranquillity have been lost," then "it is a clear sign that it proceeds from the evil spirit" (SE #333). At this point "neither affection nor

[33]Buckley, "The Structure of the Rules for Discernment," 231–32.

rational intentionality is self-justifying; it is their unity which must obtain and in which one level is critically judgemental of the other."[34] In short, neither discursive examination of thoughts nor sensitivity to feelings alone suffices. Rather it is through their critical interaction with each other that the deceit of a false consolation is revealed. The more mature person of the sixth Rule (SE #334) employs this same methodology of discernment proper to the illuminative life, together with the additional provision that the discerner retrace in memory the steps which led to the present desolation so that the lessons learned from this review make him more sensitive to the introduction of the lesser and deceptive good by the evil spirit.[35] However, in the case of a person referred to by the seventh Rule (SE #335), it is no longer necessary to critically inspect the course of his thoughts using the methodology of discernment prescribed for the first two cases. On the contrary, this person *intuits* the existence of deceit solely on the basis of the immediate effects on his affectivity at the introduction of the deceptive thoughts by the bad angel. The interiority of this most spiritually mature person is exceptionally congruent to the good angel; so much so that through the spontaneous response of his affectivity alone, this person can rapidly or immediately (at the "beginning") discern the deceit behind a false consolation. Thus,

> it is subtly possible, even at the initiation of the consolation [with preceding cause], to discern the true from the false: the true consolation [with preceding cause] will enter a person given over to the Lord, almost imperceptibly, in silence, as a drop of water enters a sponge. On the contrary, that which is not of God will enter with the violence and perceptibility of a drop hitting a rock. The condition of affectivity indicates the authenticity of the consolation long before any discriminations are elaborated on the worth of the ideas which spontaneously spring from this consolation [with preceding cause].[36]

In other words, if the temptation of "good and holy thoughts" (SE#329) enters a person who is very mature in the illuminative life,

[34]Buckley, "The Structure of the Rules for Discernment," 231.

[35]Buckley, "The Structure of the Rules for Discernment," 231.

[36]Buckley, "The Structure of the Rules for Discernment," 231–232.

this will almost immediately (at the "beginning") be translated on the level of affectivity as a sharp touch with "noise and disquiet, as when the drop of water falls on the stone" (SE #335). It is as if the life-span of what the enemy had intended to be a false consolation is very short, so that the ensuing desolation of "noise and disquiet" is almost instantly felt in the person's affectivity—just shortly after the deceptive "good and holy thoughts" have entered the person. Unlike the first two cases where the exercitants go with the flow of the deceptive good thoughts that confer false consolation for some duration of time, in this case the very spiritually mature person in the illuminative life is able to instantly reject the proposed "apparent reasons, subtleties and continual fallacies" on the level of thought because they almost instantaneously translate into the quasi-desolation of "noise and disquiet" on the level of affectivity.[37]

This seventh Rule of the Second Week then provides the director reassurance that "even when the evil spirit comes as an angel of light, he is bound to reveal himself ultimately in *every* instance," thereby removing any doubt "whether the influence of the evil spirit will *always* or only sometimes show up in what follows on the consolation and holy thoughts with which the deception begins."[38] In effect, the seventh Rule of the Second Week guarantees that it is always possible to arrive, even almost immediately, in discerning an initially ambiguous consolation with preceding cause at that same degree of epistemological clarity that resonates with the benchmark clarity of an unmistakably non-deceptive consolation without preceding cause.

The supreme affective response to the deceits of the enemy of the most spiritually mature person alluded to by the seventh Rule epitomizes what is known as *sentir* in Ignatian spirituality. Although it can mean rational, conceptual, explicit knowledge, *sentir* almost always

[37]Buckley, "The Structure of the Rules for Discernment," 231–32.

[38]Toner, *A Commentary on Saint Ignatius' Rules for the Discernment of Spirits*, 237.

means a heart-felt and connatural knowledge flowing from love, a non-conceptual, non-verbal mystical knowledge.[39] It signifies

> a 'felt-knowledge', an affective, intuitive knowledge … that is not merely an intellectual grasping of abstract propositions but a total human experience of understanding with all its emotional resonance …. [It] is more complete than ideas possessed by intellectual knowledge, more solid than the fluctuations of superficial emotions.[40]

The person with the highest degree of spiritual conformity to the good spirit possesses that *sentir* which enables him to almost instantly respond in the proper affective way not only to an *overt* deceit in the purgative life, but also to a *covert* deceit that falsely consoles for some time less mature persons in the illuminative life. This way of discernment sketched in the seventh Rule of the Second Week is therefore "more perfect, less discursive, more spontaneous[,] … more direct and quicker."[41] Here, the spiritual maturity of an exercitant is proportional not only to the rapidity by which he detects the deceit behind a false consolation, but also the manner by which he quickly exposes it. As seen in the seventh Rule for the Second Week, the quasi-desolation of "noise and disquiet" produced in the affect of a spiritually sensitive person immediately unmasks what the enemy had intended to be a false consolation proceeding from deceptive "good and holy thoughts" (SE #332).

It is in reference to this most spiritually-developed affectivity that Buckley clarifies that "affectivity is not the criterion in the First Week;

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[39]Harvey D. Egan, S.J., *The Spiritual Exercises and the Ignatian Mystical Horizon* (St. Louis: Institute of Jesuit Sources, 1976), 49 in Ramon Ma. Luza Bautista, S.J, *A Way to the Desert: 101 Questions and Answers on the Ignatian Retreat* (Makati City: St. Pauls, 2001), 98.

[40]John Carroll Futrell, S.J., "Ignatian Discernment," *Studies in the Spirituality of Jesuits* (April 1970) in Bautista, *A Way to the Desert: 101 Questions and Answers on the Ignatian Retreat*, 98.

[41]Piet Penning de Vries, S.J., *Discernment of Spirits*, trans. W. Dudok Van Heel (New York: Exposition Press, 1973), 51.

it is the criterion in the second." By this, he actually means that the affective response typified by an unconscionable person regressing in the state of mortal sin (first Rule of the First Week) should be absolutely distrusted. Conversely, the affective reaction exemplified by the spiritually keen individual pointed to by the seventh Rule of the Second Week should be upheld as the benchmark of discernment. These two illustrative sample responses on the level of affectivity of two entirely opposite persons must not be confused with each other:

> Mix these up, and you have a monster in your hands. The one who feels peace in cruelty is sick, or the religious who experiences joy in infidelity is pathological.[42]

This means that in terms of the subject matter of deceit, the affective experiences of an exercitant in mortal sin tempted with "sensual delights and pleasures" [*delectaciones y placeres sensuales*] (SE #314) and an exercitant in the illuminative life initially tempted with deceptive "good and holy thoughts" [*pensamientos buenos y sanctos*] (SE #332) are similar in that they both appear apparently good to the intellect. The "apparent pleasures" [*plaçeres aparentes*] (SE #314) due to the false thoughts in the imagination of a person in mortal sin and the false consolation due to illusory "good and holy thoughts" of a person in the illuminative life are affectively similar. The pricking and biting of the conscience through the process of reason [*punzándoles y remordiéndoles las consçientias por el sindérese de la razon*] by the good spirit can also translate on the level of affectivity of a person in mortal sin to affective features that appear to be comparable to a desolation of a good person in the purgative life or a desolation that succeeds a false consolation of a better person in illuminative life. Hence, affectivity without qualification cannot serve as the sole basis for discernment. It can become the singular basis for discernment to the extent that the person's interiority becomes more and more purified towards a degree of connaturality with God or the Angel in a way that mirrors

[42]Buckley, "The Structure of the Rules for Discernment," 232.

the connaturality [*proprio es*] (SE #315, 329][43] of the good spirits and their proper operations on the good person. Hence, a person in the state of mortal sin journeys to the greater spiritual sensitivity pointed to by the seventh Rule of the Second Week through "the conversion and reorientation of human sensibility worked through the purifications and completions of the First Week." Therefore, "only when and to the degree that affectivity is ordered can it in turn become the clue to the direction in which one should go within the myriad good options which surround one's life."[44]

Inasmuch as these two contrasting types of interiorities (person in mortal sin and person of the seventh Rule of the Second Week) represent mutually opposing extremes, they at the same time trace out a path of spiritual maturation from bad to good to better. The difference between a good person in the purgative life and a better person in the illuminative presupposes and builds on the foundational difference between a person in mortal sin and a good person progressing in the purgative life (Table 3 and 4 respectively). Seen in this light, the seventh Rule holds a pivotal significance for the interpretation of the entire text of the Rules in that it is the climax of a hidden narrative of discernment embedded in the Rules. A person in mortal sin with an affectivity described in the first Rule of the First Week (SE #314) moves to a morally converted affectivity assumed in the second Rule of the First Week (SE #315). He or she then proceeds in his or her spiritual journey towards the illuminative life, where the Rules for the Second Week begin to take effect. Within this set of Rules lie three progressive gradations of spiritual maturation of which the seventh Rule is the high point. Thus, as a person moves from mortal sin to the purgative to the highest stage in the illuminative life, he or she progressively matures in the art of discernment along the way and brings it more to

[43]Toner, *A Commentary on Saint Ignatius' Rules for the Discernment of Spirits*, 56.

[44]Buckley, "The Structure of the Rules for Discernment," 231–32. For another view regarding the criterion of affectivity in the process of discernment, see Bautista, *A Way to the Desert: 101 Questions and Answers on the Ignatian Retreat*, 110–14.

its perfection. Thus, affectivity as the criterion of the Second Week is correlative to the centrality of the seventh Rule for the Second Week (SE #335) for the entire Rules for Discernment.

This embedded narrative also reflects the structural development of the Rules: the first rule of the First Week (SE #314) establishes the primary moral foundation for discernment; the second rule of the First Week (SE #315) presupposes and builds on this previous Rule and sets the general tenor for a good person in the purgative life; the seventh Rule (SE #335) forms a thematic capstone as it assimilates this second Rule and simultaneously binds these two previous Rules into a coherent unity:

> Explicitly, the [seventh Rule of the Second Week] repeats things said in [the first and second Rules of the First Week], and then adds an explanation …. This rule could, with perfect coherence, be inserted immediately after [them], as an explanation of them.[45]

It is not surprising, therefore, that these three fundamental Rules are not only literarily expressed in strikingly similar fashion, but also altogether contain the crucial determinative criteria in discernment: the habitual state of soul or fundamental interior disposition of the exercitant; the actual direction or orientation of his or her growth (progress or regress) already presupposing his or her habitual state of soul; the immediate affective effect of the spirit on the level of his or her affectivity given his or her current orientation at the moment; and the type of spirit that is the causal source or terminus of such immediate affective effect.

Conclusion

There are two sets of Rules for Discernment. The first set is different from the second set of Rules in the same way that, to use

[45]Toner, *A Commentary on Saint Ignatius' Rules for the Discernment of Spirits*, 237; see also 51–54.

Lonsdale's image, the foundation of a building is different from the building erected on that foundation. The first set of Rules (Rules for the First Week) properly applies to a person in the purgative life while the second set (Rules for the Second Week) is more applicable to a person in the illuminative life characterized by the phenomenon of a false consolation (or a deceitful consolation with preceding cause) operative in such a stage of spiritual growth (SE #9–10).

There are also three basic Rules that progressively sketch the ideal spiritual maturation in discernment of an exercitant during an Ignatian retreat. These are the first rule of the First Week (SE #314) that deals with a bad person in mortal sin; the second rule of the First Week (SE #315) that presupposes a good person in the purgative life; and the seventh Rule (SE #335) of the Second Week that describes the better person in the illuminative life who possesses the highest level of spiritual maturity in discernment. It is with regard to this seventh Rule of the Second Week that affectivity alone can be strictly and properly considered the sole criterion for discernment.

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THE SPIRITUALITY OF LEADERSHIP
THE LONERGAN INSIGHT

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What might Jesuit philosopher and theologian Bernard Lonergan be saying about leadership? Lonergan does not seem to offer *direct* insights and reflections on leadership *per se*. But one can discern connections between his key concepts on one hand, and, on the other, some of the critical issues that confront leadership in the world today. Some of these issues are the following: the legitimacy of power and authority, the need for self-transcendence and authenticity in leadership, and the imperative of community and creativity. This article aims to draw from the wellspring of Lonergan's thought some insights that can inform the exercise of leadership in the contemporary horizon. How can Lonergan help expand and deepen our current understanding of leadership? What perspectives from the Lonerganian method can we gain which are applicable to the challenges of leadership today?

My basic thesis can be presented as follows. One critical challenge of leadership is the integration of the leader's interiority and exteriority. By interiority we simply mean what goes on within the self of the leader: his mind and spirit, his heart and soul, and his consciousness and values. By exteriority we refer to the actions and behavioral manifestations of the leader's inner realities. This includes the leader's decisions, projects, initiatives, interventions, and other things he creates. The challenge

I mentioned is the integration, or the coherence between these two: interiority and exteriority. This challenge addresses questions like the following: How can leaders create projects that flow from right values? What mindset should leaders have so that they act morally or responsibly? What is the basis of a leadership that has legitimate power and authority? What makes an authentic leader?

We can find in Lonergan some clues, if not answers, to these questions on leadership. We can deduce from Lonergan's writings that leaders are called to do tasks of creating and healing in the world. Creating moves the world toward growth and progress, and away from decline. Healing moves people toward their redemption, and away from selfishness. Both creating and healing form meanings and values, which in turn constitute culture. Creating and healing form authentic cultures; decline and selfishness form inauthentic cultures. Authenticity is the basis for a kind of power and authority that is legitimate. Hence authentic leaders possess legitimate power and authority; they build cultures that move the world forward, not backward. Such is the "exteriority" of leadership (see *Diagram*).

How are authentic leaders formed? Where can we find them? These leaders operate from a certain "interiority." For Lonergan, these authentic leaders possess "open minds" which are able to transcend natural inclinations toward biases. Such openness in mindset and consciousness facilitates four qualities which Lonergan calls the "transcendental precepts": attentiveness, intelligence, reasonableness, and responsibility. These four precepts correspond to four levels of related, recurrent operations—experiencing, understanding, judging, deciding—which happen within the interiority of the leader. By following the four precepts, leaders are able to transcend natural inclinations toward bias in general, and specifically, toward inattentiveness, obtuseness, unreasonableness, and irresponsibility. Furthermore, we can glean from Lonergan that these precepts form and create insight, love, community, and self-transcendence, and these four dimensions of insight, love, community, and self-transcendence become the force or energy for creating and healing which leaders are called to do in the world. If leaders follow the opposite path of bias,

inattentiveness, obtuseness, unreasonableness, and irresponsibility, what can be expected is decline in cultures, and the furtherance of inauthenticity and illegitimacy in leadership and power.

The *Diagram* below summarizes the points made above and a discussion on these points follows:



The Leadership Task

In *Healing and Creating in History*, Lonergan identifies two tasks which, upon reflection, we can ascribe to leadership today: the creative task and the healing task. These two are positive courses of action characteristic of the development of civilizations in history. They are complementary: Lonergan imagines the creative task as operating "from below upwards," and the healing task as operating "from above downwards."

The creative task is to "find answers," and this is done through the generation of insight:

> It is a matter of insight, not of one insight but of many, not of isolated insights but of insights that coalesce, that complement and correct one another, that influence policies and programs, that reveal their shortcomings in their concrete results, that give rise to further correcting insights, corrected policies, corrected programs, that gradually accumulate into the all-round, balanced, smoothly functioning system that from the start was needed but at the start was not yet known.[1]

This whole cumulative process of insight concretizes itself in structures of society. This process spurs growth and progress. The opposite is decline, and decline happens when the "flow of insights dry up." Insights are generated only by people who have "open minds," not "biased minds" (the idea of bias in Lonergan will be discussed later). Insight is thus critical to Lonergan's philosophy of history. Historical and social transformations happen through the "wheel of progress," which in turn is fueled by insights which arise, complement, and correct themselves. The wheel of progress becomes a "wheel of decline" when the process is distorted by bias.[2]

The healing task is described by Lonergan as "the transformation of falling in love," which is of different types:

> … the domestic love of the family; the human love of one's tribe, one's city, one's country, mankind; the divine love that orientates man in his cosmos and expresses itself in his worship. Where hatred only sees evil, love reveals values. At once it commands commitment and joyfully carries it out, no matter what the sacrifice involved.[3]

Love has the power to "dissolve" hatred that reinforces biases. In another article, Lonergan writes that "beyond progress and decline

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[1]Bernard Lonergan, "Healing and Creating in History," in *A Third Collection: Papers by Bernard J.F. Lonergan, SJ*, ed. Frederick Crowe (Mahwah, NJ: Paulist Press, 1985), 103.

[2]Lonergan, "Healing and Creating in History," 105.

[3]Lonergan, "Healing and Creating in History," 106.

there is redemption," and its principle is "self-sacrificing love."[4] The healing task for Lonergan consists thus in being able to love in a way that heals hatred and bias, which is grounded in values, and which entails self-sacrifice. This love is found in both human and divine loving.

These two tasks which Lonergan identifies as critical in history could be seen as two essential tasks of leadership today. On one hand, leaders are called to be creative: to generate ideas which in turn are concretized through structures and systems, policies and programs which hopefully respond to the crucial problems of the world today. On the other hand, leaders are also called to complement this creative role with the role of healing and loving. This healing role addresses relationships and people rather than structures and systems. It attends to the recovery of healthy interpersonal relationships that are necessary in leading. It helps move people individually toward what Lonergan calls "redemption." Together, these two roles of creating and healing complement each other since leaders do attend to both structures and people, policies and relationships, tasks and values.

Leadership as Transcendence

The call to leadership is a call to transcendence. Leaders are called to go beyond themselves and see the bigger picture of reality. They are also called to overcome themselves—their needs, weaknesses, and even strengths—and learn how to understand others and work with them with openness, humility, and generosity. They are called to deal with the temptations of power, self-indulgence, and narcissism, which cause the downfall of many leaders. In decision-making, leaders are called to consider broader perspectives, recognize and struggle with their biases, and be as objective and perspicuous as they can be. Some

[4]Bernard Lonergan, "Dialectic of Authority," in *A Third Collection: Papers by Bernard J.F. Lonergan, SJ*, ed. Frederick Crowe (Mahwah, NJ: Paulist Press, 1985), 10.

leaders, those who are called to heroism, even transcend their very selves to the point of sacrificing their lives for the sake of others.

The transcendental precepts of Bernard Lonergan can be used as a framework in the formation of transcendence in leadership. To begin with, the transcendentals operate at the level of interiority of leaders. They characterize the intentionality of leaders, and thus they precede action. They are "contained in questions prior to the answers," the *a priori* that "go beyond what we know to seek what we do not know yet." They are "unrestricted in denotation" because "answers are never complete and so only give rise to still further questions." The transcendentals are also "comprehensive in connotation" because "they intend the unknown whole or totality of which our answers reveal only a part."[5] Leaders—especially those who are transcendent—are those who have the ability to follow the imperatives of the transcendentals. They can be attentive rather than inattentive at the level of experience. They are intelligent, not obtuse nor stupid, at the level of understanding. They are reasonable rather than unreasonable at the level of judgment. They are responsible rather than irresponsible and arbitrary at the level of decision.

The transcendental method can be used by leaders as they reflect on situations, examine options, form judgments, and make decisions. Awareness of the precepts and their dispositions toward them can heighten the consciousness, self-awareness, and self-mastery of leaders. They can ask themselves whether decisions are made following the precepts of attentiveness, intelligence, reasonableness, and responsibility, or whether decisions are made deficiently or even in violation of these precepts. In addition to the natural tendencies of inattentiveness, obtuseness, unreasonableness, and irresponsibility which everyone is called to transcend, there is the inclination toward bias, and bias, according to Lonergan, can be of four different forms. There is the bias of personal egoism which focuses on one's personal

[5]Bernard Lonergan, *Method in Theology* (Toronto, Canada: University of Toronto Press, 1971), 11.

interest and advantage. There is the bias of group egoism pushing for the benefit of one group while disregarding and being hostile toward other groups. There is the bias of the neurotic whose mind is distorted by unique psychological limitations. Finally, there is the general bias of "good men of common sense" bound by a perception of "omnicompetence," "insisting on procedures that no longer work, convinced that the only way to do things is to muddle through," resistant to the challenge of reason and theory.[6] Lonergan's ideal of self-transcendence includes the struggle against one's propensity toward bias and its different forms.

We can find therefore in the framework of Lonergan a structure and path toward the self-transcendence of leaders. There is a normative function to the precepts, and everyone is called to follow it. Leaders, especially, are those who are called to observe it in a special way since they have a role in helping others—their members, followers, constituents—follow it. Research has shown that moral leaders possess higher levels of consciousness than non-leaders. If they follow the path of transcendence shown by the precepts, then they can help others follow it too, enabling them to heighten their consciousness as well. Leaders then model the way to transcendence and higher consciousness.

Community and Leadership

The same transcendental framework of experience, understanding, judgment, and action is used by Lonergan in defining community. Community is not just an aggrupation of persons within the same "geographical frontier." For Lonergan, community is more than this; it is essentially "an achievement of common meaning."[7] Lonergan quickly

[6]Lonergan, "Healing and Creating in History," 105; Lonergan, *Method in Theology*, 53.

[7]Bernard Lonergan, "Existenz *and* Aggiornamento," in *Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan* 4, eds. Frederick Crowe and Robert Doran (Toronto, Canada: University of Toronto Press, 1988), 226; Lonergan, *Method in Theology*, 79.

adds that there are varying kinds and degrees of achievement, and this diversity is understood clearly through his transcendental method. Basically, the "common meaning" achieved in community is forged by the following: common field of experience, common understanding, common judgment, and common aims and action. Furthermore,

> without the common field of experience people are out of touch. Without a common way of understanding, they will misunderstand one another, grow suspicious, distrustful, hostile, violent. Without common judgments they will live in different worlds, and without common aims they will work at cross-purposes.[8]

Lonergan adds that common meaning is "realized by will, especially by permanent dedication, in the love that makes families, in the loyalty that makes states, in the faith that makes religions."[9] He envisions that communities become "communities of love" which are "capable of making real and great sacrifices."[10] Such communities become the forces for progress and growth in history, countering the forces of decline and deterioration.

Leadership in the world today is ever challenged to build communities of understanding and action. This task is difficult as people are constantly divided by increasing complexity and multiplicity of differences: culture, race, age, gender, social class, ability, and so on. Forging unity, understanding, cooperation, and teamwork amid these diversities is among the priorities of leadership. Lonergan's framework is useful here since it stresses the centrality of common meaning in community-building, a common meaning that can indeed be achieved amid glaring diversities.

The framework also proposes a process: common meaning can be wielded through common experience, common understanding, common

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[8]Lonergan, "Dialectic of Authority," 5–6.

[9]Lonergan, "Existenz *and* Aggiornamento," 226.

[10]Lonergan, "Dialectic of Authority," 10.

judgment, and common aims. Leaders are challenged to facilitate and animate this process of achieving commonality at these four levels of operations through dialogue and conversation. Because of the complexity and interdependence of these operations, leaders are more and more challenged to undertake this process, not as single specialists, but through teamwork.[11] The extent to which these commonalities are achieved will determine the future of communities in this world, as Lonergan claims: "Community coheres or divides, begins or ends, just where the common field of experience, common understanding, common judgment, common commitments begin and end."[12] It will also determine the future of civilization, because "the source of power is cooperation," and the "carrier of power is the community."[13]

Authenticity, Culture, and Power in Leadership

At this point one can discern in the Lonerganian paradigm a certain passion for making distinctions. He strives for clarity and in doing so he elucidates an almost dualistic perspective on tendencies and outcomes like the following: progress vs. decline, insight vs. bias, attentiveness vs. inattention, intelligence vs. obtuseness, reasonableness vs. unreasonableness, responsibility vs. irresponsibility, self-transcendence vs. selfishness. Through his transcendental precepts he distinguishes the path of community and progress in history. Another distinction can be discerned in Lonergan: the way of authenticity and legitimacy in culture and leadership.

Leaders vary greatly in terms of personality, style, approach, and strategy. There are authoritarian leaders and there are democratic ones. Some follow the transactional approach of getting things done, while others adhere to the more value-based approach of transformational

[11]Lonergan, *Method in Theology*, 141–142.

[12]Lonergan, "Existenz *and* Aggiornamento," 226.

[13]Lonergan, "Dialectic of Authority," 5.

leadership. Others tend to keep one dominant style of strategy and intervention, while others are situational, or their styles vary according to the contingency of the situation. There are leaders who follow strict ethical or moral norms of leadership, while others tend to follow the dictates of indulgent power, more open to compromises and manipulation. Another important distinction is authenticity and inauthenticity of leadership, and Lonergan has something to say about this.

In *Dialectic of Authority*, Lonergan makes connections between culture, authenticity, power, and authority. Culture is "the set of meanings and values that inform a common way of life." These meanings and values can be authentic or inauthentic. They are authentic "in the measure that cumulatively they are the result of the transcendental precepts." They are inauthentic "in the measure that they are the product of cumulative inattention, obtuseness, unreasonableness, irresponsibility."[14] Authenticity is linked to power and authority as follows:

> Authenticity makes power legitimate. It confers on power the aura and prestige of authority. [I]nauthenticity leaves power naked. It reveals power as mere power. Similarly authenticity legitimates authorities, and [i]nauthenticity destroys their authority and reveals them as merely powerful. Legitimated by authenticity authority and authorities have a hold on the consciences of those subject to authority and authorities. But when they lack the legitimating by authenticity, authority and authorities invite the consciences of subjects to repudiate their claims to rule.[15]

The transcendental precepts therefore help form authenticity in leadership. This authenticity "confers" upon the leader a power that is legitimate rather than a power that is "naked." By "naked" power we can understand that power that is not used for the good of others, but only benefits the leader himself. Power, when legitimated by authentic leaders, legitimates as well what Lonergan calls "authority

[14]Lonergan, "Dialectic of Authority," 7.

[15]Lonergan, "Dialectic of Authority," 7–8.

and authorities," or what we can understand as "leadership per se" and the "leaders" themselves. Legitimate, authentic leadership then has "a hold" on the followers. Authenticity and legitimacy of power and leadership inspire followership. Inauthenticity and illegitimacy of power and leadership however can trigger opposite outcomes, like various forms of withdrawal of support, or movements to resist or remove leaders through peaceful or violent means.

Lonergan also applies authenticity and inauthenticity on the subjects or followers themselves, making a useful description of the dynamics of followership:

> Insofar as they are authentic, they will accept the claims of legitimate authority and legitimate authorities, and they will resist the claims of illegitimate authority and illegitimate authorities. On the other hand, insofar as they are inauthentic, they will resist legitimate claims, and they will support illegitimate claims.[16]

These ideas of Lonergan are useful in leadership theory. First of all, they highlight an important distinction among leaders: authenticity and inauthenticity. Secondly, they define authenticity and inauthenticity in terms of following or violating the transcendental precepts. A leader thus becomes authentic to the extent he is able to live out the precepts, and thus to the extent he can be self-transcendent: "Man achieves authenticity in self-transcendence."[17] Thirdly, authenticity leads to a kind of power and authority that is legitimate, and inauthenticity leads to the opposite direction of illegitimate power and authority. Lastly, the dynamics of authenticity are applicable to both leaders and followers, and to the dynamics of relationship between the two, like support and resistance, cooperation and repudiation.

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[16]Lonergan, "Dialectic of Authority," 8.

[17]Lonergan, *Method in Theology*, 104.

Conclusion: Love, Spirituality, and Leadership

Lonergan goes beyond the transcendental notions of experience, intelligence, deliberation, and action by bringing love into the picture. The transcendental precepts of being attentive, intelligent, reasonable, and responsible become actual when one becomes a "being-in-love."[18] The precepts, as discussed earlier, can reveal one's capacity for self-transcendence, but as Lonergan says, "capacity, hankering, intermittent trying are one thing; stable achievement is another." Such "stable achievement" can be understood in terms of the integration of interiority and exteriority, an integration that leads to integrity, consistency, wholeness, and permanence. According to Lonergan, this integration seems to occur "when one falls in love."[19] We can read from these thoughts that Lonergan may be considering "being-in-love," or "being loving," as another transcendental precept. It could be a fifth level, and as such, it sublates, presupposes and complements the other four.[20] It brings about "redemption," and its principle is "self-sacrificing love." To fall in love, according to Lonergan, is

> to go beyond attention, intelligence, reasonableness, responsibility. It is to set up a new principle that has, indeed, its causes, conditions, occasions, but, as long as it lasts, provides the mainspring of one's desire and fear, hope and despair, joy and sorrow.[21]

Lonergan then describes the different kinds of "being-in-love": intimate love found in couples and in the family, love for fellow human beings, and the love of God, as written so comprehensively in the

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[18]Lonergan, *Method in Theology*, 105.

[19]Bernard Lonergan, "Self Transcendence: Intellectual, Moral, Religious," in *Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan* 17: *Philosophical and Theological Papers 1965–1980*, eds. Robert Croken and Robert Doran (Toronto, Canada: University of Toronto Press, 2004), 325.

[20]Lonergan, *Method in Theology*, 120–121.

[21]Lonergan, "Dialectic of Authority," 10.

Scriptures. Of all these kinds of love, Lonergan says that religious love is the summit because it is

> the basic fulfillment of our conscious intentionality, of our questions for intelligence, for reflection, for deliberation. It is a fulfillment that brings a deep-set joy that can remain despite humiliation, fatigue, privation, pain, betrayal, desertion. That fulfillment brings a radical peace, the peace that the world cannot give. That fulfillment bears fruit in a love of one's neighbor that strives mightily to bring about the kingdom of God on this earth. On the other hand, the absence of that fulfillment opens the way to the trivialization of human life stemming from the ruthless exercise of power, to despair about human welfare springing from the conviction that the universe is absurd.[22]

From these words of Lonergan, written towards the latter period of his scholarship, we can discern the primacy of love. Love, particularly religious love, facilitates self-transcendence. It follows the principle of self-sacrifice that one has to embrace as one follows the transcendental precepts. This embrace is difficult. It demands a struggle and stretching of consciousness.[23] It is precarious and fragile. It often finds persons caught up in never-ending tensions and contradictions which characterize a dialectic.[24] It straddles between the critical poles of self-centered orientation and other-centered values.[25] But as Lonergan's words imply, the embrace of self-sacrifice and love is our ultimate challenge and our final fulfillment.

Leaders today are called toward this spirit of sacrifice and virtue of loving. As earlier discussed, leadership demands transcendence, and as we have seen above, transcendence will ultimately demand sacrifice and love. Leaders are expected to be the ones who are disposed and capable to respond to this demand. In responding to this demand,

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[22]Lonergan, "Self Transcendence: Intellectual, Moral, Religious," 326.

[23]Lonergan, *Method in Theology*, 14.

[24]Lonergan, "Dialectic of Authority," 8.

[25]Lonergan, "Self Transcendence: Intellectual, Moral, Religious," 318.

leadership connects with the spirit, and the spirituality that is formed becomes the wellspring of life, clarity, courage, energy, and hope that leaders so badly need as they navigate the increasingly complex world that we now have. What Lonergan offers can be seen as a path to knowing and living out this spirituality of leadership. For Lonergan, following the transcendental precepts, opening our minds to insight, building communities and cultures of progress and growth, growing in authenticity and legitimacy of power and authority—all these constitute a spirituality grounded in love, especially the love given to and received from the divine.

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AN EXEGESIS OF THE SEVEN "I AM" STATEMENTS IN THE FOURTH GOSPEL

Maria Alem L. Coching, FMA

The Dogmatic Constitution on Divine Revelation from Vatican II, *Dei Verbum* (DV), states in paragraph no. 2 that "It pleased God, in his goodness and wisdom, to reveal himself and to make known the mystery of his will (cf. Eph 1:9)." His desire is for men, whom he made in his own image and likeness, to know him in a more intimate manner. There is no other way by which man could know God unless he reveals himself and his will to him. "His will was that men should have access to the Father, through Christ, the Word made flesh, in the Holy Spirit, and thus become sharers in the divine nature (cf. Eph 2:18; 2 Pet 1:4) (DV 2)."

God revealed himself to the world because of love. "The nature of that love is revealed as self-giving love in the giving of the Son. Thus the incarnation of the Word arose out of and expresses the Father's love for the world (1.17; 1 John 4.9–10)."[1] The fullness of God's revelation of himself came through the sending of the Second Person of the Holy Trinity—Jesus Christ.

[1]John Painter, *John: Witness and Theologian* (London: SPCK, 1975), 27.

The Fourth Gospel (FG) expresses this stark reality beautifully in the Prologue (Jn 1:1–18). In these verses the author of the FG spells out the central message of the whole gospel that in the whole life and ministry of Jesus of Nazareth the glory and splendor of God was uniquely and perfectly disclosed.[2] Bruce explains further: "As the prologue to the Gospel puts it, Jesus is the eternal Word or self-revelation of God, expressed in many ways at various times, but finally incarnated in a human life."[3]

Jesus is the Logos, the Word of God, God's self-revelation to the world. The FG portrays him as both the revealer and revelation itself. He reveals God as Father and their intimate relationship with each other. He declared, "'The Father and I are one (10:30)"; "Do you not believe that I am in the Father and the Father in me? (14:10)." "Jesus, who is the Word of God, speaks God's words (17.8, 14)."[4]

However, Jesus as the Word of God not only reveals God as Father but he also reveals himself. The object of revelation is both Jesus and God (cf. 8:14, 10:25). Jesus did not only reveal God but testifies to him. One purpose of revelation is to show Jesus as human and God as Father.[5] Jesus does not only speak God's words; he also communicates himself *in* his words and *through* his words. Nonetheless, it is important to note that in revealing himself Jesus revealed God.

This self-revelation of Jesus takes a more significant form with the use of *ego eimi* in the Fourth Gospel. Schnackenburg notes:

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[2]F. F. Bruce, *The Gospel of John: Introduction, Exposition, and Notes* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans, 1983), 28.

[3]Bruce, *The Gospel of John*, 14.

[4]Bruce, *The Gospel of John*, 26.

[5]J. F. O'Grady, "Jesus the Revelation of God in the Fourth Gospel," *Biblical Theology Bulletin* 25:4 (1995), 163.

> A survey of the occurrences of the phrase ἐγώ εἰμι in the gospel of John which takes into account its frequency in all uses (Mt 5 times, Mk 3 times, Lk 4 times, John 29 times), and in the mouth of Jesus (Mt once, Mk twice, Lk twice, Jn 26 times), and the manner of its use … leaves no doubt that this is a consciously used and theologically significant expression which has become a highly compressed formula.[6]

Exegetes have identified categories of *ego eimi* uttered by Jesus himself in the FG. The most common system of grouping gives three distinct categories:

1.) the absolute use of *ego eimi* without the predicate or the image

- 8:24 "I told you that you would die in your sins, for you will die in your sins unless you believe that I am he (Gk *ego eimi*)."
- 8:28 So Jesus said, "When you have lifted up the Son of Man, then you will realize that I am he, and that I do nothing on my own, but I speak these things as the Father instructed me."
- 8:58 Jesus said to them, "Very truly, I tell you, before Abraham was, I am."
- 13:19 "I tell you this now, before it occurs, so that when it does occur, you may believe that I am he (Gk *ego eimi*)."

Schnackenburg describes this category thus:

> The ἐγώ εἰμι here concentrates in itself the full content of faith (8:24; 13:19) and knowledge (8:28). In these passages the formula has such an emphatic ring that it must contain a unique and particular claim. There is a slight difference in 8:58, which, in relation to Abraham's coming into existence, refers to Jesus' pre-existence, his eternal divine being.[7]

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[6]Rudolf Schnackenburg, *The Gospel According to St. John* II (New York: Crossroad, 1982), 79.

[7]Rudolf Schnackenburg, *The Gospel According to St. John* I (New York: Crossroad, 1982), 80.

2.) "The use where a predicate may be understood even though it is not expressed."[8]

- 6:20 But he said to them, "It is I (Gk *ego eimi*); do not be afraid."
- 18:5 They answered, "Jesus of Nazareth." Jesus replied, "I am he."
- 18:6 When Jesus said to them "I am he," they stepped back and fell to the ground.
- 18:8 Jesus answered, "I told you that I am he. So if you are looking for me, let these men go."

In explaining this use of *ego eimi* Schnackenburg elaborates:

> In the walking on the lake (6:20) and Jesus' arrest (18:5, 6, 8), the phrase is first an identifying formula. The disciples are frightened by their experience at night on the lake, and Jesus makes himself known through the formula, and adds "Do not be afraid." His "It is I" tells the soldiers who want to seize him that he is the person they are looking for ("Jesus of Nazareth"). On both occasions, however, it is more than a means of recognition; it is also a unique expression of authority, as can be seen from the epiphany on the lake and the collapse of the soldiers on hearing the words.[9]

It is clear, therefore, that whenever *ego eimi* is used in this manner Jesus does not only reveal his identity but also his authority.

3.) the use of *ego eimi* with a predicate or an image[10]

- 6:35, 51 "I am the bread of life."
- 8:12 "I am the light of the world."
- 10:7 "I am the gate."
- 10:11 "I am the good shepherd."

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[8]Raymond E. Brown, *The Gospel According to John* I (New York: Doubleday, 1966), 533.

[9]Schnackenburg, *The Gospel According to St. John* I, 80.

[10]This use of *ego eimi* will be referred to as the "I am" statements in this article.

- 11:25 "I am the resurrection and the life."
- 14:6 "I am the way, the truth, and the life."
- 15:1 "I am the (true) vine."

The uniqueness of these seven "I am" statements in contrast with the other two categories described above is that with this latter group, Jesus, more than simply revealing his identity, reveals his role and function in relationship with human life, i.e., the very reason of his coming as Immanuel, God-with-us. Moloney explains that

> these sayings are not primarily concerned with defining or describing Jesus in himself. All the predicates indicate what Jesus is in relation to women, men, and the world.
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> There is a difference between the "I am" sayings without an expressed predicate, which are directly concerned with the presentation of Jesus as revealer and the revelation of God, and these sayings. Even here, however, the theme of revelation is present. Jesus, who is one with the Father, is able to reveal the Father in a unique way. Only because this is true can he be described as the vine, the life, the resurrection, the way, the gate, the good shepherd, the truth, and the bread of life—the unique saving revelation of God among men and women.[11]

Undoubtedly therefore, the seven "I am" statements as Jesus' self-revelation have a salvific purpose. Every single statement is a declaration of God's call to each person to enter into an intimate relationship with him in the person of Jesus, for "his self-revelation is … his affection and his promise, a revelation of salvation for those who believe in him."[12] Schnackenburg continues:

> Since his revelation is a means of salvation to those who accept it and attach themselves to him, he must insist that he is the one true bread from heaven which gives life to the world (6:33, 35), the light of the world (8:12), the door which leads to life (10:7, 9), the good shepherd

[11]Francis J. Moloney, "Johannine Theology," in *The New Jerome Biblical Commentary* (New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 1990), 1424.

[12]Schnackenburg, *The Gospel According to St. John* I, 88.

who looks after the life of his sheep (10:11, 14, 28), the resurrection which becomes an event in the here and now (11:25).[13]

In the "I am" statements Jesus presents himself as the one whom people are searching for. The statements point to the person of Jesus as well as to what he signifies for the people.

I am the bread of life (6:35, 51).

The Context

The pericope is part of Jesus' discourse on "the bread come down from heaven" (6:22–59). The discourse follows two major events narrated in chapter six: the feeding of the five thousand (vv. 1–15) and Jesus' walking on the water (vv. 16–21). The discourse takes the form of a dialogue between the crowd, the Jews, and Jesus. The two preceding events establish the Christological context from which the dialogue emerges.[14] The setting of the discourse is the synagogue in Capernaum (vv. 22–24, 59).

The discourse may be divided into the following sections as suggested by Culpepper:

Setting (vv. 22–24)
Opening (vv. 25–31)
The crowd questions Jesus (v. 25)
Jesus makes the contrast between the ordinary bread and the bread from heaven (vv. 26–27)
The crowd asks Jesus how to do the works of God (v. 28)
Jesus demands that they believe in him (v. 29)
The crowd asks for a sign (vv. 30–31)

[13]Schnackenburg, *The Gospel According to St. John* I, 88.

[14]Gail R. O'Day, *Revelation in the Fourth Gospel: Narrative Mode and Theological Claim* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1986), 97.

The Father gives bread from heaven (vv. 32–34)
Jesus tells the crowd that it was not Moses who is the giver of the bread from heaven but his Father (vv. 32–33)
The crowd asks for the bread (v. 34)
The Bread from heaven (vv. 35–51)
Jesus reveals himself as the bread of life (vv. 35–40)
The Jews from the crowd begin to grumble (vv. 41–42)
Jesus explains further his role as the bread of life (vv. 43–51)
The Jews asks for clarification in disbelief (v. 52)
Jesus promises to raise up on the last day those who will eat his flesh and drink his blood (vv. 53–58)
Conclusion and another reference to the setting (vv. 58–59)

The introductory verses (vv. 22–24) set the stage for the discourse on the bread from heaven. The transition is made by using the phrase "on the next day," which is the favorite device of the evangelist when he wants to link related passages more closely (cf. 1:29, 35, 44; 12:12).[15] These verses serve to give the readers an idea that the participants in the events which took place the previous day—Jesus, the disciples, and the crowd—are reassembled again. However, Marrow sees a deeper motive for these verses in that the primary interest of these verses is the fact that "the crowd" is "seeking Jesus" (6:24).[16] In their search for Jesus the crowd, too, exhibits a certain sense of persistence and urgency.

Another point of interest is the phrase "after the Lord had given thanks" in verse 23. Brown comments:

> We may note that in vss. 22–24 there is a deepening of the theological motifs that we found in the multiplication scene … the fact that the Lord had given thanks (*eucharistein*) has become very important, an emphasis reflecting the Eucharistic interpretation of the scene. No longer is

[15]Schnackenburg, *The Gospel According to St. John* I, 34.

[16]Stanley B. Marrow, *The Gospel of John: A Reading* (Makati: St. Pauls, 1997), 83.

> it a question of the loaves (plural) but of the *bread*, again a seeming concession to the eucharistic language of the New Testament.[17]

After a careful search the crowd finally found Jesus "on the other side of the lake." As soon as they saw him they asked him, "Rabbi, when did you come here?" (v. 25) since the crowd did not witness the miracle of Jesus walking on the lake. At this, Jesus did not offer any explanation and simply ignored their question. Instead, he rebuked them for their lack of faith and their penchant for food that perishes (v. 26). Schnackenburg observes that

> a true "seeing of signs" means realizing the divine meaning of Jesus' actions. The experience of the feeding did not lead these people to a deeper vision. Their eating of "the loaves" … gave them pleasure, but it was enough for them to have their stomachs filled. Their thoughts and searching have no higher object.[18]

Jesus then takes the conversation to a higher level. He makes a contrast between "the food that perishes" and "the food that endures for eternal life." Concerning the latter Schnackenburg elaborates:

> Three properties are ascribed to the food: (a) It "endures," i.e., it has lasting effect … ; (b) it is a food connected with "eternal life," which creates that life … ; (c) the Son of man will give it to them. This last statement is very significant, since "the Son of man" is not one of Jesus' ordinary ways of referring to himself without disclosing his identity.[19]

This title "Son of Man" was not accidentally used here by the author of the FG. Its use has its purpose to bolster Jesus' claim that he himself is the "bread of life." Brown observes:

> In v. 27 Jesus identifies the food that lasts for eternal life as the gift of the *Son of Man*. This is often an eschatological title … and the use here probably reflects Johannine realized eschatology. Whether we

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[17]Brown, *The Gospel According to John* I, 259.

[18]Schnackenburg, *The Gospel According to St. John* I, 35.

[19]Schnackenburg, *The Gospel According to St. John* I, 36.

> read "will give" or "gives," the food that lasts for eternal life is in part a present gift, just as eternal life itself is a present gift. These heavenly realities are realized in the ministry of Jesus.[20]

Blind as they are due to their lack of faith, the crowd fails to grasp the very essence of Jesus' reply, i.e., that they put their heart on the food that remains unto eternal life. Instead they turn their attention on the "doing." They ask Jesus, "What must we do to perform the works of God?" Schnackenburg comments:

> Jesus tells them in reply that there is only one work of God that matters, to believe in the person God has sent. The plural "works of God" is now used emphatically in the singular; for John there is only this one demand of God. Faith is the only, and essential, human answer to God's sending of the revealer and bringer of salvation, faith not only in God but also in this messenger of his who speaks God's word (cf. 3:34, 16, 17).[21]

The crowd was led by Jesus to go beyond the superficial, material level of food, but their response (v. 28) is in terms of works that they can do. Jesus in turn (v. 29) puts the emphasis on faith.[22]

At the mention of faith and Jesus' claim to be God's representative, the crowd becomes hostile. They demand that he perform a sign in order to prove his claim. Again Schnackenburg explains:

> Jesus' demand that his hearers should believe in him as God's representative closes their hearts. If they were previously prepared to do something to "perform the works of God," their attitude now is

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[20]Brown, *The Gospel According to John* I, 264. In John, Jesus is portrayed as the unique revelation of God and it is in Jesus where one can see God "here and now." For the evangelist the moment of judgment is "now" and therefore, one has to make his decision to believe in Jesus also "now." This is John's so-called present or realized eschatology and this springs from Jesus' claim, "The Father and I are one" (10:30).

[21]Schnackenburg, *The Gospel According to St. John* I, 39.

[22]Brown, *The Gospel According to John* I, 264–5.

> the opposite, and they insist that he should do something … it is up to him to "perform" a sign (τἰ ἐργάζη). This is the evangelist's way of making the transition to unbelief.[23]

In Jewish tradition faith is never isolated from works. "Yet in contrast to their tradition (in which faith was often one work among many), Jesus defines the work essential for eternal life as faith in him (6:29); this proves to be the one work they are unwilling to do (6:30; cf. 6:41, 52, 66)."[24]

In v. 31 the crowd introduces the theme of the manna: "Our ancestors ate the manna in the wilderness; as it is written, 'He gave them bread from heaven to eat'." The crowd's demand for a sign is now connected to the theme of the manna—the sign they are asking for is for Jesus to perform a divine sign like that of the manna given to their ancestors in the wilderness.

There is here a progression of Jesus' revelation with regards to the theme "bread from heaven" which has its climax in v. 35. First, he tells the crowd that it was not Moses who gave their ancestors the manna in the wilderness but God, his Father.

Schnackenburg suggests:

> In our passage God himself is identified as the giver of the bread from heaven to emphasize its superiority to the old manna and prove the new manna to be the genuine food, really from heaven (cf. 33). The mention of Moses also implies that Jesus is the "second redeemer," the Messiah in the sense of the prophet promised by Moses (see on 6:14). However, he far surpasses Moses and his gift; he himself is the bread of life which comes from heaven (35).[25]

Second, this act of "giving" by his Father is not a thing of the past but a present reality for he "gives" the true bread from heaven. Schnackenburg continues:

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[23]Schnackenburg, *The Gospel According to St. John* I, 40.

[24]Craig S. Keener, *The Gospel of John: A Commentary* (Massachusetts: Hendrickson, 2003), 677.

[25]Schnackenburg, *The Gospel According to St. John* I, 42.

> Jesus proclaims that this time has come to pass, and that God is giving the promised bread from heaven here and now. This reflects the realized Johannine eschatology: in Jesus the eschatological salvation is present (cf. on 4:23). Everything that happens in this eschatological present is God's "true" purpose (4:23), the "real" gift from the fullness of the divine reality (cf. 7:28).[26]

Third, the "bread from heaven" which Jesus is referring to and which the Father continues to give is the "true bread from heaven." Lastly, this "true" bread which the Father gives "comes down from heaven" and now it does not give life only to the chosen people but "gives life to the world."

> For John, this "coming down" from heaven does not properly apply to the manna in the wilderness, but is the exclusive attribute of the personal, eschatological bread of God. This true "bread from heaven" also has a totally different force and effect from the food in the wilderness. Since it really comes from heaven, from the domain of divine life, it also has the power to give true, divine life, and not only to Israel, but to the whole world. This is the distinctive power and function of this bread (cf. 27b).[27]

To this revelation the crowd responds by asking for this bread (v. 34) just as the woman at the well had asked for the living water so that she would not have to come to the well (cf. 4:15).

The Statement Itself

C. H. Dodd in his book *The Interpretation of the Gospel of John* discussed the traditional rabbinic interpretation of "bread" as a "standing symbol of the Torah."[28] After tracing the historical foundation of this tradition he concludes:

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[26]Schnackenburg, *The Gospel According to St. John* I, 42.

[27]Schnackenburg, *The Gospel According to St. John* I, 43.

[28]C. H. Dodd, *The Interpretation of the Fourth Gospel* (London: Cambridge University, 1968), 336–7.

> If then we may suppose that our evangelist was acquainted with a school of thought for which the manna was a symbol of the Torah, as the expression of divine wisdom … the argument would then run: Moses did indeed give the Torah, of which manna is the symbol; but the "bread of Torah" is no more the knowledge of God which is life eternal than the manna is *άρτος άληθινός*; so Moses did not, in the true sense, give *αρτος άπ ούρανοϋ*, which, as the Scripture itself says, is God's own gift, and which is given through Christ.[29]

Koester is of the same opinion, saying, "Readers familiar with Jewish tradition would probably have connected the bread metaphor with God's word, wisdom, and law. The Scriptures said that manna pointed to the central place of God's word in human life."[30]

In verse 35 Jesus discloses to the Jews that he himself is "the bread of life." This is the first of the seven "I am" statements with an accompanying image or predicate. "This 'I am' collects together all the force of Jesus' claim to divine authority …. All the statements made in verses 32–33 about the bread which has come down from heaven and is now given by God to men apply to him. He now sums them up in the phrase 'the bread of life', since the imparting of divine, imperishable life is the most important feature of this bread of God."[31]

Brown, in his study of the meaning behind the expression "bread of life," pointed to two ways by which scholars have interpreted it. He speaks of the "sapiential theme" and of the "sacramental theme" in the expression. He writes:

> The fundamental reaction to Jesus' presentation of himself as bread in 35–50 is that of belief (35, 36, 40, 47) or of coming to him, which is a synonym for belief (35, 37, 44, 45). Only once (50) in this section is it said that anyone must eat the bread of life; it is in 51–58 that "eating"

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[29]Dodd, *The Interpretation of the Fourth Gospel*, 337.

[30]Craig R. Koester, *Symbolism in the Fourth Gospel* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2003), 101.

[31]Schnackenburg, *The Gospel According to St. John* I, 43.

> appears over and over again. The citation that Jesus uses (45) to illustrate what is happening to the people who hear him and come to him is: "And they shall all be *taught by God*"—a clear reference to the sapiential symbolism of the bread. […] This is true in ch. vi as well, for the divine word and wisdom are often presented under the symbolism of food or bread in the OT. […]
>
> If the "bread of life" in this part of the discourse refers primarily to revelation in and by Jesus, there are also indications of secondary, eucharistic undertones …. In the discourse itself, it is significant that Jesus identifies himself as the bread of life. We remember that in ch. iv Jesus spoke of giving the living water but did not identify himself with the water; yet he *is* the bread of life. While such identification is not impossible in a purely sapiential interpretation of vss. 35–50, it certainly fits the eucharistic motif as well. […]
>
> The mention of manna which introduces the discourse would have had Eucharistic association for early Christian audiences. […T]here is respectable evidence for holding that there is a secondary, eucharistic reference in 35–50, and this reference will become primary in 51–58.[32]

If "bread" here has both sapiential and sacramental connotations, what then of "life?" Koester offers an explanation:

> At the level of the literary context, bread is explicitly connected with life that is not merely physical. In its theological dimension "life" indicates life in relationship with God, so that "life" means "eternal life" (6:40, 47). Death is no longer an abiding threat for those who believe, because Jesus has promised that he will raise them up at the last day. The eternal life Jesus offers is a relationship with God that begins in faith and continues beyond the grave into eternity.[33]

Verse 35 also gives a hint on how people could have access to Jesus, the bread of life. He demands that people "come to him" and that they "believe in him." There is no other way to partake of this "bread of life" from heaven unless they come to Jesus. Each demand, however,

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[32]Brown, *The Gospel According to John* I, 273–4.

[33]Koester, *Symbolism in the Fourth Gospel*, 101–2.

has a twin promise, for those who come to Jesus will "never be hungry" and those who believe in him will "never be thirsty" (35).

Schnackenburg emphasizes:

> The saying is constructed as a synonymous parallel, with the first expression, "whoever comes to me," interpreted by the second, "whoever believes in me." "Coming to Jesus" means believing in him again …. The promise corresponds to the call: the believer (cf. 29) receives in Jesus and through Jesus the personal "bread of life," the "food which endures" (27); he will never again hunger or thirst ….[34]

The verse also assures the hearers that everyone has the possibility of allowing oneself to be drawn by the Father as well as the possibility of resisting him. "So faith is not the result of our initiative but of God's initiative with us."[35]

Verses 36–40 stress again the necessity of having faith in Jesus, and in what he reveals about himself and the Father. Brown asserts:

> These verses spell out the necessity of believing in Jesus and the will of the Father that men should have life through him. The eschatology is interesting. In vs. 37 Jesus speaks of not *driving out* anyone who comes to him. This is the same expression the Synoptics use in the context of final judgment when men will be driven out of the kingdom (Matt viii 12, xii 13). For John the context is that of realized eschatology. However, in 39, which resembles 37, the context switches to final eschatology ("the last day"). And 40 has both aspects: everyone who believes in the Son has eternal life now, and still he will be raised up on the last day. […]
>
> The stress in v. 37 that God destines men to come to Jesus does not in the least attenuate the guilt in vs. 36 of those who do not believe.[36]

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[34]Schnackenburg, *The Gospel According to St. John* I, 44.

[35]Alan R. Culpepper, *The Gospel and Letters of John* (Nashville: Abingdon, 1998), 162.

[36]Brown, *The Gospel According to John* I, 276.

At this point the Jews begin to complain and grumble at Jesus' revelation that he is the "bread that came down from heaven" (v. 41). There is now the question of Jesus' origin. This only shows that the Jews again misunderstood Jesus' self-revelation. Both Brown and Schnackenburg are of the same opinion that this attitude of the Jews is reminiscent of their ancestors' murmuring in the wilderness. The Jews object to Jesus' revelation of his divine origin and they arrogantly claim that they are certain of his parentage. To this objection Jesus authoritatively reiterates his declaration of his divine origin. He tells them that he was sent by the Father (44) and that he is from God (46). Because of this he can rightfully claim that he comes from heaven. Jesus urges them to stop their murmuring, a sign of unbelief, so that they could be drawn to the Father and be raised up on the last day. Jesus invites them to listen and to learn from what God teaches them. Brown states:

> This is the age spoken of by the prophet Isaiah when they are being taught by God, if only they will listen. This teaching has its external aspect in the sense that it is embodied in Jesus who walks among them, but it is also internal in the sense that God acts in their hearts. […] This internal moving of the heart by the Father will enable them to believe in the Son and thus possess eternal life.[37]

In verse 48 Jesus reaffirms his claim: "I am the bread of life," and again in verse 51a, "I am the living bread that came down from heaven." By claiming so he stresses the fact that those who ate the manna in the desert have all died while those who will eat of the "bread of life" will live forever. In verse 51c Jesus introduces the final section of the discourse by offering his flesh as the bread that will give life to the world.

The idea of "eating the flesh" sparked a fierce dispute among the Jews. They asked themselves, "How can this man give us his flesh to eat?" (v. 52). Culpepper explains:

> Believers who know the Gospel story know immediately how Jesus will give his flesh, both at the table and at the cross, but for those

[37]Brown, *The Gospel According to John* I, 277.

> who do not know, Jesus' words are those of a madman. Jesus' demand that they "eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood" (v. 53) continues the metaphorical language of eating and drinking, but now has clear Eucharistic overtones. Verses 52–58, therefore, probably reflect the Johannine community's use of this material in connection with the observance of the Lord's Supper. "Eating" the bread means receiving Jesus and the life he offers. Participating with the community of believers in the Lord's Supper when the community is being persecuted and ostracized would have been an open and public declaration of one's faith.[38]

Verses 52–58 obviously deal exclusively with the Eucharistic theme of the discourse as has already been pointed out by Brown. He adds further:

> No longer are we told that eternal life is the result of believing in Jesus; it comes from feeding on his flesh and drinking his blood (54). The Father's role in bringing men to Jesus or giving them to him is no longer in the limelight; Jesus himself dominates as the agent and source of salvation. Even though the verses in 51–58 are remarkably like those of 35–50, a new vocabulary runs through them: "eat," "feed," "drink," "flesh," "blood."[39]

Again in his commentary on Jesus' discourse on the "bread of life," Brown points out two indications that John has the Eucharist in mind in writing this portion of Jesus' revelation:

> The first indication is the stress on eating (feeding on) Jesus' flesh and drinking his blood … if Jesus' words in vi 53 are to have a favorable meaning, they must refer to the Eucharist. They [s]imply reproduce the words we hear in the Synoptic account of the institution of the Eucharist (Matt xxvi 26–28): "Take, *eat*; this is *my body*; … *drink* … this is *my blood*."
>
> The second indication of the Eucharist is the formula found in vs. 51: "The bread that I shall give is my flesh for the life of the world." If we consider that John does not report the Lord's words over the bread and the cup at the Last Supper, it is possible that we have preserved

[38]Culpepper, *The Gospel and Letters of John*, 163.

[39]Brown, *The Gospel According to John* I, 284.

> in vi 51 the Johannine form of the words of institution. In particular, it resembles the Lucan form of institution: "This is my body which is given for you" ….[40]

Summary

This "I am" statement, being the first of the seven, sums up all the power of Jesus' claim to divine authority. Every single description Jesus makes about the "bread from heaven" he claims for himself.

Almost all scripture exegetes agree that this "I am" statement can be interpreted in two ways: the "sapiential" and the "sacramental" themes as identified by Brown. Since "bread" is understood as either the law, the word of God, or God's wisdom in Jewish tradition, then "to eat" of this bread could be interpreted as to be taught by God, or to be guided by his word or wisdom. People should be willing to be instructed by God's divine wisdom.

To "eat of the bread" could also be taken to mean to partake of the Lord's Supper. This is its sacramental or Eucharistic meaning. Both interpretations apply to all those who have faith in Jesus. He demands faith in him as the necessary requirement in order that people would be drawn by God to him. To "eat of this bread come down from heaven" is to have Jesus in one's life, and to possess Jesus in one's life is tantamount to having eternal life. He offers his flesh and blood as nourishment so that all those who partake of him may have life eternal.

I am the light of the world (8:12).

The Context

This section follows the incident with the adulterous woman (8:1–11). However, the majority of biblical exegetes believe that the

[40]Brown, *The Gospel According to John* I, 284–5.

discourse following Jesus' claim of himself as the "light of the world" is connected to the festival of Booths or Tabernacles[41] described earlier in chapter 7. On the last day of the festival, Jesus is seen teaching in the temple area, "Again Jesus spoke to them saying, 'I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness but will have the light of life'" (8:12).

This self-revelation of Jesus introduces the whole section which deals with Jesus bearing witness to himself, and with his authority to be the judge of the world (vv. 12–20). Brown suggests three parts to the structure of the discourse which in turn correspond to a theme discussed in each part.[42] The whole discourse may be divided as follows:

Jesus' claim to be the light of the world (v. 12)
Jesus bears witness to himself (vv. 13, 14b, 17–18)
Jesus' judgment and knowledge of his Father (vv. 14c, d, 15–16, 19–20)

Biblical scholars observe that verse 12 would fit more appropriately in chapter 9 where Jesus reiterates once more his claim to be the light of the world, "As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world" (9:1–12). He reinforces this claim by performing a sign—he gives sight to a man born blind. However, Barrett believes that this claim of Jesus as light of the world in 8:12 is "entirely suitable to its context, since light cannot but bear witness to itself and is authenticated by its source."[43]

Culpepper theorizes that in proclaiming "I am the light of the world," Jesus uses an image closely related to the celebration of the

[41]This celebration is a harvest festival for the fruits of the threshing floor and the wine press and is a feast of rejoicing. It is to be celebrated for seven days as prescribed in the book of Deuteronomy 16:13–15. During the festival the individual is prescribed to offer a basket of harvest fruits and recite the saving acts of Yahweh who delivered his chosen people from Egypt.

[42]Cf. Brown, *The Gospel According to John* I, 343.

[43]C.K. Barrett, *The Gospel According to St. John* (London: SPCK, 1978), 338.

Festival of the Booths. In the same manner wherein Jesus claims that he is the source of living water in chapter 7:37–39, the claim to be the light of the world is "tantamount to saying that he himself is the fulfillment of that Jewish festival."[44] Perkins also proposes:

> The image of light may have been associated with the lighting of the four huge golden lamps in the courtyard of the women on the first night of Tabernacles …. The reader knows that Jesus is the light of the world (1:9), whose coming has divided humanity into those who "come to light" and those whose "evil deeds" lead them to prefer darkness (3:19–21).[45]

Obviously Jesus doesn't speak of himself as the light of the world only on the physical level. Jesus is more than just the light of the night-time festival which illumines and gladdens the whole of Jerusalem; he himself is the light of the world.[46]

Several interpretations have been made to explain Jesus' use of light as an image of himself. Painter points to light as the symbol of the Law and he connects this to Jesus as the bringer of judgment to the world. He writes:

> Light was also a symbol for the Law (Psalm 119, 105). Thus Jesus claims that he, not the Law, has brought about the judgment of the world. Judgment is the primary function of the revelation portrayed as light …. In John, it is clear that the judgment brought about by Jesus has a positive side for those who believe, they have life for the light of the world. Because Jesus is the light of the world, he came into the world and the world was judged by his coming (3.19–21; 9.39–41; 15.22–24).[47]

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[44]Culpepper, *The Gospel and Letters of John*, 171.

[45]Pheme Perkins, "The Gospel According to John," in *The New Jerome Biblical Commentary*, eds. Raymond E. Brown, et al. (New Jersey: Prentice Hall, Inc., 1990), 965.

[46]Schnackenburg, *The Gospel According to St. John* I, 189.

[47]Painter, *John: Witness and Theologian*, 40.

In turn, Schnackenburg comments, "Jesus has come into the world as the eschatological light (3:9; 12:46) to bring light and life to the whole of mankind."[48] He connects this symbolism of the eschatological light with the Logos which John speaks of in the Prologue of his Gospel. He says that, "From the beginning the Logos was already the light of men, but through his coming in history he becomes it in a unique and special way (cf. 1:9)."[49]

Brown, on the other hand, connects the symbolism of light to Wisdom. In Hebrew tradition Wisdom is identical with the Law. He explains:

> Just as with metaphors of water and bread, the Wisdom passages of the OT offer some valuable background for Jesus' use of light as symbol of his revelation. In Prov viii 22 Wisdom says that she was made at the beginning of the Lord's ways, and in Hebrew tradition the first creation was light (Gen i 3). Wisdom vii 26 tells us that Wisdom is a reflection of everlasting light. Already in the pre-Christian era Wisdom was identified with the Law, and we saw above that the Law was spoken of as imperishable light.[50]

For John, "light" is more than just an element of the cosmos. For him Jesus as the "light of the world" gives light by being the light itself. This light is both active and salvific. Any disciple of his is saved from the darkness of the world because they "will never walk in darkness"[51] and "will possess the light of life" (v. 12b). In this invitation, Schnackenburg observes that instead of using to "believe" or to "come to Jesus" (6:35; 7:37; cf. 12:36), the characteristically synoptic expression "follow" is used. This synoptic expression is closely connected with the vocation

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[48]Schnackenburg, *The Gospel According to St. John* I, 189.

[49]Schnackenburg, *The Gospel According to St. John* I, 189–190.

[50]Brown, *The Gospel According to John* I, 344.

[51]The phrase "walking in darkness" is generally understood in their context as well as in ours as "living in sin."

to discipleship; in the Fourth Gospel, however, the verb changes its meaning as the concept of discipleship also changes.[52]

The light which Jesus imparts is the "light of life" because it is life-giving.[53] Jesus, being both light and life, illuminates human existence and gives meaning to it. He promises that not one of his followers will ever "walk in darkness," i.e., no one will ever live in sin for he himself will illumine their life and will possess him, the "light of life." Those who possess him are in turn called to become light, "While you have the light, believe in the light, so that you may become children of light" (12:36).

Typical of the FG, this self-revelation of Jesus is, more often than not, misunderstood by his hearers. Such misunderstanding elicits unbelief on the part of those who refuse to recognize him. Reactions such as this, instead of discouraging Jesus, provoke further teaching from him. He never seems to tire of explaining to them the deeper meaning of his revelation. But for those who refuse to be enlightened by the "light" and who choose to continue to "walk in darkness," no explanation of his will ever dispel their blindness. "That Jesus' hearers do not understand his appeal to his Father at this point indicates that they do not know Jesus or the Father."[54] Knowledge of and belief in Jesus' person is necessary if one is to understand his revelation.

Summary

This imagery of "light of the world" will not be taken up again until chapter 9:5. The succeeding verses (8:13–20) point to Jesus as witness to himself and as judge. Although the discourse starts with Jesus' self-revelation as "light of the world," biblical scholars believe that the main focus of the discourse is in reality Jesus' revelation of

[52]Schnackenburg, *The Gospel According to St. John* I, 189.

[53]Bruce, *The Gospel of John*, 188.

[54]Keener, *The Gospel of John*, 742.

his identity and divine authority by emphasizing where he comes from and where he is going (v. 14). His testimony needs no other witness except that of his own and his Father's because he comes from the Father and goes back to him. His origin gives him then the authority to be the judge. But he also makes clear that he did not come to judge anyone: "I judge no one" (v. 15), he says.

Jesus as the "light of the world" could have several layers of meaning. Culpepper suggests that this claim means that Jesus is the fulfillment of the festival of Booths. Perkins, meanwhile, proposes that in this claim Jesus invites humanity to come to light, i.e., to him, otherwise they will remain in darkness. To remain in darkness is to be judged as not worthy of the light, as Painter points out. He also concludes that "light" is a symbol of the Law in Jewish tradition, but when Jesus proclaims that he himself is the light then it is no longer the Law that brings judgment to the world but Jesus, the light of the world. For Schnackenburg, Jesus, the Logos, came into the world as the eschatological light in order to bring light to the whole world immersed in the darkness of sin. For Brown, however, light is Wisdom and Wisdom is identical to the Law. All of these interpretations are not mutually exclusive.

For the author of the FG, Jesus as the light of the world brings salvation to all. He saves those who turn away from the darkness of sin and draw close to him. To draw close to Jesus does not mean only to draw close to the light but also to have life, because Jesus is not only "the light" but he is also "the life."

I am the gate (10:7, 9).
I am the good shepherd (10:11).

The Context

This section on the figure of the good shepherd follows the event where Jesus gave sight to a man born blind described in chapter 9, a deed which elicited a bitter confrontation with the Jewish leaders in

the temple. The main message of the preceding chapter is Jesus' claim to be the light of the world (9:5) and therefore he has both the power and the authority to give light to the man born blind by giving him sight. It turned out that the man's physical blindness was easier to heal than the obstinate spiritual blindness of the leaders.

Although some exegetes question the appropriateness of this section in its present context, i.e., following the event described in chapter 9, the majority still believe that in purposely putting this pericope here, the author may have wanted to show the link between the shepherd imagery described in the Old Testament[55] and the attitude of the present leaders of Israel. Culpepper also believes that the primary background for this passage is Ezekiel 34, in which the prophet castigates the religious leaders for being poor shepherds.[56] With this Old Testament background in mind and given the attitude of the Jewish leaders described in chapter 9, the author of the FG could have placed this section here on purpose. Morris opines, "It is apt, accordingly, that, immediately after Israel's shepherds have failed so conspicuously in the case of the man born blind, we should have set forth the nature and functions of the Good Shepherd."[57] Although the passage from chapter 9 to this chapter may not be construed as problematic, still there is no denying that chapter 10 marks the start of a new stage for one of Jesus' polemical discourses which leads to another controversy with his opponents. The hearers of Jesus were surely familiar with such imagery of shepherd and sheep and probably were interested to hear some more of Jesus' speech.

The literary genre of the whole discourse, likewise, seems to be problematic. Scholars differ in their opinion as regards this. However,

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[55]Cf. Jer 23:1–4; 25:32–38; Zech 11; 34 and Is 56:9–12.

[56]Culpepper, *The Gospel and Letters of John*, 179.

[57]Leon Morris, "The Gospel of John," in *The New International Commentary on the New Testament*, ed. F. F. Bruce (Grand Rapids, Michigan: WM. B. Eerdmans, 1971), 499.

most exegetes refer to it as a symbolic or figurative discourse in which allegories, parables and symbolisms are interspersed. In short, the speech doesn't fit any single literary genre; rather it is a mixture of a variety of literary forms.

The discourse may be structured as follows: [58]
The parable (vv. 1–7)
Jesus, the gate *vis-á-vis* the thieves (vv. 7–10)
Jesus, the good shepherd *vis-á-vis* the hired hand (vv. 11–18)
Division among the hearers (vv. 19–21)

Verses 1–6 present the parable where Jesus describes how pasturing and herding sheep is done in ancient Palestine. Although there is the absence of an introductory explanation as to the occasion and to what triggered the speech, the opening words, "Truly I assure you," could indicate that what will follow is of extreme importance and that what will be said is still connected to the preceding event, the healing of the man born blind in chapter 9. This connection is reinforced by the fact that the transition does not suggest the presence of a new audience or a lapse of time.[59]

Jesus speaks of "the sheep," "the gate" (or door in other translations), "the shepherd," "the doorkeeper," "the thieves," "the robbers," and "the strangers" in this figurative discourse. He makes his self-revelation as he describes a typical pastoral scene during his time, a scene very common to people's everyday life in villages where families usually own a few sheep for their use.

Already at the onset of this discourse (v. 6), the author points out that Jesus' hearers are not able to decipher the deeper meaning behind Jesus' words. Brown asserts:

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[58]Cf. Brown, *The Gospel According to John* I, 383 and Morris, "The Gospel of John," 500.

[59]For a detailed explanation of the sequence of these events, cf. Brown, *The Gospel According to John* I, 388–90.

> The failure to understand causes Jesus to explain these parable(s) of the sheepgate and the shepherd, even as it caused him to explain the Parable of the Sower in the Synoptic tradition. The failure is not primarily an intellectual problem; it is an unwillingness to respond to the challenge of the parables. In the Synoptic Gospels that challenge is centered around the kingdom of heaven; in John it is centered around Jesus himself. The familiar Synoptic phrase, "The kingdom of heaven is like…," has its Johannine parallel in "I am [*egō eimi*]…" (x 7, 9, 11, 14).[60]

"I AM THE GATE" (10:7, 9).

At first, Jesus contrasts himself as the true shepherd and the gate for the sheep with the thieves and the bandits. He portrays the true shepherd as one who enters by the gate, the one whom the gatekeeper recognizes and allows to enter, and the one whose voice the sheep of the flock recognize and follow. On the contrary, the thieves and bandits are those who do not enter by the gate but instead climb in by other means. They are the strangers whom the sheep do not follow because they do not recognize their voice. As a result the flock run away from them. Kysar explains this image of the true shepherd:

> The point is simple, Jesus is the true leader of the people (the believers), and they know him, as he knows them. Consequently, they will follow him. This is in contrast to those who try to lead the people but fail because they are not the true revealers but blind guides.[61]

Tasker elaborates further:

> In the Old Testament, the relationship between God and His people is often symbolized as that of a shepherd and his flock. The flock is always regarded as belonging to God though the care of it may be temporarily entrusted to others. Some of those guardians of the flock, such as Moses and the genuine prophets, tend the sheep with care, and in this respect are forerunners of Christ Himself. Others, such as

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[60]Brown, *The Gospel According to John* I, 393.

[61]Robert Kysar, *John's Story of Jesus* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1984), 52.

> the prophets who prophesy falsely, care not for the sheep; they come into the fold only to plunder, and they stand under divine judgment (see Je. xxiii. 1, 2).[62]

Besides being the true shepherd, Jesus claims, "I am the gate for the sheep" (v. 7), and "I am the gate" (v. 9). Being "the gate," he saves those who enter through him and he comes that the sheep "may have life and have it abundantly" (v. 10b). On the other hand, he calls as "thieves and bandits" all those who do not pass by him, the gate. Precisely because they are thieves they come "only to steal and destroy" (v. 10a). Tasker again explains:

> All who claim to be caring for God's flock but who do not enter into the sheepfold through the door which is Christ Himself—all, in other words, who hold out before men and women the prospect of a higher and better life apart from the necessity of redemption through the blood of Jesus, are deceivers, spiritual charlatans depriving men of the salvation that might otherwise be theirs. Those who have heard the authentic word of God, and who by obeying it have become members of God's flock, His elect people, will no more listen to such shepherds, however much they claim to be speaking with divine authority, than sheep will take notice when a stranger calls to them. […]
>
> The opposition of God to all such false prophets finds clear expression in the writings of the genuine prophets, especially in Ezekiel, who predicts the day when God will search for His sheep and bring them out from among the foreign peoples and gather them from distant countries, whither they have been driven for lack of trustworthy leaders (see Ezk. xxxiv. 11).
>
> This prophecy is now being fulfilled in Jesus who has been sent by God as His good Shepherd, and who will gather together the sheep at present scattered far and wide.[63]

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[62]R. V. G. Tasker. *The Gospel According to St. John: An Introduction and Commentary* (USA: Wm B. Eerdmans, 1997), 129.

[63]Tasker, *The Gospel According to St. John*, 128–9.

In revealing himself as the gate or door Jesus declares that he alone is the one true access to God. The meaning of this "I am" statement is closely connected to "I am the way, the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father except through me" (14:6). Both illustrate the truth that it is through Jesus Christ alone that human beings have access to God, attain salvation, and receive spiritual freedom and sustenance.[64] Schnackenburg also suggests that

> in v. 7 "the door" appears as the symbol of the entrant's legitimacy, the proof of the shepherd's right. And it is precisely as "door" that Jesus is also shepherd. […] But the door-word is meant to show at the same time that, because of Jesus' self-revelation, all other claimants are usurpers through being convicted of a false claim to being saviours. So long as Jesus, the shepherd, is installed in his function as door, every illegitimate claim in respect of revelation, leadership and the bringing of salvation falls to pieces when it comes into contact with him. […] There is but one bringer of salvation, one way to the Father (cf. 14:4–6)—Jesus, the "door." As this one absolute way to salvation Jesus is the door for the sheep (v. 9). As the exclusive revealer who exposes the non-salvation ways of other "bringers of salvation," he is the one door to the sheep.[65]

The repetition of the "I am" statement in v. 9a points to one more function of Jesus as the gate. He gives his followers protection from harm and abundant life, and the contrast with thieves is repeated, for they do exactly the opposite, that is, they steal and kill and destroy.[66]

"I AM THE GOOD SHEPHERD" (11, 14A).

Twice in chapter 10, vv. 11 and 14a Jesus reveals himself as "the good shepherd." These two ἐγώ εἰμί sentences with two short

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[64]J. N. Sanders, *A Commentary on the Gospel According to St. John* (London: Adam and Charles Black, 1968), 249–50.

[65]Schnackenburg, *The Gospel According to St. John* I, 289–90.

[66]Ramsey J. Michaels, "John," in *The New International Biblical Commentary*, ed. W. Ward Gasque (Massachusetts: Hendrickson, 1989), 178–9.

explanations show the former contrasting the shepherd with the hireling, while the latter delineates the solidarity of the shepherd with his sheep.[67]

In v. 11 Jesus is the good shepherd because he lays down his life for his sheep. Morris gives his interpretation of Jesus' statement:

> The great act of care for the sheep which He is impressing on His hearers by this figure is that of laying down the life. Moreover when the Palestinian shepherd did die in defence of his sheep that was an accident. He planned to live for them, not die for them. With Jesus, however, death for the sheep was the set purpose. There is an element of voluntary acceptance of death in the expression "layeth down his life" which ought not to be missed (cf. v. 18). […] Jesus is not classing Himself as one among many shepherds. He is speaking of his own distinctive activity. "A" good shepherd does not characteristically give his life for the sheep. "The" Good Shepherd does. Finally the death of the Palestinian shepherd meant disaster for his sheep. The death of the Good Shepherd means life for His sheep.[68]

In contrast to this willingness of Jesus, the good shepherd, to die for his sheep, the hired hand instead abandons the sheep in the face of danger because he does not care for the sheep. But, unlike the figures of the thieves and bandits in the preceding verses who are compared to the bogus shepherds of Israel, the "hired hand" here is used to highlight and emphasize the figure of the "good shepherd."

In v. 14a, Jesus declares again that he is the good shepherd but this time it is because he has intimate knowledge of his sheep and likewise his sheep know him. Kysar opines:

> The new focus of this verse and the next is the mutual and reciprocal knowledge between Jesus and believers. […] Here the intimate relationship of knowing includes commitment and love between two parties. The relationship between Jesus and the believer is modelled after the relationship between the Father and the Son (v. 15), as is often the

[67]Schnackenburg, *The Gospel According to St. John* I, 294.

[68]Morris, "The Gospel of John," 510.

> case in John (e.g., 17:11). […] The relationship of knowledge involves a commitment of love which makes possible the surrendering of life.[69]

Jesus then extends his sheepfold and welcomes those who do not yet belong to it—usually understood as either the gentile believers or Jewish believers from other communities—so that there will only be one flock under one shepherd. This shows the universality of Jesus' self-offering. Jesus' laying down of his life for his sheep as well as for those who still do not belong to his flock is done of his own accord. Culpepper observes that Jesus is not seized but goes willingly with his captors and that Jesus in the FG is not "raised by the Father" but he lays down his life on his own and takes it up again also on his own.[70]

A sharp division among the Jews erupted as a result of Jesus' self-revelation. The adverb "again" used by the author of the FG implies a repeated act on the part of Jesus' audience. This reaction from Jesus' hearers is a recurring leitmotif in the FG. Some Jews conclude that Jesus is possessed by a demon and judge him to be insane. Schnackenburg explains:

> For people living in those times, insanity and possession were often connected. Hence the statement would only require a stronger form of expression for it conveys the thought: his speech is so strange and incomprehensible (cf. 8:43) that it is not worthwhile listening to him. Possibly there also lurks behind the words the contemporary Jewish polemic: the claim Jesus makes about himself is madness; one should pay no heed to preaching about Christ.[71]

On the other hand, there are also those who, reflecting deeply on Jesus' words and being witnesses of Jesus' healing of the man born blind (cf. chapter 9), deduce that Jesus' claims could not come from a possessed person, especially when that person is able to perform such an incredible sign. "Their respect for the facts prevented this group

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[69]Robert Kysar, *John* (Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1986), 162–3.

[70]Culpepper, *The Gospel and Letters of John*, 181.

[71]Schnackenburg, *The Gospel According to St. John* I, 303.

from prejudging the case. So they refuse to condemn Jesus. Yet their position remains entirely a negative one. They say what Jesus is not, but they make no attempt to say what he is."[72]

Summary

At first glance this discourse seems to present some form of difficulty, and not without any reason, to the reader. How could Jesus claim to be both the gate for the sheep and its shepherd? However, a careful look into the deeper significance and meaning of both claims could yield an internal unity in Jesus' message.

Schnackenburg explains that by claiming to be "the door," Jesus appoints himself to be the only way to the Father and the lone bringer of salvation for the sheep. Tasker points out that in the Old Testament, more often than not, the relationship between Yahweh and Israel is symbolized by the relationship of the shepherd and his flock. However, God has also appointed leaders to shepherd his chosen people, Israel, some of whom abused their power and authority and did not take care of the people. It is in this note that Jesus castigated the leaders of his time and contrasts himself with them by claiming to be the only true and good shepherd. As the good shepherd, he is laying down his life for his sheep. Morris points out that in laying down his life for the sheep, Jesus in turn gives life to them.

Kysar identified four related themes from both sayings. He concludes that the two sayings reflect:

1. Jesus' exclusive and intimate relationship with his community;
2. his sole claim to leadership of that group;
3. his person as the singular means of access to the eschatological community in which there is salvation; and
4. his radical commitment to those of that community.[73]

[72]Morris, "The Gospel of John," 515.

[73]Kysar, *John*, 165.

I am the resurrection and the life (11:25).

The Context

The fifth "I am" statement, "I am the resurrection and the life," is part of the long story about the raising of Lazarus from the dead. The story covers the whole of chapter 11.

The narrative starts with Lazarus being ill and his siblings, Martha and Mary, sending a message to Jesus to tell him about their brother's serious condition. Evidently these siblings are Jesus' close friends and he loves them. But Jesus chooses to delay his journey to meet with the family for two days. When he decided to go and meet with them, Lazarus has already "fallen asleep" (v. 11), meaning he is now dead. Arriving at Bethany, Jesus learned that Lazarus has been previously buried for four days. Upon hearing that Jesus has finally come, the two sisters rushed to meet with him, Martha first (vv. 20–27) and then Mary (vv. 28–33). The author of the FG takes time to narrate the story in stages. He does not hasten to go immediately to the central miracle, but describes Jesus' encounters first with Martha, then with Mary, and he makes these meetings the means to bring out Jesus' important teaching.[74] Jesus' pronouncement and claim to be the "resurrection and the life" takes place during the course of his conversation with Martha. After his conversation with both sisters, Jesus went to the tomb and raised Lazarus up from the dead (vv. 34–43).

At first glance the story would seem to be just a simple narrative, but this Johannine narrative is considered by most exegetes as the best and most loaded source of Johannine theology and Christology. The self-revelation of Jesus, "I am the resurrection and the life" (v. 25), is complemented by Martha's profession of faith, "I have come to believe that you are the Messiah, the Son of God: he who is to come into the world" (v. 27). This act of self-revelation from Jesus is affirmed by a sign which forms the climax of all Jesus' signs, the raising of Lazarus. However, this also marks the peak of his enemies' hostility towards

[74]Kysar, *John*, 545–6.

him. They now resolve to eliminate him and meticulously plan how to accomplish it. Schnackenburg explains further:

> A word of revelation in the centre of the chapter gives its literal interpretation (vv. 25–26). Its Christological (v. 4) and soteriological (v. 40) significance are also briefly mentioned in the introduction and at the climax of the narrative. Together with the healing of the blind man, the raising of Lazarus expresses the central Christological idea of the fourth gospel, that Jesus is the light and life of the world (cf. 1:4). Wherever he found the story, the evangelist has placed this greatest of signs of Jesus as bringer of life quite deliberately at this point in his gospel. […] In the evangelist's deeper vision, it is no accident that at the moment that the Son of God gives the supreme demonstration of his power over life, the unbelievers resolve to destroy him and take all the steps necessary to that end. The path to the cross is marked out in advance, but it is marked in God's plan; the raising up on the cross will become the glorification of God in his Son. The sign of the raising of the dead is already pointing towards the final glorification (11:4), and the high priest's involuntary prophecy (11:51–52) shows how human purposes inevitably serve God's plan.[75]

Brown's structure of the narrative elucidates further John's careful laying out of Jesus' self-revelation and the eventual plotting of his death. It clearly shows how the evangelist meticulously laid down the progressive development of the narrative.

Setting (vv. 1–6)
Should Jesus go up to Judea? (vv. 7–16)
To die (vv. 7–10, 16)
To help Lazarus (vv. 11–15)
Jesus arrives at Bethany (vv. 17–33)
Arrival and setting (vv. 17–19)
Martha comes out to greet Jesus (vv. 20–27)
Mary comes out to greet Jesus (vv. 28–33)
Raising of Lazarus (vv. 34–44)
Setting and preliminaries (vv. 34–40)

[75]Schnackenburg, *The Gospel According to St. John* I, 316.

The miracle (vv. 41–44)
The Sanhedrin condemns Jesus to die; withdrawal to Ephraim.
Session of the Sanhedrin addressed by Caiphas (vv. 45–53)
Jesus withdraws to Ephraim (v. 54)[76]

Verses 1–6 set the stage for Jesus' miracle. Lazarus, Mary and Martha are named as three family members who live in Bethany. Lazarus is described as being ill, while Mary is the one "who anointed the Lord with perfume and wiped his feet with her hair" (v. 2). Martha, on the other hand, is introduced as their sister. These particular references to the two sisters imply, biblical scholars believe, that their story was well known and it circulated around the Christian communities.

The name Lazarus is also used in a parable in the Gospel of Luke in which he is portrayed as a poor beggar who dies and is taken to the bosom of Abraham. "Interestingly, that parable ends with the lament, 'If they do not listen to Moses and the prophets, neither will they be convinced even if someone rises from the dead' (16:31)."[77] Lazarus in John is referred to also as Jesus' beloved (cf. 11:3).

When Jesus heard of his friend's illness he exclaimed, "This illness does not lead to death; rather it is for God's glory, so that the Son of God may be glorified through it" (v. 4b). This suggests that the illness of Lazarus has a special purpose and that is to make the "glory of God" manifest so that the Son will be glorified (cf. 9:3), a theme which recalls John 2:11 and which points toward the real glorification on the cross (cf. 13:31–32; 17:1).[78]

After delaying for two days, Jesus proposes to go to Judea (v. 7). The disciples are worried about this because of their previous experience

[76]Brown, *The Gospel According to John* I, 419.

[77]Culpepper, *The Gospel and Letters of John*, 186.

[78]Perkins, "The Gospel According to John," 970.

of Jesus' opponents trying to stone him. Jesus tells them that they should work while there is still light and that Lazarus has already "fallen asleep" (v. 11). This euphemism of sleep as referring to death is common, but John uses it as a typical Johannine misunderstanding. At this point the narrator simply explains the misunderstanding, and Jesus declares plainly, "Lazarus is dead." In the first conversation, therefore, death is likened to sleep, and so Jesus is going to Bethany to wake Lazarus up.[79] It was Thomas who understands clearly the meaning of Jesus' journey to Judea. He challenges the others, saying, "Let us also go, that we may die with him" (v. 16).

In vv. 17–19 the evangelist takes pains to detail the setting of Jesus' conversation with Martha. First, he specifically tells his readers that Lazarus has already been buried for exactly four days. Secondly, he carefully points out the precise location of Bethany which he describes as "near Jerusalem, some two miles away" (v. 18). Finally, he says that "many of the Jews had come" to console Martha and Mary because of the death of their brother Lazarus. Michaels makes a noteworthy observation:

> The purpose of the statement that Lazarus **had already been in the tomb for four days** (v. 17) is not to construct a chronology or to help fix the location of the puzzling Bethany east of Jordan (cf. 1:28). […] The purpose of mentioning the four days is to provide a backdrop of Martha's comment in v. 39, and thus for Jesus' dramatic encounter with the grim reality of death in verses 40–44.
>
> The narrator is more interested in Bethany's location in relation to *Jerusalem* (v. 18) than in relation to the other Bethany to the east. Part of the reason may be that he knows this distance and does not know the other, but more significantly, he wants to explain the presence there of some Jews from Jerusalem (v. 19) who will play a small yet crucial role in the story (cf. vv. 31, 33, 36–37, 45–46). The fact that their presence in Bethany needs to be explained (most of the townspeople of Bethany, after all, were Jews!) suggests that here, as frequently in this Gospel, religious authorities of some kind are meant. Because Bethany was as

[79]Culpepper, *The Gospel and Letters of John*, 187.

> close to Jerusalem as it was, people from Jerusalem had come to join in the mourning, and among these were many of the religious leaders.[80]

Another interesting point is that studies show that the importance given by the evangelist in specifying "four days" is to emphasize that at this time the body is already in the state of decomposition and therefore would heighten more the significance of the sign to be performed.

Immediately after Martha hears that Jesus is within the vicinity, she goes out to meet him. Commentators believe that this act of Martha only confirms the fact that Jesus is indeed in danger in that place and therefore she meets with him in secret instead of allowing him to come and be seen by the Jews who have come to mourn with them.

As soon as she sees him Martha greets him saying, "Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died" (v. 21). These are the very same words Mary uses when she meets Jesus after Martha summons her (v. 32). Although these words may sound as having a tinge of resentment, reproach or rebuke, Martha expresses her belief in Jesus, "But even now I know that God will give you whatever you ask of him" (v. 22). The majority of biblical commentators interpret these words of Martha as a statement of a living faith which shows that she is a believer of Jesus, although at this point her belief is not yet mature. Her faith will progress as Jesus leads her to its fullness in the course of the narrative. Martha's purpose (as with Mary's in v. 32) in this statement is more to assert her conviction in Jesus' power to heal the sick. Even in the present tragic circumstances she still believes in the possibility of a miracle, though she has no idea how it will take place.[81] In the face of a great and painful situation, Martha demonstrates confidence in Jesus' power to intercede with God. This idea that a person has power to make intercession with God is consonant with Jewish custom and piety.

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[80]Michaels, "John," 200.

[81]Michaels, "John," 201.

Does Martha expect Jesus to raise her brother from the dead? Most commentators say that this is very unlikely. Schnackenburg proposes that Martha's statement should be read in accord with the evangelist's intention. He expounds:

> Martha is presented as a woman prepared to believe (καὶ νυν οἰδα), who, in a form deliberately kept general (ὁσα ἀν) and indefinite, indicates a hope and expresses a request which leaves all possibilities open. […] Martha's faith is directed more at Jesus' person than at the nature of the help.[82]

Jesus' response directs Martha to hope for the resurrection of her brother—"Your brother will rise again" (v. 23), he tells her. Jesus' words express a general and inexplicit hope for life beyond death. They may refer either to resurrection on the last day or to the spectacle about to occur as Lazarus is summoned out of the tomb.[83] Martha affirms Jesus' reply, but in the way by which she understands his words, "I know that he will rise again in the resurrection on the last day" (v. 24). Martha's statement is in accordance with the general belief of the Pharisees in the resurrection of the dead. Schnackenburg explains further:

> In Jesus' time belief in the eschatological raising of the dead was held by the Pharisees in opposition to the Sadducees (cf. Mk 12:18–27 parr), and was widespread among the people. […] The Jewish profession of faith which Martha makes directs attention forcefully to the "last day," the end of the ages. Without any doubt, the mention of this day, which only describes as "the last," come[s] here (in contrast to 6:39, 40, 44, 54; 12:48) from the evangelist. He wants to make a pointed contrast between Jewish expectations for the future and the presence of salvation here and now of which Christians are assured in the Lord.[84]

This misunderstanding on the part of Martha paves the way for Jesus to reveal himself in yet another "I am" statement.

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[82]Schnackenburg, *The Gospel According to St. John* I, 330.

[83]Kysar, *John*, 177.

[84]Schnackenburg, *The Gospel According to St. John* I, 330.

Jesus declares, "I am the resurrection and the life. Those who believe in me, even though they die, will live, and everyone who lives and believes in me will never die" (vv. 25–26a). This "I am" statement, as with the other "I am" statements which have a predicate, describes again what Jesus is in relation to people. "Resurrection" and "life" are what Jesus has to offer to everyone. Schnackenburg adds:

> In this context the "I am" of Jesus' answer has a particularly powerful and authoritative ring. As far as resurrection is concerned, Martha does not need to look to the future; it is close to her, present in the person of Jesus. The saying of the Revealer, which impressively presents one of the fundamental ideas of the fourth gospel, has the same structure as all these "I am" sayings of Jesus; there is therefore no need either for the ἐγώ to be made a predicate or for particular emphasis to be placed on ἐστίν (as present). Jesus is bearing witness to himself as the one who has been given and fully possesses (5:26) the power which belongs to God alone to "give life" (cf. 5:21), a power which has been demonstrated beyond doubt by the other great signs performed on the sick (cf. 4:50–53 with the triple ζῇ), but which receives its highest expression in this raising of a dead man. […] The powerful cry with which Jesus calls Lazarus out of the grave (v. 43) is only an external echo of the call with which he, God's messenger, calls all men who believe in him to God's life (cf. 5:24–25).[85]

Jesus reveals himself as "the resurrection and the life," and he promises that those who believe in him, even if they die, will live. Exegetes agree that this "dying" which Jesus is referring to is physical death. In his notes on vv. 25–26, Brown indicates that this statement could mean, first, that belief in Jesus will lead to eternal life despite physical death and that this physical life will not be subject to death if it is combined with belief in Jesus; and second, that the believer will have spiritual life even if he dies a physical death and that this believer who lives spiritually will never experience spiritual death.[86] In the same line of thought, Morris interprets Jesus' statement thus:

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[85]Schnackenburg, *The Gospel According to St. John* I, 330.

[86]Cf. Brown, *The Gospel According to John* I, 424.

> The paradox brings out the truth that physical death is not the important thing. For the heathen or the unbeliever death may be thought of as the end. Not so for the man who believes in Christ. Such a man may die in the sense that he passes through the door we call physical death, but he will not die in the fuller sense. Death for him is but the gateway to further life and fellowship with God. […] It means that the moment a man puts his trust in Jesus he begins to experience that life of the age to come which cannot be touched by death. Jesus is bringing Martha a present power, not the promise of a future good.
>
> Everyone who lives and believes in Jesus … will never die. Jesus does not of course mean that the believer will not die physically. […] But He means that he will not die in the sense in which death has eternal significance. He will not die with reference to the age to come. He has eternal life, the life of the age to come.[87]

There is here a tremendous revelation on the part of Jesus. He is able to promise life eternal to the believer not only because he possesses life but because he himself is the resurrection and the life *in person*. Jesus is not just the revealer and simply the giver of this life by having the power to raise the dead, but he is the source and the giver of salvation not only in the future but in the here and now. To possess him is to possess life.

This promise of eternal life is given only to those who believe in him, thus, the importance of faith. Faith in Jesus is an essential condition in order for one to possess eternal life. He demands faith as a response to his revelation. In this case the faith that Jesus demands is basically that the believer cling to him as the source and giver of life—a faith that results in a deep communion with him. This is why Jesus asks Martha, "Do you believe this?" In response to Jesus' question Martha unhesitatingly professes her faith in him, saying, "Yes, Lord, I believe that you are the Messiah, the Son of God, the one coming into the world."

[87]Morris, "The Gospel of John," 550.

Martha's response reflects her unwavering faith in the person of Jesus. By saying "Yes, Lord," she demonstrates her agreement to what Jesus has just revealed to her, although obviously she has not yet come to a full realization of what he really meant. Previously she has already declared her belief in the resurrection of the dead, but even after Jesus' self-revelation she still fails to grasp its full meaning, which is that here in front of her and speaking to her is "the resurrection and the life" himself. However, Martha's great faith in Jesus even when she is grieving is worth emulating by any believer. Human experience shows that a firm believer of Jesus who experiences crisis in life would continue to hold fast to him, full of faith and confidence that Jesus would not withhold his help from him.

Rather than repeating Jesus' words, Martha uses three significant titles for Jesus: Messiah, Son of God, and the one who is to come. Here it is worthwhile to quote extensively the study of Schnackenburg:

> Martha's confession, like Peter's, is a Messianic confession in the full Christian sense. She declares her firm faith (πεπίστευκα), in the identical words which the evangelist uses at the end of his book to sum up what he understands by Christian faith (20:31): "You are the Messiah, the Son of God." The term "Messiah" (RSV "Christ") is meant to show that the Jewish expectations are fulfilled in Christ. The second title, "the Son of God[,]" is meant at the same time to lift the idea of the Messiah above the Jewish perspective and indicate that Jesus' Messiahship surpasses all Jewish expectations, that his union with God is unique. It is the same concern not to let the Jewish title Messiah stand alone and open to misunderstanding which was apparent earlier in Nathaniel's confession (1:49) and, in a different way, in the title "the Holy One of God" in Peter's confession (6:69). All these professions of faith are phrased directly for the Christian community, and transposed from Jesus' time into the time of the evangelist. […T]hey are confessions attached by mature faith to the historical Jesus.
>
> It is therefore no surprise that at the end of the couplet another characteristically Johannine phrase is added, "he who is coming into the world." It belongs to both Christological titles, which are to be taken as a single unit, and its function is to designate Jesus, the Messiah and Son of God, as the bringer of salvation sent by God. […] The fact that the two titles which were joined in the Johannine community's Christological confession are here combined with this Johannine

> phrase is an outward sign that Martha's confession is a high-point, though one which only matches the supreme importance of Jesus' word of revelation.[88]

After this significant conversation with Martha, Jesus speaks with Mary who uses the same words as her sister Martha. Exegetes also agree that Mary's greeting does not imply any hint of criticism of Jesus' delay in coming. But, unlike with Martha, Jesus does not answer her. Instead, he proceeds to perform the greatest sign of raising Lazarus from the dead. Barrett aptly gives the meaning of this narrative for believers:

> The meaning of this narrative for John is as simple as the narrative itself. Jesus in his obedience to and dependence upon the Father has the authority to give life to whom he wills. The incident is a dramatic demonstration of the truth already declared in 5.21 (cf. 5.25, 28), which is itself the best commentary on the incident. The raising of Lazarus is no piece of black magic, or even the supreme achievement of a saint; it is an anticipation of what is to take place at the last day. It means that the believer has eternal life; that he has passed from death into life.[89]

Following his short comment about the nascent faith of some who saw the sign, the evangelist goes on to describe those who are offended by what they just witnessed. This party immediately departed to report the event to the chief priests who, together with those who are already hardened of heart, start to plot the death of Jesus. The narrative ends on a sad note of this plot against Jesus' life. While Jesus offers the gift of everlasting life to those who believe, those who do not believe instead plot to deliver him up to death. Jesus' gift of life earned for him his own death. But being the resurrection and the life, death has no power over him.

Summary

This astonishing narrative about Lazarus being raised from the dead, interspersed with Jesus' conversations with Martha and Mary,

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[88]Schnackenburg, *The Gospel According to St. John* I, 332–3.

[89]Barrett, *The Gospel According to St. John*, 388.

which in turn become the vehicle for Jesus' divine revelation, brings out several theological and Christological teachings. Schnackenburg emphasized the following points: (1) that Jesus as the life is the Son of God, the Messiah and the bringer of salvation; (2) that the raising of Lazarus manifests the glory of God and is a prelude to Jesus' own final glorification; and (3) that Jesus' promise of resurrection is not only true for the future but is already present here and now in his very person.

Biblical commentators like Brown, Morris and Michaels accentuate Jesus' promise to the believer as well as the importance of having a firm faith in the person of Jesus. Some of the most important and valuable aspects they have indicated are: (1) that Jesus demands faith as a necessary requirement to avail of his promise of eternal life; (2) that the promise of life eternal does not literally mean that the believer will not die a physical death but that this death is only a passageway to the promised everlasting life; and (3) that "the resurrection and the life" is not something but Someone, i.e., Jesus!

I am the way, the truth, and the life (14:6).

The Context

The sixth "I am" statement forms part of the farewell discourse which runs from chapter 13 verse 31 up to chapter 17. In chapter 13 vv. 31–35 Jesus begins to speak of his glorification and gives a hint of his impending departure. He has just foretold his betrayal and Judas has just left the group. He also gives his disciples a new commandment, the command that they love one another just as he has loved them. This talk is interrupted by Peter (v. 36) and he promises Jesus that he would be willing to lay down his life for him. Jesus in turn does not hesitate to tell Peter that he would deny him three times before the cock crows that night.

Biblical exegetes differ significantly in determining the structure of this segment of the farewell discourse. However, Brown in his commentary cited Lagrange's suggested division as to the internal

organization of chapter 14: vv. 1–11, vv. 12–26, and vv. 27–31. Bultmann on the other hand divided the chapter thus: vv. 1–4, vv. 15–14, vv. 15–24, and vv. 25–31. Culpepper instead suggests the following structure of the chapter:

> Jesus' departure to prepare a place for the disciples (vv. 1–7)
> Jesus as the revelation of the Father (vv. 8–14)
> The Promise of the Paraclete (vv. 15–24)
> The Coming of the Paraclete (vv. 25–31)[90]

Chapter 14 opens with Jesus telling his disciples "Do not let your hearts be troubled" (v. 1a). There is reason enough for the disciples to be troubled. Jesus has just intimated to them that one of them would betray him (13:21), that Peter would deny him three times (13:36–38), and that he would soon leave them and go to a place where they could not follow. Jesus in turn urges them to believe in God and to also believe in him (14:1b). He assures them that he is going to prepare a place for them in his Father's house where there are many dwelling-places (v. 2). Jesus also comforts them with the promise that he would come back and take them to himself so they could be together again (v. 3). This promise may have caused great consolation to the disciples, for being with Jesus again is their greatest desire. But Jesus makes it clear to them that all of these will only take place if they believe in him and that the sadness in their hearts would dissipate only if they put their faith in him.

In verse 4, Jesus confidently declares to his disciples that they already know the way to the place where he is going. Thomas blurts out his confusion, "Lord, we do not know where you are going. How can we know the way" (v. 5)? Most biblical scholars believe that Thomas' objection to Jesus' statement embodies the disciples' slowness in understanding Jesus' revelation. However, Thomas' objection makes it possible for Jesus to articulate further and in a more precise manner his revelation.

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[90]Cf. Culpepper, *The Gospel and Letters of John*, 209–12.

Jesus answers Thomas with another "I am" statement, "I am the way, the truth, and the life" (v. 6). Again, biblical scholars vary in their interpretation as to how these three terms may be related to each other. In his notes on this statement Brown uses De la Potterie's summary of some exegetes' opinions regarding how this saying may be interpreted:

A. There are explanations wherein *the way* is directed toward a goal that is *the truth* and/or *the life*:
   1. Most of the Greek Fathers, Ambrose, and Leo the Great (Leo I) understood the way and the truth to lead to the life (eternal life in heaven). Maldonatus modified this, seeing behind the Greek a Hebraism wherein the truth is taken as just an adjectival description of the way: "I am the true way to life."
   2. Clement of Alexandria, Augustine, and most of the Latin Fathers understood that the way leads to both the truth and the life. In this interpretation both truth and life are eschatological, divine realities (the truth is the mind of God, the *Logos*). Thomas Aquinas instead held a medieval form of this theory wherein he saw Christ as the way according to his humanity, but he is the truth and the life according to his divinity. Many modern scholars still hold a modification of the theory (De la Potterie lists Westcott, E. F. Scott, V. Taylor, Lagrange, and Braun).
   3. Other modern scholars (W. Bauer, Bultmann, and Dodd) interpret John according to Gnostic dualism, Mandean, and Hermetic thought …. They think of the ascent of the soul along the way to the heavenly sphere of truth, light, and life. […] Their way is already their goal. The truth is the manifested divine reality, and the life is that reality shared by men.

B. Other interpretations point to *the way* as the primary predicate, while *the truth* and *the life* are just explanations of the way. Jesus is the way **because** he is the truth and the life. […] That "the way" is the dominating phrase in 6 is suggested by the fact that Jesus is reaffirming his statement

> about the way in 4, in response to Thomas' question about the way in 5. Moreover, the second line of 6 leaves aside the truth and the life and concentrates on Jesus as the way: "No one comes to the Father except *through me*."[91]

Brown holds this latter explanation. Culpepper simply puts the relationship between these three terms by claiming that "the way" could be seen as the process, "the truth" as the means or the goal, and "the life" as the result. "The way may lead to truth and life, or truth and life may explain why Jesus is the way."[92] Whitacre also gives a concise explanation of how these three terms may be interpreted according to their relationship. He says:

> The three terms *way*, *truth* and *life* are simply linked together with "and" in the Greek (*kai*). But the central term is *way* because that was the subject of the question (vv. 4–5) and the second half of the verse speaks of coming to the Father *through* Jesus. […]
>
> The other two terms explain how Jesus is the *way*; "Jesus is the way inasmuch as He is the truth and the life" (Michaelis 1967: 81). *Truth* and *life* correspond to Jesus' roles in this Gospel as revealer and life-giver. God alone is truth and life, and when our rebellion separated us from God, we plunged into ignorance and death. It follows that the way to the Father requires both revelation, because of our ignorance, and life, due to our death.[93]

Schnackenburg holds the same opinion:

> The concept "the way" is, in itself, an unusual metaphor to apply to a person, but its meaning is made clearer by the additional statement that "the truth" and "the life" are also incorporated into that person. It almost sounds like a justification, but it is really a clarification: "I

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[91]Raymond E. Brown, *The Gospel According to John* II (New York: Doubleday, 1966), 620–1.

[92]Culpepper, *The Gospel and Letters of John*, 210.

[93]Rodney A. Whitacre, "John," in *IVP New Testament Commentary Series* (Illinois: Intervarsity, 1999), 351.

> am the way, that is, the truth and the life" for everyone who wants to reach the goal. In other words, by revealing the truth that leads to life and mediating that true life to the one who accepts and realizes that truth in faith, Jesus takes everyone who believes in him to the goal of his existence, that is, "to the Father"; in this manner, he becomes the "way."[94]

Jesus' claim to be "the way" implies that he is the *only* way to the Father: "No one comes to the Father except through me." He claims for himself an exclusive role, "the way" to the Father. In fact, in vv. 6–11 Jesus explains in a straightforward manner how he is the way to the Father. Since he is the truth or the revelation of the Father he is "the way" to Him, and men can come to know the Father if they know him: "If you know me, you will know my Father" (v. 7). To see Jesus is to see the Father, "Whoever has seen me has seen the Father" (v. 8). "He is the way because he is the life—since he lives in the Father and the Father lives in him (10–11), he is the channel through which the Father's life comes to men."[95] Jesus alone has the authority to claim this exclusive means to God because he alone knows God fully (3:13, 6:46). According to Bultmann this *ego eimi* saying of Jesus is a pure expression of revelation.[96] Jesus, the Revealer, is the only access to God which men and women are looking for.

This exclusive claim of Jesus is seen by Kysar as more than just a declaration but a confession of faith in the context in which the first Christian community found itself. He says,

> Jesus is the only means by which the revelation is bestowed. These words are best seen not as a universal declaration for all time and place but as a confession of the Johannine community in the midst of their

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[94]Rudolf Schnackenburg, *The Gospel According to St. John* III (New York: Crossroad, 1982), 64–5.

[95]Brown, *The Gospel According to John* II, 628.

[96]Rudolf Bultmann, *The Gospel of John: A Commentary* (Oxford: Westminster, 1971), 605.

> own situation. The exclusiveness of this statement had its source in the difficult and threatening dialogue with the synagogue and affirms over against Judaism the effectiveness of Christian faith. […] The thought of the clause emerges, moreover, out of the relationship of Christ and God and declares the functional reality of that relationship for humans. Jesus serves as the passage to **the Father** (cf. 10:7).[97]

Many biblical scholars believe that this exclusive claim to be the only way to the Father also means that Jesus is presenting himself as the only route to salvation as he claims in 10:9, "I am the gate. Whoever enters by me will be saved …." This "I am" statement is firmly grounded on his divine identity as the one who comes from the Father, and it expresses his saving mission and his relation to men. This interpretation is closely related to Jesus being the truth and the life. He alone leads men to salvation because he is the truth and he is the life. Brown explains:

> In calling himself the truth, Jesus is not giving an ontological definition in terms of [transcendence] but is describing himself in terms of his mission to men …. "I am the truth" is to be interpreted in the light of xviii 37: "The reason I have come into the world is to testify to the truth." […] Furthermore, it reflects what Jesus is in *himself*; the whole Johannine emphasis on "the real" (*alēthinos:* the real bread, the real vine) would be in vain if what Jesus is in relation to men was not a true indication of what he is in himself.
>
> If Jesus is the way in the sense that he is the truth and enables men to know their goal, he is also the way in the sense that he is THE LIFE (*zōē*). Once again this is a description of Jesus in terms of his mission to men: "I came that they may have life and have it to the full" (x 10). The destination of the way is life with the Father; this life the Father has given to the Son (v. 26), and the Son alone can give it to men who believe in him (x 28). The gift of natural life to Lazarus was a sign of eternal realities behind Jesus' claim to be the resurrection and the life (xi 25–26): "Everyone who is alive and believes in me shall never die at all."
>
> If Jesus is the way because he is the truth and the life, "truth" and "life" are not simply coordinates: life comes through the truth. Those who

[97]Kysar, *John*, 223.

> believe in Jesus as the incarnate revelation of the Father (and that is what "truth" means) receive the gift of life, so that the words of Jesus are the source of life: "The words that I have spoken to you are both Spirit and life" (vi 63); "The man who hears my word and has faith in Him who sent me possesses eternal life" (v. 24).[98]

De la Potterie summarizes the theological significance of Jesus' declaration in the context of the Trinitarian slant of Jesus' revelation: (1) First, "I am" statements make it plain that Jesus is essentially the revealer of the Father, the one who passes on to us the words of the Father. But the phrase Jesus uses here compels us to go beyond this purely functional interpretation. As St. Jerome observed, no prophet or apostle could ever say, as Christ did, "I am the truth." This declaration recalls the teaching of the Prologue, but expressed with all possible clarity, i.e., *the identification, pure and simple, between the person of Christ and the truth.* (2) Second, in order to understand clearly and to justify fully this declaration of Jesus, we are forced to contemplate the mystery of his person, the mystery of the trinitarian relationships between Father and Son. In the broader context of 14:6 (cf. 14:7–14) as well as its parallel in the Prologue, it can be deduced that Christ is the truth and the life because he can lead us to the Father. He can lead us to the Father simply because he himself, in person, is in close communion with the Father. Therefore, Jesus is the truth, because of the fact that in his own person he reveals to us the mystery of the trinitarian life, the intimate and vital relations which unite him to the Father.[99]

Summary

Studies show that throughout the centuries biblical scholars including the Church Fathers differ in their views on how to read this particular "I am" statement, that is, the relationship of the three predicates of Jesus' claim: the way, the truth, and the life. De La Potterie

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[98]Brown, *The Gospel According to John* II, 630–1.

[99]Ignace De La Potterie, "The Truth in Saint John," in *The Interpretation of John*, ed. John Ashton (Pennsylvania: Fortress, 1986), 58.

in his study identified two common modes by which biblical scholars and theologians interpret the statement:

A. that the "truth" and the "life" are *the goals* of the "way," and
B. that the two predicates, "truth" and "life," are the *explanations* of the "way."

It is clear that modern scholars, although they vary in their approach, adhere to the latter interpretation. They agree that Jesus is the way to the Father because he is "the truth" and "the life." Their studies also accentuate the exclusivity of Jesus' claim, that he alone is the only access to the Father and consequently to man's salvation. Jesus' claim has divine authority because of his provenance: he has come from the Father, and also because of his destination: he will return to the Father. He alone has the full knowledge of the Father because he comes from him.

Jesus' claim to be the way, the truth, and the life makes him more than just a moral figure for the Christian. This claim gives the full force of Jesus' divine identity and salvific mission. Schnackenburg wisely concludes:

> Jesus' self-revelatory statement, which is given a precise and absolute expression in the sentence that follows: "No one comes to the Father, but by me," is a culminating point in Johannine theology. It forms a classical summary of the Johannine doctrine of salvation that is based entirely on Jesus Christ. In Jesus Christ, the evangelist is saying, the invisible and incomprehensible God has, in his will to save men, made himself so tangible and so comprehensible that they are able to reach the goal of their existence along this way, by accepting in faith the truth that has been revealed to them in Jesus Christ and by sharing in his life. […]
>
> The concept of truth is different in John, where it is not a reality that is divine and discloses itself, but a reality of salvation that is revealed by the historical Jesus.[100]

[100]Schnackenburg, *The Gospel According to St. John* III, 65–6.

I am the true vine (15:1).

The Context

Chapter 15 begins with the last of the "I am" statements, "I am the true vine," which gives this chapter an authoritative tone even if it may sound quite abrupt. Jesus has just declared himself to be "the way, the truth, and the life" (14:6) and revealed the mutual indwelling that exists between him and the Father (cf. 14:10–11). He promised the coming of the Paraclete, the Spirit of truth, and assured his disciples of his abiding presence even when he has departed to return to the Father. He instructed them to obey his commandments as proof of their love for him, and he promised too that he and the Father would dwell in those who love him and keep his word (cf. v. 23). The final paragraph of chapter 14 sums up the themes of this part of Jesus' farewell discourse. He would continue to reveal his legacy to his disciples, and leave them his love and peace.

In the first part of chapter 15 in which Jesus claims to be the true vine, he refers to his Father as the vine-grower and his disciples as the branches. The discourse now shifts from the theme of Jesus' departure to the theme of the necessity of his disciples' remaining in him. By using the image of the vine Jesus develops the theme of the mutual abiding and indwelling of himself in the disciples and the disciples in him.

Just like the discourse on the gate and the shepherd, exegetes differ in categorizing this speech with finality. Some settle on referring to it as an allegory, a parable (though not in the same sense of parables found in the Synoptic Gospels), a "literal" or a "figurative" discourse. Brown refers to 15:1–6 as a *mashal*.[101] No matter how they call it, they somehow agree on the fact that this particular *ego eimi* saying is very

[101] *Māšal* is a Hebrew term covering all figurative illustrations such as parable, allegory, proverb, maxim, simile, metaphor, etc. For a detailed discussion on this cf. Brown, *The Gospel According to John* I, 390–1.

similar to the discourse of Jesus on the gate and the shepherd and that the imagery of the vine is developed in a very powerful way. "That Jesus would appeal to a vine image is not surprising. Aside from evidence that Jesus used Isaiah's comparison of Israel with a vineyard (Mark 12:1), vineyards and vines were so much a part of ancient Mediterranean life that they presented themselves naturally for comparisons."[102]

Although some biblical scholars fall back on Gnostic and Mandean sources as background for the imagery of the vine and the branches, the majority still believe that the FG's author used the Old Testament and Jewish background as his possible sources. Brown summarizes:

> In the OT the vineyard is a frequent symbol for Israel. Occasionally the symbol is one of fruitfulness (Is xxvi 2–6); more often the vineyard is unproductive or desolate and disappointing to Yahweh (Jer v. 10, xii 10–11). In the Synoptic tradition Jesus draws on the OT vineyard symbolism: his Parable of the Vineyard (Mark xii 1–11 and par.) implicitly cites Isaiah's "Song of the Vineyard" (Isa v. 1–7). See also the Parables of the Workers in the Vineyard (Matt xx 1–16), of the Obedient and Disobedient Sons (Matt xxi 28–32), and of the Fig Tree Planted in the Vineyard (Luke xiii 6–9). Now in John we are dealing with a vine rather than a vineyard.[103]

Although it is true that the use of the image of vine or vineyard as a symbol for Israel is common in the OT as well as in the NT, Brown cites two difficulties in identifying these as sources for John's use of the imagery. The first difficulty is that the image of vineyard or vine usually stands for Israel, while in John the vine is identified with Jesus. Secondly, he stresses the idea that none of the OT passages on the vine identifies the vine as the source of life for its branches, while in John this is an essential and central conviction. To overcome such difficulties, Brown says that

> it is a feature of Johannine theology that Jesus applied to himself terms used in the OT for Israel and in other parts of the NT for the Christian

[102]Keener, *The Gospel of John*, 988–9.

[103]Brown, *The Gospel According to John* II, 669–70.

> community. This is part of the Johannine technique of replacing "the kingdom of God is like …" with "I am …." In the present instance, however, we should note that the element of the collective is not absent. Jesus is not the stalk but the whole vine, and the branches remain part of the vine. […]
>
> In conclusion, it is clear that John's mashal of the vine and the branches has a unique orientation, consonant with Johannine Christology. This orientation is not found in the OT or in Jewish thought, but many of the images and ideas that have been blended together under this orientation are found there. Granting the originality of John's thought, we suggest that the OT and Judaism supplied the raw material from which this *mashal* was composed, even as they supplied the raw material for the *mashal* of the sheepgate and the shepherd.[104]

There are also references wherein the vine is likened to Wisdom. For instance, Culpepper cites Sirach 24:17–19 where Wisdom compares herself to a vine:

> Like the vine I bud forth delights,
> and my blossoms become glorious and abundant fruit.
> Come to me, you who desire me,
> And eat your fill of my fruits.

Many exegetes also agree that this discourse may have some Eucharistic symbolisms. Brown for example cites the fact that the discourse on the vine is narrated just before Jesus' death and the explanation given by him talks about sacrificial death. "This motif of the death of Jesus is, of course, part of all the accounts of the institution of the Eucharist. The theme of intimate union with Jesus would also be shared both by the *mashal* of the vine (remaining in Jesus) and by the eucharistic theology of the early Church."[105] Barrett is also of the same opinion by maintaining that the discourse is said in the context of the narrative of the Last Supper. "Such a connection would confirm the view of the

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[104]Brown, *The Gospel According to John* II, 669–70.

[105]Brown, *The Gospel According to John* II, 673.

symbolism … it is at least in part eucharistic, and the union of believers with Christ which it represents is a union in his death."[106]

As for the structure of the discourse on the vine two divisions are suggested:

The vine and the branches (vv. 1–11)
The commandment of love and bearing fruit (vv. 12–17)

For the last time in the FG Jesus utters a predicated "I am" statement with an authority that he alone possesses. He uses the image of the vine which, as pointed out above, is usually used to symbolize Israel but which he now applies to himself. The author may have intentionally done this in order to emphasize the fact that indeed Jesus is *the* vine and this is stressed all the more by the opening words *ego eimi*. Schnackenburg argues:

> Jesus described himself as *the* vine and does so with a precision that is similar to that of the other images. The addition of the words ἡ ἀληθινή is striking, because they are strongly emphasized by being placed after the noun. […T]he best interpretation is that Jesus is the true vine; he merits the name of "true vine" and the name applies fully to him.[107]

Culpepper also argues that one striking feature of the symbolism of the vine in this discourse is that it ceases to represent Israel and takes on a significance which is highly Christological. The vine now represents Jesus himself. Whereas before salvation comes by being a member of the chosen people, Israel, now Jesus claims that one's life depends on remaining in him. Jesus becomes the source of life. Other scholars also interpret these words as Jesus claiming to be the new Israel; "Christ is God's servant who stands in the place of Israel."[108] Whitacre elaborates on this, saying that

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[106]Barrett, *The Gospel According to St. John*, 393.

[107]Schnackenburg, *The Gospel According to St. John* III, 97.

[108]Kysar, *John*, 236.

> when Jesus refers to himself as the true vine (v. 1) he is once again taking an image for Israel and applying it to himself. Jesus himself is true Israel …. Israel's place as the people of God is now taken by Jesus and his disciples, the vine and its branches. This is not a rejection of Judaism as such, but its fulfillment in its Messiah. The identification of the people of God with a particular nation is now replaced with a particular man who incorporates in himself the new people of God composed of Jews and non-Jews.[109]

Aside from claiming for himself the image of the vine, Jesus qualifies it by stressing the fact that he is not only *the* vine but he is the *true* vine. He insists that he is the real vine. Brown explains further:

> It does not seem that in claiming to be the real vine Jesus is directly polemicizing against a false vine; rather he is emphasizing that he is the source of "real" life, a life that can come only from above and from the Father. Jesus is the vine in the sense in which only the Son of God can be the vine. "Real" here is the language of Johannine dualism distinguishing what is below from what is above.[110]

Culpepper suggests that the added emphasis on Jesus' words "I am the *true* vine" may very well imply a warning not to accept any other substitute for him.[111]

Together with the authoritative "I am" statement, Jesus mentions his Father to validate his claim. He refers to him as the vine-grower. "The imagery acknowledges the differences between Jesus and his Father, but it also conveys their unity. […H]e calls himself the genuine or "true" (alēthinos) vine, using a term appropriate for God (7:28; 17:3) and for what is of divine origin (1:9; 6:32; 8:16; cf. 4:23)."[112] Furthermore, even if the main idea of the discourse is that of "remaining in Jesus"

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[109]Whitacre, "John," 372.

[110]Brown, *The Gospel According to John* II, 674.

[111]Culpepper, *The Gospel and Letters of John*, 215.

[112]Koester, *Symbolism in the Fourth Gospel*, 272.

(vv. 4–7), still, as Schnackenburg points out, the Father does not play a secondary role. He posits:

> His activity, as described in v. 2, leads to the idea of bearing fruit and this is another dominant aspect of the discourse (vv. 4–5) and its objective (v. 8). The Father is mentioned again in this latter verse, according to which he is glorified in the disciples' bearing of abundant fruit. As the vine-dresser, God carries out his work in Jesus, the vine. And this increases the importance of the activity of the disciples as well.[113]

More often than not in the FG the Father and the Son are portrayed as always being together in whatever they do, and so it is not surprising that after declaring himself as the true vine Jesus immediately refers to his Father as the vine-grower who does the work of taking care of the vine. It is the Father who ensures the fruitfulness of the vine by pruning it and by taking out the branches that do not bear fruit.

One major theme of the discourse is "abiding" in Jesus, resulting in the disciples' "bearing fruit." He solemnly tells his disciples that unless they abide in him, and he in them, they can not bear fruit just like the branches which cannot bear fruit unless they are securely attached to the vine (cf. vv. 4–5). Those branches that do not bear fruit are thrown away and burned. Some biblical scholars interpret the imagery of "bearing fruit" as leading a virtuous life and doing good works. In line with this, some commentators see the pruning and the cleansing as an act of divine judgment on those disciples and/or Christians who do not live a virtuous way of life nor produce good works. Nonetheless the "abiding in Christ" aspect must not be overlooked in the effort to stress the moral dimension of the verses since the fruitfulness of the branches is largely dependent on their remaining attached to the vine. This suggests that if one continues to abide in Christ, he in turn will continue to abide in that person and this mutual indwelling will result in the person's fruitfulness.

[113]Schnackenburg, *The Gospel According to St. John* III, 97.

Another major theme of the imagery is the love that exists between the Father and the Son and the love of the Son for the disciples. Koester comments:

> Jesus explains that love comes from God the Father, who loves him, and the love that Jesus receives from the Father is the love that he gives to the disciples. Therefore, for the disciples to abide in Jesus means that they abide in his love like branches on the vine, drawing strength from the main stalk and thereby bearing fruit (15:9). With a seamless interplay of thought, readers find that Jesus the vine produces fruit through the love expressed by his disciples and that by showing love the disciples reveal the love they receive from the vine.[114]

It can also be construed that this love for Jesus is demonstrated through obedience to what he has commanded. This obedience will ensure their abiding in his love just as he abides in the Father's love by his unwavering obedience to his will. In this manner the Father is glorified. Jesus wills that this revelation would produce joy in the disciples, a joy that is the result of the assurance of having Christ present in one's life. Obedience to his commandment would also merit Jesus' friendship. The disciples will no longer be considered servants, but rather his friends, if they will obey his commandment of love. The test of discipleship is obedience, and Jesus' friendship is the prize for it. "Jesus' friendship with his followers therefore is both the source and the norm for their relationships with each other. As the one 'true vine,' he displaces anything else that might claim to be the source of a disciple's life."[115]

This love between Jesus and the disciples must not stop there, but must be extended towards others. Jesus' commandment is that the disciples should love each other with the kind of love that he has loved them. This is the new commandment that he gives his disciples. The theme of love reaches its climax in Jesus' declaration that the greatest love is being able to lay down one's life for one's friends. This is exactly

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[114]Koester, *Symbolism in the Fourth Gospel*, 272.

[115]Koester, *Symbolism in the Fourth Gospel*, 275.

what Jesus does when he lays down his life for all. "True honor and glory are given by God to his servants. Jesus laid down his life in an ignominious death out of obedience to God, and God glorified him. Those who lose themselves in the service of Jesus will also be honored by God even if dishonored by other people."[116]

Jesus promises that the prayer of the disciples will be answered as a consequence of fruit-bearing, of living always in union with him, and of sharing his love with others. "Thus while the disciples themselves must go and bear fruit or risk being cut off (v. 6), they have the assurance that Jesus has chosen and appointed them for this activity and that the Father will answer their prayers."[117]

Summary

This last "I am" statement remains enigmatic because of the richness of the imagery used by the author of the FG and the varied themes embedded therein. It also shows the acute knowledge of the author of viticultural practices in the ancient Mediterranean world.

Just like the discourse on the gate and the shepherd in chapter 10, this pericope is not easy to classify as proven by the differing opinions of exegetes in this regard. Schnackenburg concludes that it is better to classify it as a "figurative discourse" while Brown calls it a *mashal*. Both, though, have strong arguments to support their choice.

The seeming paradox of Jesus' self-revelation, "I am the true vine," is that he applies to himself an image that usually refers to Israel, the people of God. Biblical scholars agree that this shift employed by the author is influenced by his OT and Jewish background but highly motivated by his theological and Christological goal.

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[116]Koester, *Symbolism in the Fourth Gospel*, 276.

[117]Whitacre, "John," 381.

The whole discourse on the vine and the branches is replete with themes characteristic of the FG. Jesus being the "true vine" is supported by his Father whom he calls the vine-grower. Jesus makes several demands from his disciples such as: (1) abiding in him, (2) bearing fruit, (3) loving one another, (4) being able to lay down one's life for one's friends, and (5) obedience to his commandment especially the commandment of love. With all these demands comes the promise of the abiding presence of Jesus, being loved by him, his friendship, and prayers being heard by the Father. However, the warning of being cut off, of withering away, and of being broken and burned like the fruitless branches of the vine, must also be taken seriously. Schnackenburg aptly sums up:

> The passage concludes with a repetition of Jesus' commandment to love one another (v. 17). This completes the unit of the discourse and throws light once more on the place that it occupies in the whole discourse. The object of this discourse on the vine was to point to the bearing of fruit by the disciples. This is given concrete expression and is even more powerfully motivated—by the idea of the love of friends—in the exposition in vv. 12–17. The admonition to the community, which consists of Christ's disciples and friends, culminates in this repeated commandment of mutual love.[118]

The community of the beloved disciple could not but understand this treaty in all its richness, and invest all of their best efforts to put it into practice even in the midst of the not so encouraging situation they were in.

General Summary and Conclusion

This study gives an exposition of Jesus' self-revelation using the "I am" statements. A survey of the frequency of the use of the *ego eimi* formula in all the Gospel narratives shows that the author of the FG utilized this tool the most number of times. Biblical exegetes identified

[118]Schnackenburg, *The Gospel According to St. John* III, 113.

three distinct usage of *ego eimi* uttered by Jesus Christ himself in the FG: (1) the absolute use of the formula without employing any image or predicate, (2) the use where a predicate is implied, and (3) the *ego eimi* sayings with a predicate or where an image is used. The latter category was used by Jesus seven times and in this chapter they are identified as the "I am" statements.

The seven "I am" statements prove to be the vehicle by which Jesus reveals not only his identity but also his relationship to all men and women of his time and for all time, thus expressing his saving action in history. This relational dimension of his self-revelation is that which makes the seven "I am" statements unique and different from the first two categories of the *ego eimi* sayings.

The "I am" statements are firmly grounded in Jesus' divine identity, yet by them Jesus describes himself using images which are rather commonplace and readily perceptible to his audience. The images of "bread," "light," "gate," "shepherd," and "true vine" are deeply rooted in his hearers' cultural and religious traditions. Even the concepts of "resurrection and life," as well as the "way and truth," are no stranger to them. One might say that Jesus chose these images with such care and used them with such precision that it leaves no doubt in anybody's mind that he intended to be understood by his listeners. Unfortunately, the Gospel narratives show that he failed in this dismally. The apparent obstinacy of his hearers as they reacted to his revelation in a repeated pattern of misunderstanding and unbelief led to a total rejection of Jesus' revelation and person. This rejection brought Jesus to his passion, death and later to his glorification.

But Jesus' revelation is not dependent on his audiences' reaction but solely on his Father's will. The Father's will is for all people to be saved. Thus, the purpose of Jesus' self-revelation is for everyone to have life and to be saved. As "bread of life" Jesus instructs and gives God's people his wisdom as he also nourishes them at the table of the Eucharist. He is the "light of the world" who takes away the darkness of sin from people's lives. As "the gate" he leads his sheep to eternal life, and being the good shepherd he takes care of his sheep to the point of willingly laying down his own life for them so that they may

have life in abundance. Jesus is "the resurrection and the life" who promises eternal life to those who believe in him. He claims to be the only "way" to the Father because no one can have access to the Father except through him. He is "the way" because he is also "the truth and the life." Finally, Jesus is "the true vine" without which the disciples cannot survive nor bear fruit. Attachment to Jesus, "the true vine," is a guarantee of continuous life and fruitfulness.

All seven "I am" statements were proclaimed by Jesus with resounding authority. He proclaimed them with such authority as could come only from his deep awareness of his divine identity, that of being the Son of the Father. Everything that he did he did because it was the will of the Father, and every word he uttered he spoke because it was commanded to him by the Father; "… for I have not spoken on my own, but the Father who sent me has himself given me a commandment about what to say and what to speak. And I know that his commandment is eternal life. What I speak, therefore, I speak just as the Father has told me" (12:49–50). Every word he spoke carries with it the authority that comes from God himself for he is the *Logos*, the Word that was from the beginning, the Word who was with God, and the Word who is God (cf. 1:1).

Springing, too, from the authority that lies behind these "I am" statements is the exclusivity of Jesus' claims. When he reveals himself to be "the bread of life" he does not liken himself to any bread; he literally claims to be *the* bread. He is not just any bread but "the bread of life." In like manner, he alone can claim to be "the light of the world," "the gate of the sheepfold," "the good shepherd," and so on and so forth. His authority to make these claims is so complete such that it nullifies all previous claims (if ever there were) and it eliminates all other possibilities for anyone to make the same claim. In the "I am" sayings Jesus makes an exclusive assertion of being the *only one* who can touch and influence *every* facet of *every* human person's life and that of *all* creation. Because of his provenance (he comes from the Father) and his divine identity as the Son, he has all the authority and power to make such claims. He cannot tolerate nor can he accept any rival.

Five out of seven "I am" statements are coupled with a solemn promise and assurance of eternal life while two assure the believer of a deeper intimacy with Jesus and the Father. One promises "fruitfulness" of the disciples, aside from the assurance of Jesus' love and friendship. Jesus' self-revelation does not end in making himself and his Father known to people. He makes himself known in order that those who hear his revelation may gain life in him. His revelation is not self-serving; rather it offers his hearers the chance to choose life and be saved. However, Jesus' promise demands from his listeners unwavering faith in him as well as being attached to him and obeying his commandment. There is no other way by which a person could hope to obtain fullness of life except through Jesus.

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