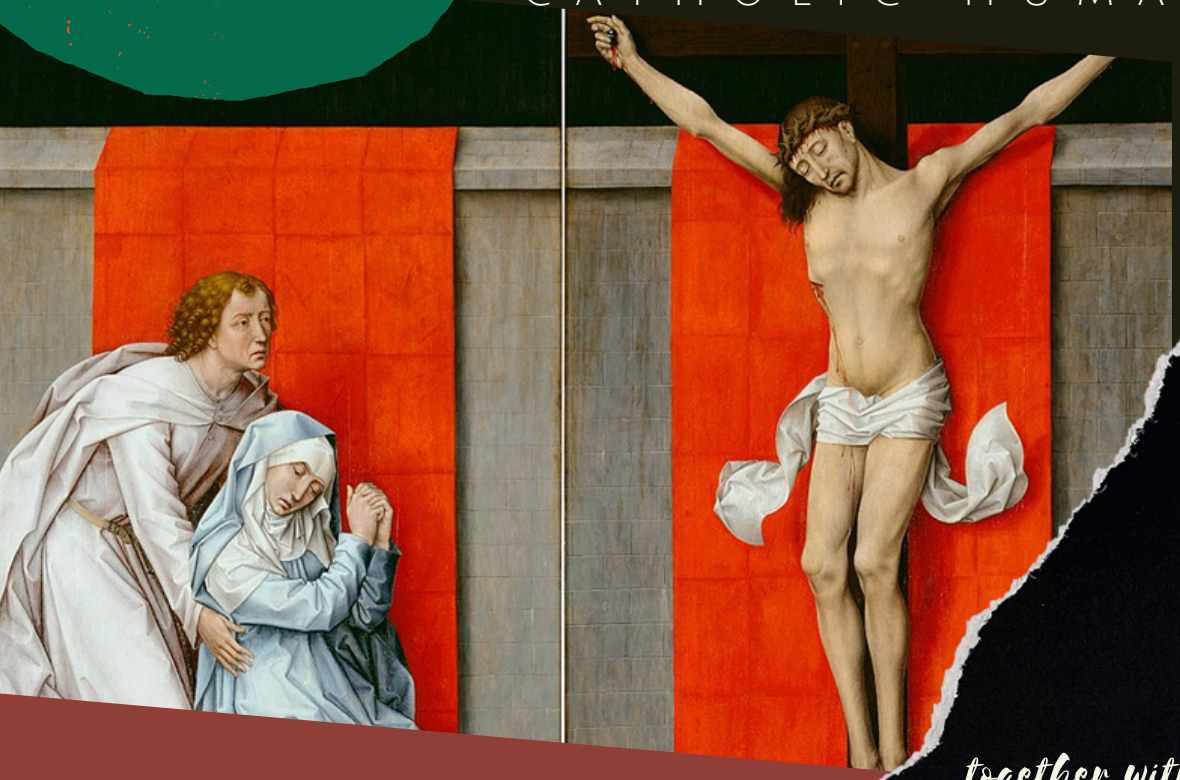
READER

The Good

AN EXPLORATION OF CATHOLIC HUMANISM



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‘Our Hearts Are Restless’

The Search for Meaning and Happiness

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- *What are some rival conceptions of the good life that seem to hold sway today? What are their virtues and what are their limits?*
- *On the flip side, how do we explain our common feelings of emptiness and restlessness? How does our account of evil inform our understanding of the good – of how to live well?*

Session 1

I | *Inferno* I (1-63), 1300 A.D.

Dante Alighieri

Midway in the journey of our life
I came to myself in a dark wood,
for the straight way was lost.

Ah, how hard it is to tell
the nature of that wood, savage, dense, and
harsh—
the very thought of it renews my fear!

It is so bitter death is hardly more so.
But to set forth the good I found
I will recount the other things I saw.

How I came there I cannot really tell,
I was so full of sleep
when I forsook the one true way.

But when I reached the foot of a hill,
there where the valley ended
that had pierced my heart with fear,

looking up, I saw its shoulders
arrayed in the first light of the planet
that leads men straight, no matter what their
road.

Then the fear that had endured
in the lake of my heart, all the night
I spent in such distress, was calmed.

And as one who, with laboring breath,
has escaped from the deep to the shore
turns and looks back at the perilous waters,

so my mind, still in flight,
turned back to look once more upon the pass
no mortal being ever left alive.

After I rested my wearied flesh a while,
I took my way again along the desert slope,
my firm foot always lower than the other.

But now, near the beginning of the steep,
a leopard light and swift
and covered with a spotted pelt

refused to back away from me
but so impeded, barred the way,
that many times I turned to go back down.

It was the hour of morning,
when the sun mounts with those stars
that shone with it when God's own love

first set in motion those fair things,
so that, despite that beast with gaudy fur,
I still could hope for good, encouraged

by the hour of the day and the sweet season,
only to be struck by fear
when I beheld a lion in my way.

He seemed about to pounce—
his head held high and furious with hunger
—so that the air appeared to tremble at him.

And then a she-wolf who, all hide and bones,
seemed charged with all the appetites
that have made many live in wretchedness

so weighed my spirits down with terror,
which welled up at the sight of her,
that I lost hope of making the ascent.

And like one who rejoices in his gains
but when the time comes and he loses,
turns all his thought to sadness and lament,

such did the restless beast make me—
coming against me, step by step,
it drove me down to where the sun is silent.

While I was fleeing to a lower place,
before my eyes a figure showed,
faint, in the wide silence.

Session 1

II | *A Secular Age,* 2007

Charles Taylor

We all see our lives, and/or the space wherein we live our lives, as having a certain moral/spiritual shape. Somewhere, in some activity, or condition, lies a fullness, a richness; that is, in that place (activity or condition), life is fuller, richer, deeper, more worthwhile, more admirable, more what it should be. …Perhaps this sense of fullness is something we just catch glimpses of from afar off; we have the powerful intuition of what fullness would be, were we to be in that condition, e.g., of peace or wholeness; or able to act on that level, of integrity or generosity or abandonment or self- forgetfulness. But sometimes there will be moments of experienced fullness, of joy and fulfillment, where we feel ourselves there. Let one example, drawn from the autobiography of Bede Griffiths, stand for many:

> One day during my last term at school I walked out alone in the evening and heard the birds singing in that full chorus of song, which can only be heard at that time of the year at dawn or at sunset. I remember now the shock of surprise with which the sound broke on my ears.It seemed to me that I had never heard the birds singing before and I wondered whether they sang like this all year round and I had never noticed it. As I walked I came upon some hawthorn trees in full bloom and again I thought that I had never seen such a sight or experienced such sweetness before. If I had been brought suddenly among the trees of the Garden of Paradise and heard a choir of angels singing I could not have been more surprised. I came then to where the sun was setting over the playing fields. A lark rose suddenly from the ground beside the tree where I was standing and poured out its song above my head, and then sank still singing to rest. Everything then grew still as the sunset faded and the veil of dusk began to cover the earth. I remember now the feeling of awe which came over me. I felt inclined to kneel on the ground, as though I had been standing in the presence of an angel; and I hardly dared to look on the face of the sky, because it seemed as though it was but a veil before the face of God.

In this case, the sense of fullness came in an experience which unsettles and breaks through our ordinary sense of being in the world, with its familiar objects, activities and points of reference. These may be moments, as Peter Berger puts it, describing the work of Robert Musil, when "ordinary reality is 'abolished' and something terrifyingly *other* shines through"...

These experiences, and others again which can't all be enumerated here, help us to situate a place of fullness, to which we orient ourselves morally or spiritually. They can orient us because they offer some sense of what they are of: the presence of God, or the voice of nature, or the force which flows through everything, or the alignment in us of desire and the drive to form. But they are also often unsettling and enigmatic. Our sense of where they come from may also be unclear, confused, lacunary. We are deeply moved, but also

puzzled and shaken. We struggle to articulate what we've been through. …

This can help define a direction to our lives. But the sense of orientation also has its negative slope; where we experience above all a distance, an absence, an exile, a seemingly irremediable incapacity ever to reach this place; an absence of power; a confusion, or worse, the condition often described in the tradition as melancholy, ennui (the "spleen" of Baudelaire). What is terrible in this latter condition is that we lose a sense of where the place of fullness is, even of what fullness could consist in; we feel we've forgotten what it would look like, or cannot believe in it anymore. But the misery of absence, of loss, is still there, indeed, it is in some ways even more acute.

There are other figures of exile, which we can see in the tradition, where what dominates is a sense of damnation, of deserved and decided exclusion forever from fullness; or images of captivity,within hideous forms which embody the very negation of fullness: the monstrous animal forms that we see in the paintings of Hieronymous Bosch, for instance.

Then thirdly, there is a kind of stabilized middle condition, to which we often aspire. This is one where we have found a way to escape the forms of negation, exile, emptiness, without having reached fullness. We come to terms with the middle position, often through some stable, even routine order in life, in which we are doing things which have some meaning for us; for instance, which contribute to our ordinary happiness, or which are fulfilling in various ways, or which contribute to what we conceive of as the good. Or often, in the best scenario, all three: for instance,we strive to live happily with spouse and children, while practising a vocation which we find fulfilling, and also which constitutes an obvious contribution to human welfare.

But it is essential to this middle condition, first that the routine, the order, the regular contact with meaning in our daily activities, somehow conjures, and keeps at bay the exile, or the ennui, or captivity in the monstrous; and second, that we have some sense of continuing contact with the place of fullness; and of slow movement towards it over the years. This place can't be renounced, or totally despaired of, without the equilibrium of the middle condition being undermined.

Here's where it might appear that my description of this supposedly general structure of our moral/spiritual lives tilts towards the believer. It is clear that the last sentences of the previous paragraph fit rather well the state of mind of the believer in the middle condition. She goes on placing faith in a fuller condition, often described as salvation, and can't despair of it, and also would want to feel that she is at least open to progress towards it, if not already taking small steps thither.

But there are surely many unbelievers for whom this life in what I've described as the "middle condition" is all there is. This is the goal. Living this well and fully is what human life is about — for instance, the threefold scenario I described above. This is all that human life offers; but on this view this is a) no small thing, and b) to believe that there is something more, e.g., after death, or in some impossible condition of sanctity, is to run

away from and undermine the search for this human excellence.

So describing fullness as another "place" from this middle condition may be misleading. And yet there is a structural analogy here. The unbeliever wants to be the kind of person for whom this life is fully satisfying, in which all of him can rejoice, in which his whole sense of fullness can find an adequate object. And he is not there yet. Either he's not really living the constitutive meanings in his life fully: he's not really happy in his marriage, or fulfilled in his job, or confident that this job really conduces to the benefit of humankind. Or else he is reasonably confident that he has the bases of all these, but contrary to his express view, cannot find the fullness of peace and a sense of satisfaction and completeness in this life. In other words, there is something he aspires to beyond where he's at. He perhaps hasn't yet fully conquered the nostalgia for something transcendent. In one way or another, he still has some way to go.

Now the point of describing these typical dimensions of human moral/spiritual life as identifications of fullness, modes of exile, and types of the middle condition, is to allow us to understand better belief and unbelief as lived conditions, not just as theories or sets of beliefs subscribed to.

The big obvious contrast here is that for believers, the account of the place of fullness requires reference to God, that is, to something beyond human life and/or nature; where for unbelievers this is not the case; they rather will leave any account open, or understand fullness in terms of a potentiality of human beings understood naturalistically. But so far this description of the contrast seems to be still a belief description. What we need to do is to get a sense of the difference of lived experience.

Of course, this is incredibly various. But perhaps some recurring themes can be identified. For believers, often or typically, the sense is that fullness comes to them, that it is something they receive; moreover, receive in something like a personal relation, from another being capable of love and giving; approaching fullness involves among other things, practices of devotion and prayer (as well as charity, giving); and they are aware of being very far from the condition of full devotion and giving; they are aware of being self-enclosed, bound to lesser things and goals, not able to open themselves and receive/give as they would at the place of fullness. So there is the notion of receiving power or fullness in a relation; but the receiver isn't simply empowered in his/her present condition; he/she needs to be opened, transformed, brought out of self.

This is a very Christian formulation. In order to make the contrast with modern unbelief, perhaps it would be good to oppose to it another formulation, more "Buddhist": here the personal relation might drop out as central. But the emphasis would be all the stronger on the direction of transcending the self, opening it out, receiving a power that goes beyond us.

For modern unbelievers, the predicament is quite different. The power to reach fullness is within. There are different variations of this. One is that which centres on our nature as

rational beings. The Kantian variant is the most upfront form of this. We have the power as rational agency to make the laws by which we live. This is something so greatly superior to the force of mere nature in us, in the form of desire, that when we contemplate it without distortion, we cannot but feel reverence (Achtung) for this power. The place of fullness is where we manage finally to give this power full reign, and so to live by it. We have a feeling of receptivity, when with our full sense of our own fragility and pathos as desiring beings, we look up to the power of law-giving with admiration and awe. But this doesn't in the end mean that there is any reception from outside; the power is within; and the more we realize this power, the more we become aware that it is within, that morality must be autonomous and not heteronomous.

Of course, there are also lots of more naturalistic variants of the power of reason… but within this kind of naturalism, we often find an admiration for the power of cool, disengaged reason, capable of contemplating the world and human life without illusion, and of acting lucidly for the best in the interest of human flourishing. A certain awe still surrounds reason as a critical power, capable of liberating us from illusion and blind forces of instinct, as well as the phantasies bred of our fear and narrowness and pusillanimity. The nearest thing to fullness lies in this power of reason, and it is entirely ours, developed if it is through our own, often heroic action. (And here the giants of modern "scientific" reason are often named: Copernicus, Darwin, Freud.)

Indeed, this sense of ourselves as beings both frail and courageous, capable of facing a meaningless, hostile universe without faintness of heart, and of rising to the challenge of devising our own rules of life, can be an inspiring one, as we see in the writings of a Camus for instance. Rising fully to this challenge, empowered by this sense of our own greatness in doing so, this condition we aspire to but only rarely, if ever, achieve, can function as its own place of fullness, in the sense of my discussion here.

Over against these modes of rejoicing in the self-sufficient power of reason, there are other modes of unbelief which, analogous to religious views, see us as needing to receive power from elsewhere than autonomous reason to achieve fullness. Reason by itself is narrow, blind to the demands of fullness, will run on perhaps to destruction, human and ecological, if it recognizes no limits; is perhaps actuated by a kind of pride, hubris. There are often echoes here of a religious critique of modern, disengaged, unbelieving reason. Except that the sources of power are not transcendent. They are to be found in Nature, or in our own inner depths, or in both. We can recognize here theories of immanence which emerge from the Romantic critique of disengaged reason, and most notably certain ecological ethics of our day, particularly deep ecology. Rational mind has to open itself to something deeper and fuller. This is something (at least partly) inner; our own deepest feelings or instincts. We have therefore to heal the division within us that disengaged reason has created, setting thinking in opposition to feeling or instinct or intuition.

So we have here views which, as just mentioned, have certain analogies to the [10] religious reaction to the unbelieving Enlightenment, in that they stress reception over against self-sufficiency; but they are views which intend to remain immanent, and are often as hostile, if

not more so, to religion than the disengaged ones.

There is a third category of outlook, which is hard to classify here, but which I hope to illuminate later in this discussion. These are views, like that of certain contemporary modes of post- modernism, which deny, attack or scoff at the claims of self-sufficient reason, but offer no outside source for the reception of power. They are as determined to undermine and deny Romantic notions of solace in feeling, or in recovered unity, as they are to attack the Enlightenment dream of pure thinking; and they seem often even more eager to underscore their atheist convictions. They want to make a point of stressing the irremediable nature of division, lack of centre, the perpetual absence of fullness; which is at best a necessary dream, something we may have to suppose to make minimum sense of our world, but which is always elsewhere, and which couldn't in principle ever be found.

This family of views seems to stand altogether outside the structures I'm talking about here. And yet I think one can show that in a number of ways it draws on them. In particular, it draws empowerment from the sense of our courage and greatness in being able to face the irremediable, and carry on nonetheless.

So we've made some progress in talking about belief and unbelief as ways of living or experiencing moral/spiritual life, in the three dimensions I talked about earlier. At least I drew some contrasts in the first dimension, the way of experiencing fullness; the source of the power which can bring us to this fullness; whether this is "within" or "without"; and in what sense. Corresponding differences follow about experiences of exile, and those of the middle condition.

What does it mean to say that for me fullness comes from a power which is beyond me, that I have to receive it, etc.? Today, it is likely to mean something like this: the best sense I can make of my conflicting moral and spiritual experience is captured by a theological view of this kind. That is, in my own experience, in prayer, in moments of fullness, in experiences of exile overcome, in what I seem to observe around me in other people's lives — lives of exceptional spiritual fullness, or lives of maximum self-enclosedness, lives of demonic evil, etc. — this seems to be the picture which emerges. But I am never, or only rarely, really sure, free of all doubt, untroubled by some objection — some experience which won't fit, some lives [11] which exhibit fullness on another basis, some alternative mode of fullness which sometimes draws me, etc.

This is typical of the modern condition, and an analogous story could be told by many an unbeliever. We live in a condition where we cannot help but be aware that there are a number of different construals, views which intelligent, reasonably undeluded people, of good will, can and do disagree on. We cannot help looking over our shoulder from time to time, looking sideways, living our faith also in a condition of doubt and uncertainty.
It is this index of doubt, which induces people to speak of "theories" here. Because theories are often hypotheses, held in ultimate uncertainty, pending further evidence. I hope I have said something to show that we can't understand them as mere theories, that there is a way in which

our whole experience is inflected if we live in one or another spirituality. But all the same we are aware today that one can live the spiritual life differently; that power, fullness, exile, etc., can take different shapes.

But there is clearly another way one can live these things, and many human beings did. This is a condition in which the immediate experience of power, a place of fullness, exile, is in terms which we would identify as one of the possible alternatives, but where for the people concerned no such distinction, between experience and its construal, arose. Let's recur to Hieronymus Bosch for instance. Those nightmare scenarios of possession, of evil spirits, of captivation in monstrous animal forms; we can imagine that these were not "theories" in any sense in the lived experience of many people in that age. They were objects of real fear, of such compelling fear, that it wasn't possible to entertain seriously the idea that they might be unreal. You or people you knew had experienced them. And perhaps no one in your milieu ever got around even to suggesting their unreality.

Analogously, the people of New Testament Palestine, when they saw someone possessed of an evil spirit, were too immediately at grips with the real suffering of this condition, in a neighbour, or a loved one, to be able to entertain the idea that this was an interesting explanation for a psychological condition, identifiable purely in intra-psychic terms, but that there were other, possibly more reliable aetiologies for this condition.

So there is a condition of lived experience, where what we might call a construal of the moral/spiritual is lived not as such, but as immediate reality, like stones, rivers and mountains. And this plainly also goes for the positive side of things: e.g., people in earlier ages of our culture, for whom moving to fullness just meant getting closer to God. The alternatives they faced in life were:living a fuller dévotion, or going on living for lesser goods, at a continuing distance from fullness; being "dévot" or "mondain", in the terms of seventeenth-century France; not taking off after a different construal of what fullness might mean.

Session 1

III | "Questions They Never Asked Me" (1977)

Walker Percy

This life is too much trouble, far too strange, to arrive at the end of it and then to be asked what you make of it and have to answer, 'Scientific humanism.' That won't do. A poor show. Life is a mystery; love is a delight. Therefore I take it as axiomatic that one should settle for nothing less than the infinity mystery and the infinite delight, i.e., God. In fact I demand it. I refuse to settle for anything less. I don't see why anyone should settle for less than Jacob, who actually grabbed hold of God and would not let go until God identified himself and blessed him.

Session 1

IV | *Macbeth,* Act 5, Scene 5, *1603*

Shakespeare

Performed: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HZnaXDRwu84&t=19s

Tomorrow, and tomorrow, and tomorrow,
Creeps in this petty pace from day to day
To the last syllable of recorded time,
And all our yesterdays have lighted fools
The way to dusty death.

Out, out, brief candle!
Life's but a walking shadow, a poor player
That struts and frets his hour upon the stage
And then is heard no more: it is a tale
Told by an idiot, full of sound and fury,
Signifying nothing.

Session 1

V | *Confessions*, 400 A.D.

St. Augustine

Great are You, O Lord, and greatly to be praised; great is Your power, and of Your wisdom there is no end. And man, being a part of Your creation, desires to praise You — man, who bears about with him his mortality, the witness of his sin, even the witness that You resist the proud, — yet man, this part of Your creation, desires to praise You. You move us to delight in praising You; for You have made us for Yourself, and our hearts are restless until they rest in You. [*cor nostrum inquietum est donec requiescat in Te*]

‘What is the good of the human person?’

- *How do Foucault, Pinker, and Wojtyla understand the human person?*
- *How do (or would) these three thinkers conceive the human good?*
- *What is distinctive about the Christian account of the human person?*
- *What does Genesis 2 tell us about the good of the human person?*

Session 2

I | *The Order of Things: An Archaeology of the Human Sciences* (excerpts from Preface and Conclusion)
Michel Foucault

From the Preface

This book first arose out of a passage in Borges, out of the laughter that shattered, as I read the passage, all the familiar landmarks of my thought—our thought, the thought that bears the stamp of our age and our geography—breaking up all the ordered surfaces and all the planes with which we are accustomed to tame the wild profusion of existing things, and continuing long afterwards to disturb and threaten with collapse our age-old distinction between the Same and the Other. This passage quotes a "certain Chinese encyclopedia" in which it is written that "animals are divided into: (a) belonging to the Emperor, (b) embalmed, (c) tame, (d) sucking pigs, (e) sirens, (f) fabulous, (g) stray dogs, (h) included in the present classification, (i) frenzied, (j) innumerable, (k) drawn with a very fine camelhair brush, (l) et cetera, (m) having just broken the water pitcher, (n) that from a long way off "look like flies". In the wonderment of this taxonomy, the thing we apprehend in one great leap, the thing that, by means of the fable, is demonstrated as the exotic charm of another system of thought, is the limitation of our own, the stark impossibility of thinking that.

But what is it impossible to think, and what kind of impossibility are we faced with here? Each of these strange categories can be assigned a precise meaning and a demonstrable content; some of them do certainly involve fantastic entities—fabulous animals or sirens—but, precisely because it puts them into categories of their own, the Chinese encyclopedia localizes their powers of contagion; it distinguishes carefully between the very real animals (those that are frenzied or have just broken the water pitcher) and those that reside solely in the realm of imagination. The possibility of dangerous mixtures has been exorcized, heraldry and fable have been relegated to their own exalted peaks: no inconceivable amphibious maidens, no clawed wings, no disgusting, squamous epidermis, none of those polymorphous and demoniacal faces, no creatures breathing fire. The quality of monstrosity here does not affect any real body, nor does it produce modifications of any kind in the bestiary of the imagination; it does not lurk in the depths of any strange power. It would not even be present at all in this classification had it not insinuated itself into the empty space, the interstitial blanks separating all these entities from one another. It is not the "fabulous" animals that are impossible, since they are designated as such, but the narrowness of the distance separating them from (and juxtaposing them to) the stray dogs, or the animals that from a long way off look like flies. What transgresses the boundaries of all imagination, of all possible thought, is simply that alphabetical series (a, b, c, d) which links each of those categories to all the others.

* * *

When we establish a considered classification, when we say that a cat and a dog resemble each other less than two greyhounds do, even if both are tame or embalmed, even if both are frenzied, even if both have just broken the water pitcher, what is the ground on which we are able to establish the validity of this classification with complete certainty? On what "table", according to what grid of identities, similitudes, analogies, have we become accustomed to sort out so many different and similar things? What is this coherence—which, as is immediately apparent, is neither determined by an a priori and necessary concatenation, nor imposed on us by immediately perceptible contents? For it is not a question of linking consequences, but of grouping and isolating, of analyzing, of matching and pigeon-holing concrete contents; there is nothing more tentative, nothing more empirical (superficially, at least) than the process of establishing an order among things; nothing that demands a sharper eye or a surer, better-articulated language; nothing that more insistently requires that one allow oneself to be carried along by the proliferation of qualities and forms. And yet an eye not consciously prepared might well group together certain similar figures and distinguish between others on the basis of such and such a difference: in fact, there is no similitude and no distinction, even for the wholly untrained perception, that is not the result of a precise operation and of the application of a preliminary criterion. A "system of elements"—a definition of the segments by which the resemblances and differences can be shown, the types of variation by which those segments can be affected, and, lastly, the threshold above which there is a difference and below which there is a similitude—is indispensable for the establishment of even the simplest form of order. Order is, at one and the same time, that which is given in things as their inner law, the hidden network that determines the way they confront one another, and also that which has no existence except in the grid created by a glance, an examination, a language; and it is only in the blank spaces of this grid that order manifests itself in depth as though already there, waiting in silence for the moment of its expression.

The fundamental codes of a culture—those governing its language, its schemas of perception, its exchanges, its techniques, its values, the hierarchy of its practices—establish for every man, from the very first, the empirical orders with which he will be dealing and within which he will be at home. At the other extremity of thought, there are the scientific theories or the philosophical interpretations which explain why order exists in general, what universal law it obeys, what principle can account for it, and why this particular order has been established and not some other. But between these two regions, so distant from one another, lies a domain which, even though its role is mainly an intermediary one, is nonetheless fundamental: it is more confused, more obscure, and probably less easy to analyze. It is here that a culture, imperceptibly deviating from the empirical orders prescribed for it by its primary codes, instituting an initial separation from them, causes them to lose their original transparency, relinquishes its immediate and invisible powers, frees itself sufficiently to discover that these orders are perhaps not the only possible ones or the best ones; this culture then finds itself faced with the stark fact that there exists, below the level of its spontaneous orders, things that are in themselves capable of being ordered, that belong to a certain unspoken order; the fact, in short, that order exists. As though emancipating itself to some extent from its linguistic,

perceptual, and practical grids, the culture superimposed on them another kind of grid which neutralized them, which by this superimposition both revealed and excluded them at the same time, so that the culture, by this very process, came face to face with order in its primary state. It is on the basis of this newly perceived order that the codes of language, perception, and practice are criticized and rendered partially invalid. It is on the basis of this order, taken as a firm foundation, that general theories as to the ordering of things, and the interpretation that such an ordering involves, will be constructed. Thus, between the already "encoded" eye and reflexive knowledge there is a middle region which liberates order itself: it is here that it appears, according to the culture and the age in question, continuous and graduated or discontinuous and piecemeal, linked to space or constituted anew at each instant by the driving force of time, related to a series of variables or defined by separate systems of coherences, composed of resemblances which are either successive or corresponding, organized around increasing differences, etc. This middle region, then, in so far as it makes manifest the modes of being of order, can be posited as the most fundamental of all: anterior to words, perceptions, and gestures, which are then taken to be more or less exact, more or less happy, expressions of it (which is why this experience of order in its pure primary state always plays a critical role); more solid, more archaic, less dubious, always more "true" than the theories that attempt to give those expressions explicit form, exhaustive application, or philosophical foundation. Thus, in every culture, between the use of what one might call the ordering codes and reflections upon order itself, there is the pure experience of order and of its modes of being.

The present study is an attempt to analyze that experience. I am concerned to show its developments, since the sixteenth century, in the mainstream of a culture such as ours: in what way, as one traces—against the current, as it were—language as it has been spoken, natural creatures as they have been perceived and grouped together, and exchanges as they have been practiced; in what way, then, our culture has made manifest the existence of order, and how, to the modalities of that order, the exchanges owed their laws, the living beings their constants, the words their sequence and their representative value; what modalities of order have been recognized, posited, linked with space and time, in order to create the positive basis of knowledge as we find it employed in grammar and philology, in natural history and biology, in the study of wealth and political economy. Quite obviously, such an analysis does not belong to the history of ideas or of science: it is rather an inquiry whose aim is to rediscover on what basis knowledge and theory became possible; within what space of order knowledge was constituted; on the basis of what historical a priori, and in the element of what positivity, ideas could appear, sciences be established, experience be reflected in philosophies, rationalities be formed, only, perhaps, to dissolve and vanish soon afterwards. I am not concerned, therefore, to describe the progress of knowledge towards an objectivity in which today's science can finally be recognized; what I am attempting to bring to light is the epistemological field, the episteme in which knowledge, envisaged apart from all criteria having reference to its rational value or to its objective forms, grounds its positivity and thereby manifests a history which is not that of its growing perfection, but rather that of its conditions of possibility; in this account, what should appear are those configurations within the space of knowledge which have given rise to the diverse forms of empirical science. Such an enterprise is not so much a

history, in the traditional meaning of that word, as an "archaeology".

* * *

In this way, analysis has been able to show the coherence that existed, throughout the Classical age, between the theory of representation and the theories of language, of the natural orders, and of wealth and value. It is this configuration that, from the nineteenth century onward, changes entirely; the theory of representation disappears as the universal foundation of all possible orders; language as the spontaneous tabula, the primary grid of things, as an indispensable link between representation and things, is eclipsed in its turn; a profound historicity penetrates into the heart of things, isolates and defines them in their own coherence, imposes upon them the forms of order implied by the continuity of time; the analysis of exchange and money gives way to the study of production, that of the organism takes precedence over the search for taxonomic characteristics, and, above all, language loses its privileged position and becomes, in its turn, a historical form coherent with the density of its own past. But as things become increasingly reflexive, seeking the principle of their intelligibility only in their own development, and abandoning the space of representation, man enters in his turn, and for the first time, the field of Western knowledge. Strangely enough, man — the study of whom is supposed by the naive to be the oldest investigation since Socrates — is probably no more than a kind of rift in the order of things, or, in any case, a configuration whose outlines are determined by the new position he has so recently taken up in the field of knowledge. Whence all the chimeras of the new humanisms, all the facile solutions of an "anthropology" understood as a universal reflection on man, half- empirical, half-philosophical. It is comforting, however, and a source of profound relief to think that man is only a recent invention, a figure not yet two centuries old, a new wrinkle in our knowledge, and that he will disappear again as soon as that knowledge has discovered a new form.

From the Conclusion

One thing in any case is certain: man is neither the oldest nor the most constant problem that has been posed for human knowledge. Taking a relatively short chronological sample within a restricted geographical area - European culture since the sixteenth century - one can be certain that man is a recent invention within it. It is not around him and his secrets that knowledge prowled for so long in the darkness. In fact, among all the mutations that have affected the knowledge of things and their order, the knowledge of identities, differences, characters, equivalences, words - in short, in the midst of all the episodes of that profound history of the Same - only one, that which began a century and a half ago and is now perhaps drawing to a close, has made it possible for the figure of man to appear.

And that appearance was not the liberation of an old anxiety, the transition into luminous consciousness of an age-old concern, the entry into objectivity of something that had long remained trapped within beliefs and philosophies: it was the effect of a change in the fundamental arrangements of knowledge. As the archaeology of our thought easily shows, man is an invention of recent date. And one perhaps nearing its end.

If those arrangements were to disappear as they appeared, if some event of which we can at the moment do no more than sense the possibility—without knowing either what its form will be or what it promises—were to cause them to crumble, as the ground of Classical thought did, at the end of the eighteenth century, then one can certainly wager that man would be erased, like a face drawn in sand at the edge of the sea.

Session 2

II | *"Evolutionary Psychology and the Blank Slate"*

An Interview with Stephen Pinker

If you have studied sociology, the chances are that you have been taught that biology plays little or no part in determining human behavior. For instance, if there is conflict in society, then it is not to be explained in tens of categories which refer to an innate predisposition towards aggression. Rather, it is to be seen as, for example, a function of a disruption in society's normative system, or the result of a fundamental conflict of interest between opposing social groups.

This kind of marginalization of biology is predicated on a particular view of the human mind. The Standard Social Science Model (SSSM), as it has been called by Leda Cosmides and John Too by, holds that the mind has no specific content; it is simply a general purpose machine suited for tasks such as learning and reasoning. Therefore, whatever is found in human minds has come in from the outside-from the environment and the social world. Consequently, if, for example, humans tend to manifest a preference for their in-group, it is because they have learnt that the familiar is good; it is not, for instance, because they have a built-in tendency to favor what they know over what they don't.

However, this model of the mind is falling increasingly into disrepute. The seeds of its current difficulties were sown in the late 1970s with the emergence of sociobiology, which seeks to explain social behavior in terms of its contribution to the Danvinian fitness of the individuals manifesting the behavior. However, whilst sociobiology has ushered thoughts about human nature to center stage, it is evolutionary psychology which poses the biggest challenge to the SSSM. In particular, advocates of evolutionary psychology, such as Steven Pinker, Johnstone Family Professor in the Department of Psychology at Harvard University, argue that the brain is not a general purpose machine, as is supposed by the SSSM, but rather that it comprises a number of functionally distinct parts, which have evolved as solutions to particular problems in our evolutionary past.

What evidence is there, I ask Pinker, for this proposition that the mind is made up of distinct parts?

'The evidence comes from a variety of sources,' he replies. 'For example, the faculty of intuitive psychology is selectively impaired in autistic people. A person with autism will fail a false belief test; that is, they won't make correct predictions about a person who has a belief about the world that differs from their own. However, they pass a false photograph test; that is, they will know that a photograph can have a depiction of reality that is different from their current knowledge. The formal similarity of these tasks suggests that there is a selective

deficit in the ability to conceptualize the content of another person's mind.

'There are other examples of selective impairments. For example, in aphasia, language can be lost while many other aspects of intelligence are spared, including, in some case studies, the ability to solve problems in intuitive psychology such as the false belief task. And there is a genetic disorder called Williams' syndrome which is associated with an inability to conceptualize three-dimensional spatial relationships, but which has far less of an effect on performance in other areas, including language, intuitive psychology and social skills.'

How do people who are committed to the idea that the mind is a general purpose machine respond to this kind of evidence?

'They would have to say that the mind starts out with a uniform architecture, but due to the statistical contingencies of sensory input from the world, the brain dynamically allocates different areas to different tasks,' Pinker replies. 'But the evidence that a gene deficit can affect a person's ability to conceptualize three-dimensional space is hard to reconcile with the idea that the mind is a homogenous structure.

'The general problem is that nobody has come up with an explicit theory explaining how a learning device with no innate structure could accomplish all the things which a functioning human can accomplish. Whenever anybody tries to implement such a device, they end up building in many kinds of innate architecture. The philosopher W. V. O. Quine made the logical point that no learning system can learn without some kind of innate organization, because there are always an infinite number of generalizations that are consistent with any set of observations. Even the arch-empiricist B. F. Skinner had to allow for an innate similarity space in order to explain how animals can generalize from stimuli they have been trained on to those they have not been trained on. Similarity is in the eye of the beholder, so, if nothing else, the organism's similarity metric has to be innate. This logical point must ah,rays come to the forefront when people talk about how cognitive processes work.'

Evolutionary psychology then is committed to the idea that the brain has a heterogeneous, complex: structure. But presumably the idea isn't that there are particular blobs of brain which are identifiable as distinct parts. Rather, we're talking about functionally distinct, rather than physically distinct, parts of the brain.

'That's right,' Pinker confirms. 'The analogy is with organs of the body such as blood or the lymphatic system. These don't have dotted lines around them, with one arrow in and one arrow out. Nonetheless, they have characteristic properties which are in the service of particular biological functions. Even the hard disk of a computer is not cleanly divided up into different programs and files: data can be physically implemented in fragments scattered across the disk. Surely the brain is at least that dynamic. The distribution of its functional parts in space may have little causal significance, except perhaps in terms of the speed of connections. So you wouldn't expect the functional units in the brain to be neatly segregated in space. All the brain has to do is to process the information in the right way via the right interconnectivity in the microcircuitry.'

'Of-course,' he continues, 'the organs of the brain obviously have a physical implementation, and I would expect this to be found when we understand more about how to parse the b.rain along functional lines. It will be to do with circuits, though, not big blobs.'

Perhaps the major challenge which is faced by evolutionary psychology is the need to develop techniques by means of which it is possible to identify what the various organs of the brain—as they are manifest in cognitive abilities, behavioral dispositions, and so on—have evolved to accomplish; and indeed whether, in any particular case, they are adaptations at all. Pinker talks about this as the necessity to engage in 'reverse engineering.' Are there any general principles which will result in this being done well?

'Any function that the system has been designed to implement must have a direct or indirect Darwinian payoff,' he answers. Therefore, good reverse engineering must show that a part of the mind ultimately has the function of promoting reproduction, normally by the means of achieving sub-goals such as staying alive, not falling off cliffs, making friends and influencing people, understanding the world well enough to manipulate it, finding mates, and so on. Moreover, a putative mechanism for achieving these goals must have an engineering design that is capable of achieving that goal in the kind of environment in which humans evolved. It can't rely for its functioning on aspects of the environment which we know are recent-for example, government, written language or modern medicine.'

'Reverse engineering fails when the reverse-engineer fails to come up with an engineering design that accomplishes a particular adaptive outcome,' Pinker says. 'For example, I'm unimpressed by all the adaptationist accounts of music. The evolutionary functions which have been proposed for music beg the question of how they serve the Darwinian goal of increasing the numbers of copies of the putative genes for music. For example, if someone proposes a hypothesis that the function of music is to bring the community together, the problem is to explain why hearing certain acoustic signals, in particular harmonic and rhythmic relations, should bring a group of organisms together. This is as big a mystery as the question of why people listen to music in the first place. Even if group cohesion is a legitimate Darwinian goal of increasing the numbers of copies of the putative genes for music. For example, if someone proposes a hypothesis that the function of music is to bring the community together, the problem is to explain why hearing certain acoustic signals, in particular harmonic and rhythmic relations, should bring a group of organisms together. This is as big a mystery as the question of why people listen to music in the first place. Even if group cohesion is a legitimate Darwinian function, and probably it is, there isn't an independent engineering analysis that leads from the properties of music to group cohesion, unless you already assume that the brain is organized in such a way that certain harmonically and rhythmically organized sounds make people want to bond. But, that, of course, is what we need to explain.'

Pinker's skepticism about adaptive explanations of music is interesting because some critics have suggested that evolutionary psychology is in the business of inventing, *ex nihilo*, 'just-so' stories to explain how any cognitive attribute or behavioral disposition was adaptive in our evolutionary past. More specifically, the argument is that we don't know enough about the

evolutionary past of humans to specify with any kind of certainty the evolutionary pressures that we have faced. Is this then a fair criticism?

'There surely are problems with specific hypotheses and research programmes, but they're not problems in principle for the entire enterprise,' Pinker answers. 'We actually know a lot about the environment in which we evolved, because we know when particular historical developments occurred. For example, we know that 50,000 years ago we didn't have computers, or dishwashers, or written language, or organized cities, or governments, or the rule of law, or modern medicine. Although these are negative statements, they have important implications. For example, the thesis that a taste for revenge is a biological adaptation hinges on the fact that there was no police force or judicial system in our evolutionary past.

'Also, there are certain recurring adaptive problems that all mammals, including humans, face. We know that our ancestors had to attract mates, that they were subject to predation, to parasites, to exposure and to starvation. We know from palaeoanthropology that tools have been part of the human lifestyle for at least two and a half million years; and that meat has been part of the human diet for several million years. So while it is true that we don't know everything, it is just as true that we know a great deal.'

What then is the epistemological status of the more well-established theories or truths of evolutionary psychology? Presumably, we're not ever going to get the kinds of certainty that we get in the hard sciences?

'No, of course not, but that is the wrong comparison,' Pinker replies. 'The temperature at which water boils, for example, is a simple fact about the physical world. But humans are amongst the most complex entities in the Universe, perhaps the most complex, and for things as complex as a human you're not going to get laws which are equivalent to the boiling point. The right comparison is not between evolutionary psychology and physics. It's between evolutionary psychology and non-evolutionary psychology.'

* * *

The view which holds that genetic and evolutionary approaches have no significant part to play in explanations of human behavior is nearly always associated with the idea that the mind is a 'blank slate'; that is, with the idea that the specific content of the mind comes in from the outside. However, it is very difficult to see how this view can be reconciled with, for example, the systematic differences in sexual behavior which exist between men and women. The evidence shows that across cultures: men tend to want more partners than women; women place more importance on men's financial status than vice versa; men are more concerned with good looks than women; women are more worried about loss of commitment than men; and so on. How can a blank slate view even get started in explaining this kind of thing?

'It is difficult, and in the end I don't think that it can be done,' replies Pinker. 'If you believe that everybody's slate is blank, then by definition the slates of men and women must be the same. Any differences between men and women would have to be caused by factors outside the mind; for example, by the way that boys and girls are brought up, or the way that men and women are rewarded for their behavior.

'There are then just two main options to explain a systematic sex difference. The first invokes historical accident: perhaps all human cultures are connected to some prehistoric culture which just happened to have that sex difference. The second invokes the constraints that are exerted on the problem space by other causes, which lead to sex differences as an outcome. For example, if men have all the economic power in all societies, then women will value status and earning power in a mate because it is the only means available for them to gain wealth. This is a reasonable hypothesis, which has to be tested. One test is to see whether women's desire for high-status, wealthy partners is lessened in societies where they are wealthier than men. The answer is that it is not. Another test is to see whether in our society, wealthier women have less of a desire for high-status, wealthy partners than less wealthy women. And again, the answer is that they do not.

In *The Blank Slate*, Pinker argues that one fear associated with biological explanations of mind and behavior is that if it is shown that there are innate differences between particular groups of people-as, for example, in the case of these sex differences -then, more likely than not, the result will be discrimination and oppression. Is this fear justified!

'One political reassurance of the doctrine of the blank slate comes from the mathematical fact that zero equals zero; if we're all blank slates, we must be equal,' he replies. 'It doesn't follow, though, that if we're not blank slates then there will be significant differences, for example, among ethnic groups, or between sexes. But, as we have seen in the case of women and men, it is certainly possible. The response to this possibility is that we can't legislate empirical facts on the basis of what is morally most comforting. Rather, we have to ground our moral convictions on arguments based on identified values. One value holds that individuals should be treated on the basis of his or her merits; that we should not prejudge people because of their ethnicity or sex. Given that value, we can uphold policies of non-discrimination and equality of opportunity regardless of what the facts turn out to be about the average traits of particular groups. We choose to set aside certain actuarial statistics in making decisions about individuals.'

Presumably if we deal with the possibility that particular groups have different average traits by simply denying that it is possible, then if it turns out at some future point that the evidence for the proposition is undeniable, we're in trouble, because there is no further position that we could occupy.

'Absolutely,' agrees Pinker. 'If important moral values hinge on empirical dogma, then you make these values hostages to fortune; the possibility exists that future discoveries might make them obsolete. One needs a firmer foundation than empirical dogma to condemn things which obviously should be condemned.'

* * *

Is the issue then of free will and moral responsibility more difficult to think through than the worry about innate traits and oppression?

'There may be a component of the problem of consciousness, and a component of the problem of free will, which will never be solved. I suspect that they are not scientific, but rather conceptual, problems. I am in sympathy with people who say that science should ignore the unsolvable aspects of these problems. Nonetheless, being humans, having the minds that we have, there will always be an itch that we cannot scratch. Is a person really blameworthy if there is no contingency of responsibility which will deter him, and hence is blame pointless? Why does it feel like something to have neurons firing in particular parts of the brain in particular patterns? Scientists say it just does. The curious intellect will say, I'm not satisfied. I won't be surprised if this discrepancy is permanent.'

An interesting aside to all this talk about moral responsibility, deterrability and the necessity of punishment is the fact that advocates of the blank slate—and perhaps this is part of its attraction—are required to claim that there is nothing malign in any aspect of the nature of human beings. ls this an idea backed up by the evidence?

'Absolutely not,' insists Pinker. 'First, violence is a human universal, including murder, rape, grievous bodily harm and. theft. It is found in all cultures. Also, contrary to the belief of many intellectuals, the best ethnographic accounts show that the highest rates of violence are found in pre-state, foraging societies. Rates of homicide and death by warfare in these societies are, by orders of magnitude, higher than in the modem West.

'Even in Western societies, a majority of people harbor violent fantasies about people they don't like, though of course most never act on them. Also, violence appears early in the life of a child—the majority of 2-year-olds kick, bite and scratch. Violence is also common among chimpanzees, our close evolutionary cousins. When you put all this together, it suggests that at least the urge to violence, if not necessarily violence itself, is part of our nature. It's a desire that is present in most people and a behavior option which we take up easily.'

So from Pinker's point of view the utopian dream that we might one day achieve a society characterized by spontaneous cooperation and an absence of violent tendencies is unrealistic?

'Yes, I think you could say that,' he laughs. 'You have to buy into the myth of the noble savage to believe it is possible, and I don't.'

Despite the advances in biological explanations of human behavior, Pinker has argued that it is possible that some things are beyond our ability to sort out properly. The hard problem of

consciousness -how it is that the activity of the brain is accompanied by an inner feel - is, as he has mentioned, one of these things.

'I don't see this possibility as imposing limitations on the science of consciousness; he tells me. Admittedly, a lot of scientists bristle at the idea; they think it is an attempt to wall off some scientific problem by saying that it is futile to study it. But we can learn an enormous amount about the so-called "easy problem" of consciousness, namely the distinction between conscious and unconscious information processing in the brain; and what we can't learn about may not be within the realm of science at all, since it may not have objective empirical consequences. We may simply be bothered by a deep dissatisfaction that we can formulate certain problems without solving them.'

If we were a different kind of being, might we then have a better handle on the problem of consciousness?

'That's an important but almost perversely unanswerable question,' he replies. 'But I suspect we would. There is every reason to believe that certain patterns of neural activity are necessary and sufficient for subjective experience. We just don't know how to bridge the gap. Why should firing neurons feel like something? Firing neurons do feel like something. I know that they do, because I am feeling something right now. But we have no way to bridge that gap. The fact that we are so confident that it is true, yet the problem seems so intractable, suggests that the difficulty lies in the way that the human mind conceptualizes the whole problem.'

The term sociobiology was coined by the naturalist Ed Wilson. He now says that the controversy over sociobiology and evolutionary psychology is largely dying out. Is this a view which Pinker shares?

'No,' he replies, 'I am less optimistic. What has changed is that the blank slate is no longer an unquestioned dogma, and theories which invoke human nature are no longer taboo. For example, it is not considered politically retrograde and morally suspect to investigate whether sex differences or individual differences have genetic causes. Nonetheless, there are still many people who treat the idea of human nature with fear and loathing.'

Session 2

III | *Subjectivity and the Irreducible in the Human Being*

Karol Wojtyla

4. THE NECESSITY OF PAUSING AT THE IRREDUCIBLE

In order to interpret the human being in the context of lived experience, the aspect of *consciousness* must be introduced into the analysis of human existence. The human being is then given to us not merely as a being defined according to species, but as a concrete self, a self-experiencing subject. Our own subjective being and the existence proper to it (that of a *suppositum)* appear to us in experience precisely as a self-experiencing subject. If we pause here, this being discloses the structures that determine it as a concrete self. The disclosure of these structures constituting the human self need in no way signify a break with reduction and the species definition of the human being— rather, it signifies the kind of methodological operation that may be described as *pausing at the irreducible.* We should pause in the process of reduction, which leads us in the direction of understanding the human being in the world (a *cosmological* type of understanding), in order to understand the human being inwardly. This latter type of understanding may be called *personalistic.* The personalistic type of understanding the human being is not the antinomy of the cosmological type but its complement. As I mentioned earlier, the definition of the person formulated by Boethius only marks out the "metaphysical terrain" for interpreting the personal subjectivity of the human being.

The experience of the human being cannot be derived by way of cosmological reduction; we must pause at the irreducible, at that which is unique and unrepeatable in each human being, by virtue of which he or she is not just *a particular human being—an* individual of a certain species—but *a personal subject.* Only then do we get a true and complete picture of the human being. We cannot complete this picture through reduction alone; we also cannot remain within the framework of the irreducible alone (for then we would be unable to get beyond the pure self). The one must be cognitively supplemented with the other. Nevertheless, given the variety of circumstances of the real existence of human beings, we must always leave the greater space in this cognitive effort for the irreducible; we must, as it were, give the irreducible the upper hand when thinking about the human being, both in theory and in practice. For the irreducible also refers to everything in the human being that is invisible and wholly internal and whereby each human being, myself included, is an "eyewitness" of his or her own self—of his or her own humanity and person.

My lived experience discloses not only my *actions* but also my inner *happenings* in their profoundest dependence on my own self. It also discloses my whole personal structure of *self-determination,* in which I discover myself as that through which I possess myself and govern

myself—or, at any rate, *should* possess myself and govern myself. The dynamic structure of self-determination reveals to me that I am given to myself and assigned to myself. This is precisely how I appear to myself in my acts and in my inner decisions of conscience: as permanently assigned to myself, as having continually to affirm and monitor myself, and thus, in a sense, as having continually to "achieve" this dynamic structure of my self, a structure that is given to me as self-possession and self-governance. At the same time, this is a completely internal and totally immanent structure. It is a real endowment of the personal subject; in a sense, it *is* this subject. *In my lived experience of self-possession and self-governance, I experience that I am a person and that I am a subject.*

Session 2

IV | Genesis 2:4-25

What is the human being? This question is posed to every generation and to each individual human being, for in contrast to the animals our life is not simply laid out for us in advance. What it means for us to be human beings is for each one of us a task and an appeal to our freedom. We must each search into our human-beingness afresh and decide who or what we want to be as humans. In our own lives each one of us must answer, whether he or she wants to or not, the question about being human.
What is the human being? The biblical account of creation means to give some orientation in the mysterious region of human-beingness. It means to help us appreciate the human person as God's project and ro help us formulate the new and creative answer that God expects from each one of us.

4 In the day that the LORD God made the earth and the heavens, **5** when no plant of the field was yet in the earth and no herb of the field had yet sprung up—for the LORD God had not caused it to rain upon the earth, and there was no one to till the ground; **6** but a stream would rise from the earth, and water the whole face of the ground— **7** then the LORD God formed man from the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and the man became a living being.

8 And the LORD God planted a garden in Eden, in the east; and there he put the man whom he had formed. **9** Out of the ground the LORD God made to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight and good for food, the tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

10 A river flows out of Eden to water the garden, and from there it divides and becomes four branches. **11** The name of the first is Pishon; it is the one that flows around the whole land of Havilah, where there is gold; **12** and the gold of that land is good; bdellium and onyx stone are there. **13** The name of the second river is Gihon; it is the one that flows around the whole land of Cush. **14** The name of the third river is Tigris, which flows east of Assyria. And the fourth river is the Euphrates.

15 The LORD God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to till it and keep it. **16** And the LORD God commanded the man, "You may freely eat of every tree of the garden; **17** but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall die."

18 Then the LORD God said, "It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a helper as his partner." **19** So out of the ground the LORD God formed every animal of the field and every bird of the air, and brought them to the man to see what he would call them; and whatever the man called every living creature, that was its name. **20** The man gave names to all cattle, and to the birds of the air, and to every animal of the field; but for the man here was not found a helper as his partner. **21** So the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and he slept; then he took one of his ribs and closed up its place with flesh. **22** And

the rib that the LORD God had taken from the man he made into a woman and brought her to the man. **23** Then the man said,

"This at last is bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh;
this one shall be called Woman,
for out of Man this one was taken."

24 Therefore a man leaves his father and his mother and clings to his wife, and they become one flesh. **25** And the man and his wife were both naked, and were not ashamed.

Session 2

V | *The Creation of the Human Being*

Joseph Ratzinger

The Human Being - Taken from the Earth

What does this account say? We are told that God formed the man of dust from the ground. There is here something at once humbling and consoling. Something humbling because we are told: You are not God, you did not make yourself, and you do not rule the universe; you are limited. You are a being destined for death, as are all things living; you are only earth. But something consoling too, because we are also told: The human being is not a demon or an evil spirit, as it might occasionally appear. The human being has not been formed from negative forces, but has been fashioned from God's good earth. Behind this glimmers something deeper yet, for we are told that all human beings are earth. Despite every distinction that culture and history have brought about, it is still true that we are, in the last resort, the same. The medieval notion characterized in the dance of death that arose during the horrible experience of the black plague, which threatened everyone at the time, was in fact already expressed in this account: Emperor and beg-gar, master and slave are all ultimately one and the same person, taken from the same earth and destined to return to the same earth. Throughout all the highs and lows of history the human being stays the same - earth, formed from earth, and destined to return to it.

Thus the unity of the whole human race becomes immediately apparent. We are all only from *one*. There are not different kinds of "blood and soil," to use a Nazi slogan. There are not fundamentally different kinds of human beings, as the myths of numerous religions used to say and as some worldviews of our own day also assert. There are not different categories and races in which human beings are valued differently. We are all one humanity, formed from God's one earth. It is precisely this thought that is at the very heart of the creation account and of the whole Bible. In the face of all human division and human arro-gance, whereby one person sets himself or herself over and against another, humanity is declared to be one creation of God from his one earth. What is said at the beginning is then repeated after the Flood: in the great genealogy of Genesis ro the same thought reappears—-namely, that there is only one humanity in the many human beings. The Bible says a decisive "no" to all racism and to every human division.

Image of God

But in order for the human being to exist there must be a second element as well. The basic material is earth; from this the human being comes into existence after God has breathed his breath into the nostrils of the body that was formed from it. The divine reality really enters in here. The first creation account, which we considered in our previous meditations, says the

same thing by way of another and more deeply reflective image. It says that the human being is created in God's image and likeness (Gen. 1:26-27). In the human being heaven and earth touch one another. In the human being God enters into his creation; the human being is directly related to God. The human being is called by him. God's words in the Old Testament are valid for every individual human being: "I call you by name and you are mine." Each human being is known by God and loved by him. Each is willed by God, and each is God's image. Precisely in this consists the deeper and greater unity of humankind—that each of us, each individual human being, realizes the *one* project of God and has his or her origin in the same creative idea of God. Hence the Bible says that whoever violates a human being violates God's property (Gen. 9:5). Human life stands under God's special protection, because each human being, however wretched or exalted he or she may be, however sick or suffering, however good-for-nothing or important, whether born or unborn, whether incurably ill or radiant with health–each one bears God's breath in himself or herself, each one is God's image. This is the deepest reason for the inviolability of human dignity, and upon it is founded ultimately every civilization. When the human person is no longer seen as standing under God's protection and bearing God's breath, then the human being begins to be viewed in utilitarian fashion. It is then that the barbarity appears that tramples upon human dignity. And vice versa: When this is seen, then a high degree of spirituality and morality is plainly evident.

The fate of all of us depends on whether this moral dignity of the human person can be defended in the world of technology, with all its possibilities. For here a particular temptation exists for our technical scientific age. The tech-nical and scientific attitude has produced a particular kind of certitude - namely, that which can be corroborated by way of experiment and mathematical formula. This has given humankind a certain freedom from anxiety and su-perstition, a certain power over the world. But now there is a temptation to view as reasonable and therefore as serious only what can be corroborated through experiment and computation. This means that the moral and the holy no longer count for anything. They are considered to belong to the domain of what must be transcended, of the ir-rational. But whenever the human being does this, whenever we base ethics on physics, we extinguish what is particularly human, and we no longer liberate the human being but crush him or her. We must ourselves recognize what Kant recognized and knew perfectly well—that there are two kinds of reason, as he says: a theoretical and a practical reason. We may call them the physical-natural scientific and the moral-religious reason. It is improper to refer to the moral reason as gross unreason and superstition simply because its contours and the scope of its knowledge are not mathematical. It is in fact the more fundamental of the two reasons, and it alone can preserve the human dimensions of both the natural sciences and technology and also prevent them from destroying humankind. Kant spoke of a preeminence of the practical over the theoretical reason and of the fact that what is more important, more profound, and more determinative is recognized by the moral reason of the human being in his moral freedom. For it is there, we must add, that we image God and there that we are more than "earth."

Let us take this further. The essence of an image consists in the fact that it represents something. When I see it I recognize, for example, the person whom it repre-sents, or the landscape, or whatever. It points to something beyond itself. Thus the property of an image is not to be merely what it itself is—for example, oil, canvas, and frame. Its nature as an image has to do with the fact that it goes beyond itself and that it manifests something that it itself is

not. Thus the image of God means, first of all, that human beings cannot be closed in on themselves. Human beings who attempt this betray themselves. To be the image of God implies relationality. It is the dynamic that sets the human being in motion toward the totally Other. Hence it means the capacity for relationship; it is the human capacity for God. Human beings are, as a consequence, most profoundly human sequence, most profoundly human when they step out of themselves and become capable of addressing God on fa-miliar terms. Indeed, to the question as to what distinguishes the human being from an animal, the answer has to be that they are the beings that God made capable of thinking and praying. They are most profoundly themselves when they discover their relation to their Creator. Therefore the image of God also means that human persons are beings of word and of love, beings moving toward Another, oriented to giving themselves to the Other and only truly receiving themselves back in real self-giving.

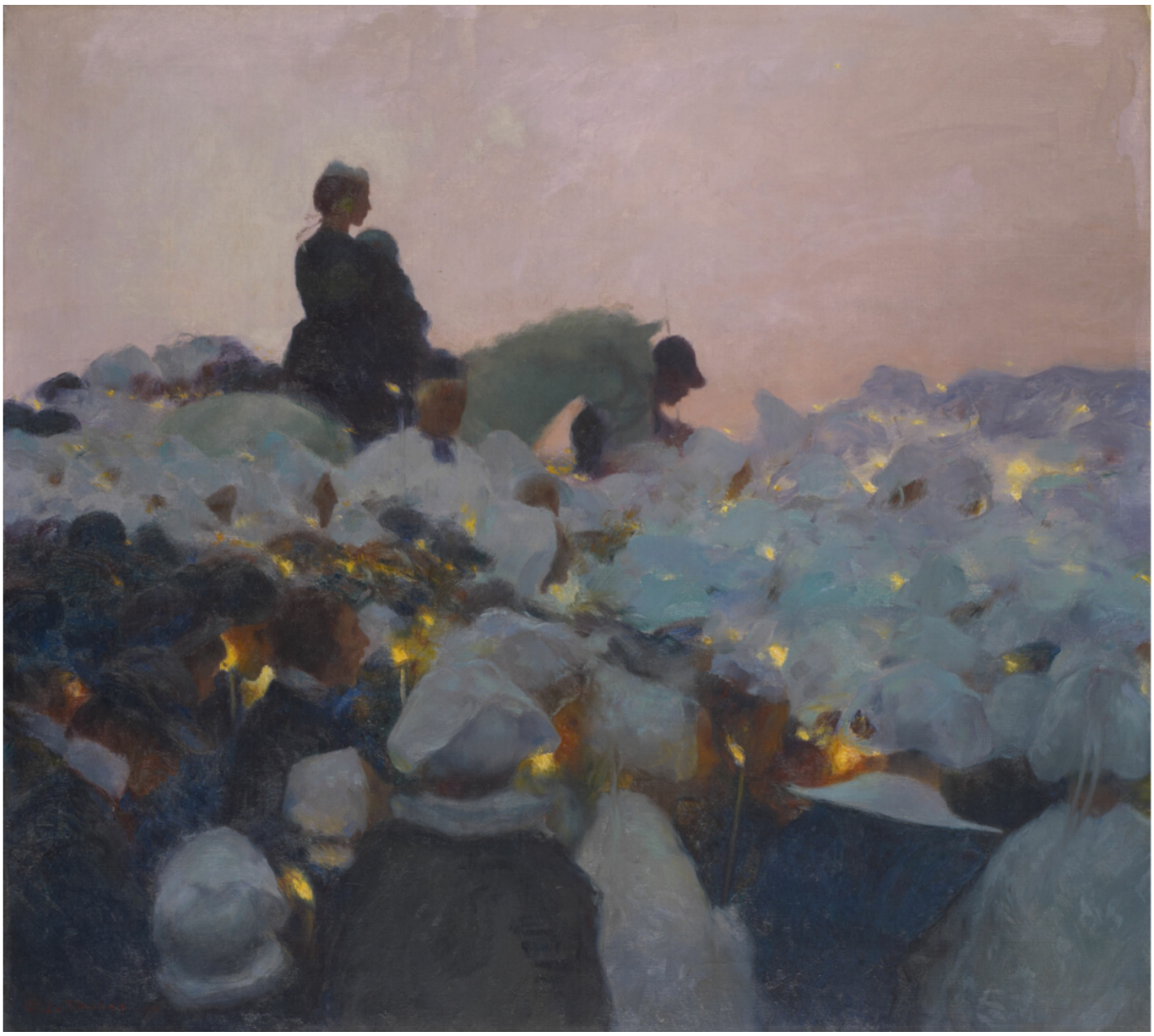
Holy Scripture enables us to go a still further step if we again follow our basic rule—namely, that we must read the Old and New Testaments together and that only in the New is the deepest meaning of the Old to be found. In the New Testament Christ is referred to as the second Adam, as the definitive Adam, and as the image of God (1 Corinthians 15:44-48; Colossians 1:15). This means that in him alone appears the complete answer to the question about what the human being is. In him alone appears the deepest meaning of what is for the present a rough draft. He is the definitive human being, and creation is, as it were, a preliminary sketch that points to him. Thus we can say that human persons are the beings who can be Jesus Christ's brothers or sisters. Human beings are the creatures that can be one with Christ and thereby be one with God himself. Hence this relationship of creature to Christ, of the first to the second Adam, signifies that human persons are beings *en route*, beings characterized by transition. They are not yet themselves; they must ultimately become themselves. Here in the midst of our thoughts on creation there suddenly appears the Easter mystery, the mystery of the grain of wheat that has died. Human beings must die with Christ like a grain of wheat in order to truly rise, to stand erect, to be themselves (John 12:24). Human persons are not to be understood merely from the perspective of their past histories or from that isolated moment that we refer to as the present. They are oriented toward their future, and only it permits who they really are completely (1 John 3:2). We must always see in other human beings persons with whom we shall one day share God's joy. We must look upon them as persons who are called, together with us, to be members of the Body of Christ, with whom we shall one day sit at table with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and with Christ himself, as their brothers and sisters, as the brothers and sisters of Christ, as the children of God.

"Pilgrims are we all"

Journeying, Seeking, Striving

- *We often speak of life as a journey, or say that what matters in life is the journey, not the destination. What difference does it make to think of life as a pilgrimage?*
- *How do the motivations and activity of a pilgrim differ from those of a tourist?*
- *What is the relationship between the Here and There? Between daily, ordinary living and the eternal for which we seek?*

"You move us to delight in praising You; for You have made us for Yourself, and our hearts are restless until they rest in You." (Augustine, *Confessions* 1.1)



Session 3

I | *Psalm 121*

1
A song of ascents.
I raise my eyes toward the mountains.
From whence shall come my help?
2
My help comes from the Lord,
the maker of heaven and earth.
3
He will not allow your foot to slip;
or your guardian to sleep.
4
Behold, the guardian of Israel
never slumbers nor sleeps.
5
The Lord is your guardian;
the Lord is your shade
at your right hand.
6
By day the sun will not strike you,
nor the moon by night.
7
The Lord will guard you from all evil;
he will guard your soul.
8
The Lord will guard your coming and going
both now and forever.

Session 3

II | *Pilgrim's Song (Wallfahrtslied),* 1984

Arvo Pärt

After reading Psalm 121, listen to Arvo Pärt's *Pilgrim's Prayer/Song (Wallfahrtslied).* Here are some words of introduction written by Arvo Pärt, the composer:

When my friend Grigori Kromanov, the Estonian film and stage director, died in July 1984, it was like a bolt from the blue. Suddenly an invisible rift had opened up between us – with me still on the side of time and him already in the sphere of timelessness.

My Pilgrims" Song is an attempt to overcome this insurmountable gap through a gentle touch, a greeting. I wanted the two worlds, Here and There, to merge in the music, as contrasting layers – that was the origin of the work.

On the one side, there is the dynamism and mobility of the orchestra – and on the other, the static quality of the men"s voices, reduced to a single pitch, with the serenity of a mountain.
I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills…

Arvo Pärt

Take a listen here: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XImcfKFYlVQ.

Session 3

III | "Migrant, Tourist, Pilgrim, Monk: Mobility and Identity in a Global Age"

William Cavanaugh

Images of mobility dominate the literature on globalization. William Greider, for example, depicts globalization as a constantly accelerating machine that reaps as it destroys, trampling down fences and ignoring familiar boundaries. No one is at the wheel; in fact there is no wheel, no steering mechanism at all. Greider also likens globalization to a storm, a whirlwind that has blown all previously stable order, borders, and identities out of place.1 For the last few centuries, the world has been carved up into clearly bordered nation-states, and the nation has been the primary source of identity. What happens now that national identities are being shaken by the storm? In the new mobility, will there emerge a new cosmopolitan global identity that transcends our old divisions? How is the church affected, and how should Christians respond to the disorder of the new world order?

I address these questions first by examining the status of borders in a global age, and then by addressing the question of mobility. I undertake the latter task by examining mobility of three kinds: migrant, tourist, and pilgrim. The migrant and the tourist represent two kinds of mobility typical of a globalized world. The pilgrim represents a type of mobility long venerated in the Christian tradition. Finally, I turn from mobility to examine a type of stability, that of the monk. I suggest that the figures of the pilgrim and the monk together are important resources for a Christian response to globalization.

…

Does the Christian tradition have resources for addressing the problems of identity in the dynamic of globalism? I believe that the figure of the pilgrim is a good place to start looking. Here we find a model of mobility that is not dependent on an imperial gaze.

Tourism has precursors in medieval pilgrimage, but there are significant differences between the two. Although the motives for both tourist and pilgrim may be seen in the search for transformation of the self, medieval pilgrimage was situated in a system of penitence largely absent from the modern world. The primary motive of pilgrimage was transformation of the self through the forgiveness of sin. This transformation of the self was not self-transformation, as such, because it responded to a discipline that had its source outside the self: God. Pilgrims traveled to obtain indulgences and to complete penances that had been assigned them, meaning that pilgrimages were not always voluntary and self-initiated. Indeed, in contrast to tourists, pilgrims did not travel to assert their freedom from necessity, but to respond to the necessity of their destiny in God. Humility, therefore, was the essential virtue of the pilgrim. Pilgrimage was a kenotic movement, a stripping away of the external sources of stability in

one's life. The pilgrim's way was the way of the cross: "If any want to become my followers, let them deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me" (Mk 8:34). The journey required a disorientation from the trappings of one's quotidian identity, in order to respond to a call from the source of one's deeper identity.

The modalities of pilgrimage and tourism also differ. Pilgrims generally traveled on foot. The journey was often arduous, not an exercise in leisure, and the perils of the journey were often considered part of corporal penance. Pilgrimage was not a for-profit industry, and was available to all members of society, including the poor. A network of sanctuaries, hospices, and monasteries supported pilgrims with acts of charity and hospitality. Finally, medieval pilgrimage was a communal journey. Pilgrimage was a social event, during which many of the ordinary rules of hierarchy and social structure were suspended.

The above account is not meant to idealize medieval pilgrimage. The point is not that medieval pilgrims were necessarily more authentic and more spiritually sincere than modern tourists. The point is rather that medieval pilgrims were enmeshed in a communal system of penitence and brought a common framework to their travels. In modernity the only common framework is the search for difference. As Luigi Tomasi points out, there were plenty of pilgrims decried as inauthentic in the medieval period, those who went for base motives or those who went as proxies for someone else. What is significant, however, is the way that judgments about what defined authenticity differed from such judgments in our time.

The most significant such difference in judgment is that regarding the status of center and periphery, or identity and difference. As Erik Cohen points out, the pilgrim moves toward the center of her world, the tourist toward the periphery. The pilgrim moves toward the source of order and blessing in her world, toward God, as mediated through particular holy places (usually made so by contact with particular holy persons or their material relics). The tourist, by contrast, desires to escape her world, to remove herself from modern civilization in order to seek authenticity in difference, in the novel and the exotic. For this reason, pilgrims welcome other pilgrims, but tourists regard other tourists with disdain. For the pilgrim, the presence of other pilgrims at a site attests to its authenticity; the more pilgrims, the more powerful a shrine. For the tourist, the presence of other tourists at a site detracts from its authenticity. The tourist seeks to gain authenticity through contrast with others. The more tourists crowd a location, the less likely is one to encounter authentic otherness—hence the need for the tourist to find ever more peripheral places to encounter difference. The presence of pilgrims hallows a particular place; the presence of tourists hollows it out. The vacation vacates particular locations, so the tourist must constantly be on the move, seeking out the unspoiled, only to spoil it with her presence.

As I am using them here, both "tourist" and "pilgrim" are ideal types. Actual people do not fall neatly into one category or the other. Nor does the pilgrim/tourist binary map onto the religious/secular binary. There is a burgeoning literature on "religious tourism," and other types of journey not associated with Christianity or any "traditional religion"—to Elvis Presley's Graceland or to Ground Zero in Manhattan, for example—are treated as pilgrimage. It is not my purpose here to explore all the different types of what is called "pilgrimage." Other traditions have practices of pilgrimage, and other traditions have valuable contributions

to make to- ward responding positively to the challenges of globalization. Here I am capable only of briefly exploring some positive Christian contributions. I am particularly interested in exploring how the history of pilgrimage in Christianity can provide clues for how the church is to live in a globalized world. There can be no direct application of medieval modalities of pilgrimage to the contemporary context, since most of the social conditions under which medieval pilgrimage flourished have vanished. Christendom is long gone, replaced by a world that values plurality above all. The church itself now finds itself located not at the center of culture but on the periphery, both within the West—where church attendance and Constantinian arrangements decline—and in the world at large, where the church's center of gravity is increasingly located in the South, at the periphery of the world market. If the church can practice pilgrimage today, it will be in a very different context.

To embrace the identity of pilgrim now is first of all to embrace a certain type of mobility in the context of globalization. The church has been unmoored and should joyfully take leave of the settledness of Constantinian social arrangements that gave it privilege and power. To accept our status as pilgrims on our way back to God is, as Augustine saw, to accept the provisional nature of human government. Our status as pilgrims makes clear that our primary identity is not that defined for us by national borders. The pilgrim seeks to transgress all artificial borders that impede the quest for communion with God and with other people.

Loyalty to the nation-state is not eclipsed by a simple cosmopolitanism, however, for like the migrant and unlike the tourist, the pilgrim travels on foot and does not enjoy a commanding view of the globe from above. Humility is the key virtue of the pilgrim. A church that desires to be a pilgrim does not claim the power to treat every location as interchangeable and impose global solutions on the world. Pilgrimage is a kenotic movement. The church on the periphery finds itself in solidarity with the migrant and other liminal peoples. The pilgrim church is itself a liminal reality, occupying the border between heaven and earth. The term peregrinus from which "pilgrim" is derived recognizes this liminal status; the meaning of the term in Latin includes foreigner, wanderer, exile, alien, traveler, new- comer, and stranger.36 Like the Israelites whose care for the alien and poor was motivated by remembrance of their own slavery and wandering (e.g., Deut 10:17–19, 24:17–22), the pilgrim church is to find its identity in solidarity with the migrant who travels from necessity, not from a desire to transcend all necessity.

The pilgrim does not constantly seek difference for its own sake but moves toward a center, which, for the Christian pilgrim, is communion with God. The pilgrim therefore rejoices when others join with him on pilgrim- age, because communion with God is also communion with other persons, each made in the image of God. Though globalism seeks to bring the world together into one global village and celebrate the differences of all, in fact neither union nor difference has been achieved. Globalism has tended to reinforce divisive borders, especially that between the developed and the undeveloped. The cosmopolitan gaze of the tourist seeks to connect with others but ends up vacating their otherness and thus destroys the connection. The pilgrim, on the other hand, sees all as potential brothers and sisters on a common journey to God. The pilgrim preserves otherness precisely by not seeking otherness for its own sake, but by moving toward a common center to which an infinite variety of itineraries is possible. If God, the Wholly Other, is at the center, and not the great Western Ego, then there can be

room for genuine otherness among human beings. The pilgrim church is therefore able simultaneously to announce and dramatize the full universality of communion with God, a truly global vision of reconciliation of all people, without thereby evacuating difference.

As the work of John Zizioulas has so fruitfully emphasized, the source for Christian exploration of communion and otherness is the doctrine of the Trinity, in which otherness is constitutive of unity, not a threat to unity. The tourist is restless because her identity depends not only on seeking difference but also on differentiating herself from others. The other is ultimately a threat, and so the tourist must constantly depart from others. According to Zizioulas, the Other in patristic thought is conceived of as "ever-moving rest" (aeikinetos statis) which does not negate particularity in moving from one particular to another:

Movement and rest are not contradictory, because the otherness of the Other is not threatened but confirmed through relationship and communion: every "other," in moving to and relating with another "other", confirms the particularity of the "other", thus granting it a specific identity, an ontological "rest." In this movement, the ultimate destination of otherness is the Other par excellence, who affirms the particularity of every "other" and in whom, in this way, all particulars find their ontological affirmation (rest) as "other".

Such a rest in movement can only be affirmed in the context of a telos, an eschatological movement of the pilgrim toward the One who calls him home. The tourist, though, perpetually seeks escape; freedom can only mean autonomy. In the Christian tradition, freedom consists in responding to a call to relation with God and other human persons. The doctrine of creation means that humans are constituted ontologically by a call from the Other. This means that human life has a history, and that history has a goal. The pilgrim does not seek escape, but moves toward a center, heaven, a future in communion with God and others. At the same time, this goal does not negate otherness. The movement toward the future is not a rupture or leaving behind of the past, for in an eschatological ontology, as Zizioulas points out, every "old" receives its significance from the "new." Otherness, therefore, coincides with communion.

Session 3

IV | *A Prayer,* 1922

A Poem by Claude McKay

'Mid the discordant noises of the day I hear thee calling;
I stumble as I fare along Earth's way; keep me from falling.

Mine eyes are open but they cannot see for gloom of night:
I can no more than lift my heart to thee for inward light.

The wild and fiery passion of my youth consumes my soul;
In agony I turn to thee for truth and self-control.

For Passion and all the pleasures it can give will die the death;
But this of me eternally must live, thy borrowed breath.

'Mid the discordant noises of the day I hear thee calling;
I stumble as I fare along Earth's way; keep me from falling.

Session 3

V | Excerpt from the *Dialogue*

Catherine of Siena (1347-1380)

THE BRIDGE

26

Then God eternal, to stir up even more that soul's love for the salvation of souls, responded to her:

Before I show you what I want to show you, and what you asked to see, I want to describe the bridge for you.[1] I have told you that it stretches from heaven to earth by reason of my having joined myself with your humanity, which I formed from the earth's clay.

This bridge, my only-begotten Son, has three stairs. Two of them he built on the wood of the most holy cross, and the third even as he tasted the great bitterness of the gall and vinegar they gave him to drink. You will recognize in these three stairs three spiritual stages.

The first stair is the feet, which symbolize the affections. For just as the feet carry the body, the affections carry the soul. My Son's nailed feet are a stair by which you can climb to his side, where you will see revealed his inmost heart.[2] For when the soul has climbed up on the feet of affection and looked with her mind's eye into my Son's opened heart, she begins to feel the love of her own heart in his consummate and unspeakable love. (I say consummate because it is not for his own good that he loves you; you cannot do him any good, since he is one with me.) Then the soul, seeing how tremendously she is loved, is herself filled to overflowing with love. So, having climbed the second stair, she reaches the third. This is his mouth, where she finds peace from the terrible war she has had to wage because of her sins.

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1. The basic image of the bridge may well be drawn from Gregory the Great, but Catherine builds it up with a wealth of detail apparently original to her. She may have had in mind a bridge such as that she had seen spanning the River Arno in Florence, a walled bridge complete with shops along its sides.

2. Cf. A.M. Walz, "Il segreto del cuore di Criso nella spiritualità cateriniana," *Studii domenicani* (Rome, 1939).

At the first stair, lifting the feet of her affections from the earth, she stripped herself of sin. At the second she dressed herself in love for virtue. And at the third she tasted peace.

So the bridge has three stairs, and you can reach the last by climbing the first two. The last stair is so high that the flooding waters cannot strike it—for the venom of sin never touched my Son.[3]

But though this bridge has been raised so high, it still is joined to the earth. Do you know when it was raised up? When my Son was lifted up on the wood of the most holy cross he did not cut off his divinity from the lowly earth of your humanity. So though he was raised so high he was not raised off the earth. In fact, his divinity is kneaded into the clay of your humanity like one bread. Nor could anyone walk on that bridge until my Son was raised up. This is why he said, "If I am lifted up high I will draw everything to myself."[4]

When my goodness saw that you could be drawn in no other way, I sent him to be lifted onto the wood of the cross. I made of that cross an anvil where this child of humankind could be hammered into an instrument to release humankind from death and restore it to the life of grace. In this way he drew everything to himself: for he proved his unspeakable love, and the human heart is always drawn by love. He could not have shown you greater love than by giving his life for you.[5] You can hardly resist being drawn by love, then, unless you foolishly refuse to be drawn.

I said that, having been raised up, he would draw everything to himself. This is true in two ways: First, the human heart is drawn by love, as I said, and with all its powers: memory, understanding, and will. If these three powers are harmoniously united in my name, everything else you do, in fact or in intention, will be drawn to union with me in peace through the movement of love, because all will be lifted up in the pursuit of crucified love. So my Truth indeed spoke truly when he said, "If I am lifted up high, I will draw everything to myself." For everything you do will be drawn to him when he draws your heart and its powers.

What he said is true also in the sense that everything was created for your use, to serve your needs. But you who have the gift of reason were made not for youselves but for me, to serve me with all your

3. Cf. 1 Jn. 3:5.
4. Jn. 12:32.
5. Jn. 15:13.

heart and all your love. So when you are drawn to me, everything is drawn with you, because everything was made for you.

It was necessary, then, that this bridge be raised high. And it had to have stairs so that you would be able to mount it more easily.

Session 3

VI | *On Pilgrimage,* 1897-1980

A Diary Excerpt from Dorothy Day

It is never too late to begin. It is never too late to turn over a new leaf. In spite of the atom bomb, the jet plane, the conflict with Russia, ten just men may still save the city.

Maybe if we keep on writing and talking, there will be other conversions like Mr. Hyde's. It was reading an article that got Father Damien his helper Brother Joseph, at Molokai. It was reading that converted St. Augustine. So we will keep on writing.

And talking, too. They always said in England that the Distributists did nothing but talk. But one needs to talk to convey ideas. St. Paul talked so much and so long that in the crowded room one young lad, sitting on the windowsill, fell out of the window and was killed like a woman down the street from us, last week. Only she was not listening to the word of God but washing windows on a Sunday morning. And it was sad that there was no St. Paul to bring her to life. Her life finished there. But we are still alive, though we live in a city of ten million, and one can scarcely call it life, and the papers every day carry news of new weapons of death.

However, we are still here. We are still marrying and having children, and having to feed them and house them and clothe them. We don't want them to grow up and say, "This city is such hell that perhaps war will be preferable. This working in a laundry, a brass factory, the kitchen of a restaurant, is hell on earth. At least war will teach me new trades, which the public school system has failed to do. This coming home at night to a four-room or a two-room tenement flat and a wife and three children with whooping cough (there are usually not more than three children in the city) is also hell." And what can be done about it? We are taught to suffer, to embrace the cross. On the other hand, St. Catherine said, "All the way to heaven is heaven, because He said, 'I am the Way.'" And He was a carpenter and wandered the roadsides of Palestine and lived in the fields and plucked the grain to eat on a Sunday as He wandered with His disciples.

‘Discerning the Good on the Journey’

- *Are there any universal moral laws? If so, how are they discovered?*
- *How can belief in the natural law be reconciled with the existence of widespread moral disagreement?*
- *How should we live together in a morally pluralistic society?*

Session 4

I | Right and Wrong as a Clue to the Meaning of the Universe, *Mere Christianity,* 1952

C.S. Lewis

1. The Law Of Human Nature

Everyone has heard people quarrelling. Sometimes it sounds funny and sometimes it sounds merely unpleasant; but however it sounds, I believe we can learn something very important from listening to the kind of things they say. They say things like this: "How'd you like it if anyone did the same to you?"—"That's my seat, I was there first"—"Leave him alone, he isn't doing you any harm"— "Why should you shove in first?"—"Give me a bit of your orange, I gave you a bit of mine"—"Come on, you promised." People say things like that every day, educated people as well as uneducated, and children as well as grown-ups.

Now what interests me about all these remarks is that the man who makes them is not merely saying that the other man's behaviour does not happen to please him. He is appealing to some kind of standard of behaviour which he expects the other man to know about. And the other man very seldom replies: "To hell with your standard." Nearly always he tries to make out that what he has been doing does not really go against the standard, or that if it does there is some special excuse. He pretends there is some special reason in this particular case why the person who took the seat first should not keep it, or that things were quite different when he was given the bit of orange, or that something has turned up which lets him off keeping his promise.

It looks, in fact, very much as if both parties had in mind some kind of Law or Rule of fair play or decent behaviour or morality or whatever you like to call it, about which they really agreed. And they have. If they had not, they might, of course, fight like animals, but they could not quarrel in the human sense of the word. Quarrelling means trying to show that the other man is in the wrong. And there would be no sense in trying to do that unless you and he had some sort of agreement as to what Right and Wrong are; just as there would be no sense in saying that a footballer had committed a foul unless there was some agreement about the rules of football.

Now this Law or Rule about Right and Wrong used to be called the Law of Nature. Nowadays, when we talk of the "laws of nature" we usually mean things like gravitation, or heredity, or the laws of chemistry. But when the older thinkers called the Law of Right and Wrong "the Law of Nature," they really meant the Law of Human Nature. The idea was that, just as all bodies are governed by the law of gravitation and organisms by biological laws, so the creature called man also had his law—with this great difference, that a body could not choose whether it obeyed the law of gravitation or not, but a man could choose either to obey the Law of Human Nature

or to disobey it.

We may put this in another way. Each man is at every moment subjected to several different sets of law but there is only one of these which he is free to disobey. As a body, he is subjected to gravitation and cannot disobey it; if you leave him unsupported in mid-air, he has no more choice about falling than a stone has. As an organism, he is subjected to various biological laws which he cannot disobey any more than an animal can. That is, he cannot disobey those laws which he shares with other things; but the law which is peculiar to his human nature, the law he does not share with animals or vegetables or inorganic things, is the one he can disobey if he chooses.

This law was called the Law of Nature because people thought that everyone knew it by nature and did not need to be taught it. They did not mean, of course, that you might not find an odd individual here and there who did not know it, just as you find a few people who are colour-blind or have no ear for a tune. But taking the race as a whole, they thought that the human idea of decent behaviour was obvious to everyone. And I believe they were right. If they were not, then all the things we said about the war were nonsense. What was the sense in saying the enemy were in the wrong unless Right is a real thing which the Nazis at bottom knew as well as we did and ought to have practised? If they had had no notion of what we mean by right, then, though we might still have had to fight them, we could no more have blamed them for that than for the colour of their hair.

I know that some people say the idea of a Law of Nature or decent behaviour known to all men is unsound, because different civilisations and different ages have had quite different moralities.

But this is not true. There have been differences between their moralities, but these have never amounted to anything like a total difference. If anyone will take the trouble to compare the moral teaching of, say, the ancient Egyptians, Babylonians, Hindus, Chinese, Greeks and Romans, what will really strike him will be how very like they are to each other and to our own. Some of the evidence for this I have put together in the appendix of another book called The Abolition of Man; but for our present purpose I need only ask the reader to think what a totally different morality would mean. Think of a country where people were admired for running away in battle, or where a man felt proud of double- crossing all the people who had been kindest to him.

You might just as well try to imagine a country where two and two made five. Men have differed as regards what people you ought to be unselfish to—whether it was only your own family, or your fellow countrymen, or everyone. But they have always agreed that you ought not to put yourself first. Selfishness has never been admired. Men have differed as to whether you should have one wife or four. But they have always agreed that you must not simply have any woman you liked.

But the most remarkable thing is this. Whenever you find a man who says he does not believe in a real Right and Wrong, you will find the same man going back on this a moment later. He may break his promise to you, but if you try breaking one to him he will be complaining "It's

not fair" before you can say Jack Robinson. A nation may say treaties do not matter, but then, next minute, they spoil their case by saying that the particular treaty they want to break was an unfair one. But if treaties do not matter, and if there is no such thing as Right and Wrong— in other words, if there is no Law of Nature—what is the difference between a fair treaty and an unfair one? Have they not let the cat out of the bag and shown that, whatever they say, they really know the Law of Nature just like anyone else?

It seems, then, we are forced to believe in a real Right and Wrong. People may be sometimes mistaken about them, just as people sometimes get their sums wrong; but they are not a matter of mere taste and opinion any more than the multiplication table. Now if we are agreed about that, I go on to my next point, which is this. None of us are really keeping the Law of Nature. If there are any exceptions among you, I apologise to them. They had much better read some other work, for nothing I am going to say concerns them. And now, turning to the ordinary human beings who are left:

I hope you will not misunderstand what I am going to say. I am not preaching, and Heaven knows I do not pretend to be better than anyone else. I am only trying to call attention to a fact; the fact that this year, or this month, or, more likely, this very day, we have failed to practise ourselves the kind of behaviour we expect from other people. There may be all sorts of excuses for us. That time you were so unfair to the children was when you were very tired. That slightly shady business about the money—the one you have almost forgotten—came when you were very hard up. And what you promised to do for old So-and-so and have never done—well, you never would have promised if you had known how frightfully busy you were going to be.

And as for your behaviour to your wife (or husband) or sister (or brother) if I knew how irritating they could be, I would not wonder at it—and who the dickens am I, anyway? I am just the same.

That is to say, I do not succeed in keeping the Law of Nature very well, and the moment anyone tells me I am not keeping it, there starts up in my mind a string of excuses as long as your arm. The question at the moment is not whether they are good excuses. The point is that they are one more proof of how deeply, whether we like it or not, we believe in the Law of Nature. If we do not believe in decent behaviour, why should we be so anxious to make excuses for not having behaved decently? The truth is, we believe in decency so much—we feel the Rule or Law pressing on us so— that we cannot bear to face the fact that we are breaking it, and consequently we try to shift the responsibility. For you notice that it is only for our bad behaviour that we find all these explanations.

It is only our bad temper that we put down to being tired or worried or hungry; we put our good temper down to ourselves. These, then, are the two points I wanted to make. First, that human beings, all over the earth, have this curious idea that they ought to behave in a certain way, and cannot really get rid of it. Secondly, that they do not in fact behave in that way.

They know the Law of Nature; they break it. These two facts are the foundation of all clear thinking about ourselves and the universe we live in.

Session 4

II | Selections from the *Summa Theologiae* on the natural law

St. Thomas Aquinas

Law is nothing other than a certain dictate of practical reason on the part of a ruler who governs some complete community. But once we assume that the world is governed by divine providence, it is obvious that the entire community of the universe is governed by divine reason. Therefore, the very nature of the governance of things that exists in God as the ruler of the universe has the character of law. And since, as Proverbs 8:23 puts it, God's reason does not conceive of anything temporally but instead has an eternal conception, it follows that a law of this kind must be called eternal law.

… Since law is a rule and a measure, there are two senses in which it can exist in something: first, in the sense of existing in that which regulates and measures and, second, in the sense of existing in that which is regulated and measured. For a thing is measured and regulated to the extent that it has some participation in the rule and measure. So since, as is clear from what was said above, all the things subject to divine providence are regulated and measured by eternal law, it is clear that all things in some way participate in eternal law. More precisely, because eternal law is imprinted on them, they have inclinations toward their own proper acts and ends.

Now among all creatures, the rational creature is subject to divine providence in a more excellent manner, because he himself participates in providence, providing for himself and for others. Hence, in him, too, there is a participation in eternal reason through which he has a natural inclination to his due act and end. And the rational creature's mode of participation in the eternal law is called natural law.

… The first principle in practical reasoning is what is founded on the notion good, which is the notion: *The good is what all things desire*. Therefore, the first precept of law is that good ought to be done and pursued and that evil ought to be avoided. And all the other precepts of the law of nature are founded upon this principle—so that, namely, all the things to be done or avoided that practical reason naturally apprehends as human goods are such that they belong to the precepts of the law of nature. For since what is good has the character of an end and what is bad has the character of the contrary of an end, it follows that all the things man has a natural inclination toward are such that (a) reason naturally apprehends them as goods and thus as things that ought to be pursued by action and (b) reason naturally apprehends their contraries as evils and thus things that ought to be avoided.

Therefore, there is an ordering of the precepts of the natural law that corresponds to the

ordering of the natural inclinations.

First, man has an inclination toward the good with respect to the nature he shares in common with all substances, viz., insofar as every substance strives for the conservation of its own being in accord with its own nature. And what belongs to the natural law in light of this inclination is everything through which man's life is conserved or through which what is contrary to the preservation of his life is thwarted.

Second, man has an inclination toward certain more specific goods with respect to the nature that he shares in common with the other animals. Accordingly, those things are said to belong to the natural law which nature teaches all the animals, i.e., the union of male and female, the education of offspring, etc.

Third, man has an inclination toward the good with respect to the rational nature that is proper to him; for instance, man has a natural inclination toward knowing the truth about God and toward living in society. Accordingly, those things that are related to this sort of inclination belong to the natural law, e.g., that a man avoid ignorance, that he not offend the others with whom he has to live in community, and other such things related to this inclination.

… The natural law contains in the first place certain very general precepts that are known to everyone, but it also contains certain secondary, and more particular, precepts that are like conclusions lying in the neighborhood of the principles.

Thus, as far as the universal principles are concerned, the natural law cannot in any way be erased entirely from the hearts of men. However, it is erased with respect to particular actions insofar as reason is impeded from applying a universal principle to a particular action because of sensual desire or some other passion, as was explained above.

However, as far as the other, i.e., secondary, precepts are concerned, the natural law can be erased from the hearts of men, either because of bad arguments, in the same way that errors occur in speculative matters with respect to necessary conclusions, or because of depraved customs and corrupt habits—in the way that, as the Apostle points out in Romans 1:24, theft or even vices contrary to nature are not thought of as sins by some people.

Session 4

III | "A Disquieting Suggestion" (from *After Virtue*)

Alasdair MacIntyre

Imagine that the natural sciences were to suffer the effects of a catastrophe. A series of environmental disasters are blamed by the general public on the scientists. Widespread riots occur, laboratories are burnt down, physicists are lynched, books and instruments are destroyed. Finally a Know-Nothing political movement takes power and successfully abolishes science teaching in schools and universities, imprisoning and executing the remaining scientists. Later still there is a reaction against this destructive movement and enlightened people seek to revive science, although they have largely forgotten what it was. But all that they possess are fragments: a knowledge of experiments detached from any knowledge of the theoretical context which gave them significance; parts of theories unrelated either to the other bits and pieces of theory which they possess or to experiment; instruments whose use has been forgotten; half-chapters from books, single pages from articles, not always fully legible because torn and charred. Nonetheless all these fragments are reembodied in a set of practices which go under the revived names of physics, chemistry and biology. Adults argue with each other about the respective merits of relativity theory, evolutionary theory and phlogiston theory, although they possess only a very partial knowledge of each. Children learn by heart the surviving portions of the periodic table and recite as incantations some of the theorems of Euclid. Nobody, or almost nobody, realizes that what they are doing is not natural science in any proper sense at all. For everything that they do and say conforms to certain canons of consistency and coherence and those contexts which would be needed to make sense of what they are doing have been lost, perhaps irretrievably.

In such a culture men would use expressions such as 'neutrino', 'mass', 'specific gravity', 'atomic weight' in systematic and often interrelated ways which would resemble in lesser or greater degrees the ways in which such expressions had been used in earlier times before scientific knowledge had been so largely lost. But many of the beliefs presupposed by the use of these expressions would have been lost and there would appear to be an element of arbitrariness and even of choice in their application which would appear very surprising to us. What would appear to be rival and competing premises for which no further argument could be given would abound. Subjectivist theories of science would appear and would be criticized by those who held that the notion of truth embodied in what they took to be science was incompatible with subjectivism.

This imaginary possible world is very like one that some science fiction writers have constructed. We may describe it as a world in which the language of natural science, or parts of it at least, continues to be used but is in a grave state of disorder. We may notice that if in this

imaginary world analytical philosophy were to flourish, it would never reveal the fact of this disorder. For the techniques of analytical philosophy are essentially descriptive and descriptive of the language of the present at that. The analytical philosopher would be able to elucidate the conceptual structures of what was taken to be scientific thinking and discourse in the imaginary world in precisely the way that he elucidates the conceptual structures of natural science as it is.

What is the point of constructing this imaginary world inhabited by fictitious pseudo-scientists and real, genuine philosophy? The hypothesis which I wish to advance is that in the actual world which we inhabit the language of morality is in the same state of grave disorder as the language of natural science in the imaginary world which I described. What we possess, if this view is true, are the fragments of a conceptual scheme, parts which now lack those contexts from which their significance derived. We possess indeed simulacra of morality, we continue to use many of the key expressions. But we have — very largely, if not entirely — lost our comprehension, both theoretical and practical, of morality.

But how could this be so? The impulse to reject the whole suggestion out of hand will certainly be very strong. Our capacity to use moral language, to be guided by moral reasoning, to define our transactions with others in moral terms is so central to our view of ourselves that even to envisage the possibility of our radical incapacity in these respects is to ask for a shift in our view of what we are and do which is going to be difficult to achieve. But we do already know two things about the hypothesis which are initially important for us if we are to achieve such a shift in viewpoint. One is that philosophical analysis will not help us. In the real world the dominant philosophies of the present, analytical or phenomenological, will be as powerless to detect the disorders of moral thought and practice as they were impotent before the disorders of science in the imaginary world. Yet the powerlessness of this kind of philosophy does not leave us quite resourceless. For a prerequisite for understanding the present disordered state of the imaginary world was to understand its history, a history that had to be written in three distinct stages. The first stage was that in which the natural sciences flourished, the second that in which they suffered catastrophe and the third that in which they were restored but in damaged and disordered form. Notice that this history, being one of decline and fall, is informed by standards. It is not an evaluatively neutral chronicle. The form of the narrative, the division into stages, presuppose standards of achievement and failure, of order and disorder. It is what Hegel called philosophical history and what Collingwood took all successful historical writing to be. So that if we are to look for resources to investigate the hypothesis about morality which I have suggested, however bizarre and improbable it may appear to you now, we shall have to ask whether we can find in the type of philosophy and history propounded by writers such as Hegel and Collingwood — very different from each other as they are, of course — resources which we cannot find in analytical or phenomenological philosophy.

But this suggestion immediately brings to mind a crucial difficulty for my hypothesis. For one objection to the view of the imaginary world which I constructed, let alone to my view of the real world, is that the inhabitants of the imaginary world reached a point where they no longer realized the nature of the catastrophe which they had suffered. Yet surely an event of such striking world historical dimensions could not have been lost from view, so that it was both erased from memory and unrecoverable from historical records? And surely what holds of the

fictitious world holds even more strongly of our own real world? If a catastrophe sufficient to throw the language and practice of morality into grave disorder had occurred, surely we should all know about it. It would indeed be one of the central facts of our history. Yet our history lies open to view, so it will be said, and no record of any such catastrophe survives. So my hypothesis must simply be abandoned. To this I must at the very least concede that it will have to be expanded, yet unfortunately at the outset expanded in such a way as to render it, if possible, initially even less credible than before. For the catastrophe will have to have been of such a kind that it was not and has not been — except perhaps by a very few — recognized as a catastrophe. We shall have to look not for a few brief striking events whose character is incontestably clear, but for a much longer, more complex and less easily identified process and probably one which by its very nature is open to rival interpretation. Yet the initial implausibility of this part of the hypothesis may perhaps be slightly lessened by another suggestion.

History by now in our culture means academic history, and academic history is less than two centuries old. Suppose it were the case that the catastrophe of which my hypothesis speaks had occurred before, or largely before, the founding of academic history, so that the moral and other evaluative presuppositions of academic history derived from the forms of the disorder which it brought about. Suppose, that is, that the standpoint of academic history is such that from its value-neutral viewpoint moral disorder must remain largely invisible. All that the historian — and what is true of the historian is characteristically true also of the social scientist — will be allowed to perceive by the canons and categories of his discipline will be one morality succeeding another: seventeenth-century Puritanism, eighteenth-century hedonism, the Victorian work-ethic and so on, but the very language of order and disorder will not be available to him. If this were to be so, it would at least explain why what I take to be the real world and its fate has remained unrecognized by the academic curriculum. For the forms of the academic curriculum would turn out to be among the symptoms of the disaster whose occurrence the curriculum does not acknowledge. Most academic history and sociology — the history of a Namier or a Hofstadter and the sociology of a Merton or a Lipset — are after all as far away from the historical standpoint of Hegel and Collinwood as most academic philosophy is from their philosophical perspective.

It may seem to many readers that as I have elaborated my initial hypothesis I have step by step deprived myself of very nearly all possible argumentative allies. But is not just this required by the hypothesis itself? For if the hypothesis is true, it will necessarily appear implausible, since one way of stating part of the hypothesis is precisely to assert that we are in a condition which almost nobody recognizes and which perhaps nobody at all can recognize fully. If my hypothesis appeared initially plausible, it would certainly be false. And at least if even to entertain this hypothesis puts me into an antagonistic stance, it is a very different antagonistic stance from that of, for example, modern radicalism. For the modern radical is as confident in the moral expression of his stances and consequently in the assertive uses of the rhetoric of morality as any conservative has ever been. Whatever else he denounces in our culture he is certain that it still possesses the moral resources which he requires in order to denounce it. Everything else may be, in his eyes, in disorder; but the language of morality is in order, just as it is. That he too may be being betrayed by the very language he uses is not a thought available to him. It is the aim of this book to make that thought available to radicals, liberals and

conservatives alike. I cannot however expect to make it palatable; for if it is true, we are all already in a state so disastrous that there are no large remedies for it.

Do not however suppose that the conclusion to be drawn will turn out to be one of despair. Angst is an intermittently fashionable emotion and the misreading of some existentialist texts has turned despair itself into a kind of psychological nostrum. But if we are indeed in as bad a state as I take us to be, pessimism too will turn out to be one more cultural luxury that we shall have to dispense with in order to survive in these hard times.

I cannot of course deny, indeed my thesis entails, that the language and the appearances of morality persist even though the integral substance of morality has to a large degree been fragmented and then in part destroyed. Because of this there is no inconsistency in my speaking, as I shall shortly do, of contemporary moral attitudes and arguments. I merely pay to the present the courtesy of using its own vocabulary to speak of it.

Session 4

IV | Excerpt from *Evangelium Vitae* on civil and moral law

John Paul II

In the democratic culture of our time it is commonly held that the legal system of any society should limit itself to taking account of and accepting the convictions of the majority. It should therefore be based solely upon what the majority itself considers moral and actually practices. Furthermore, if it is believed that an objective truth shared by all is de facto unattainable, then respect for the freedom of the citizens-who in a democratic system are considered the true rulers-would require that on the legislative level the autonomy of individual consciences be acknowledged. Consequently, when establishing those norms which are absolutely necessary for social coexistence, the only determining factor should be the will of the majority, whatever this may be. Hence every politician, in his or her activity, should clearly separate the realm of private conscience from that of public conduct.

As a result we have what appear to be two diametrically opposed tendencies. On the one hand, individuals claim for themselves in the moral sphere the most complete freedom of choice and demand that the State should not adopt or impose any ethical position but limit itself to guaranteeing maximum space for the freedom of each individual, with the sole limitation of not infringing on the freedom and rights of any other citizen. On the other hand, it is held that, in the exercise of public and professional duties, respect for other people's freedom of choice requires that each one should set aside his or her own convictions in order to satisfy every demand of the citizens which is recognized and guaranteed by law; in carrying out one's duties the only moral criterion should be what is laid down by the law itself. Individual responsibility is thus turned over to the civil law, with a renouncing of personal conscience, at least in the public sphere.

At the basis of all these tendencies lies the ethical relativism which characterizes much of present-day culture. There are those who consider such relativism an essential condition of democracy, inasmuch as it alone is held to guarantee tolerance, mutual respect between people and acceptance of the decisions of the majority, whereas moral norms considered to be objective and binding are held to lead to authoritarianism and intolerance.

But it is precisely the issue of respect for life which shows what misunderstandings and contradictions, accompanied by terrible practical consequences, are concealed in this position. It is true that history has known cases where crimes have been committed in the name of "truth."

But equally grave crimes and radical denials of freedom have also been committed and are still being committed in the name of "ethical relativism". When a parliamentary or social majority

decrees that it is legal, at least under certain conditions, to kill unborn human life, is it not really making a "tyrannical" decision with regard to the weakest and most defenceless of human beings? Everyone's conscience rightly rejects those crimes against humanity of which our century has had such sad experience. But would these crimes cease to be crimes if, instead of being committed by unscrupulous tyrants, they were legitimated by popular consensus?

Democracy cannot be idolized to the point of making it a substitute for morality or a panacea for immorality. Fundamentally, democracy is a "system" and as such is a means and not an end. Its "moral" value is not automatic, but depends on conformity to the moral law to which it, like every other form of human behaviour, must be subject: in other words, its morality depends on the morality of the ends which it pursues and of the means which it employs. If today we see an almost universal consensus with regard to the value of democracy, this is to be considered a positive "sign of the times", as the Church's Magisterium has frequently noted. But the value of democracy stands or falls with the values which it embodies and promotes. Of course, values such as the dignity of every human person, respect for inviolable and inalienable human rights, and the adoption of the "common good" as the end and criterion regulating political life are certainly fundamental and not to be ignored.

The basis of these values cannot be provisional and changeable "majority" opinions, but only the acknowledgment of an objective moral law which, as the "natural law" written in the human heart, is the obligatory point of reference for civil law itself. If, as a result of a tragic obscuring of the collective conscience, an attitude of scepticism were to succeed in bringing into question even the fundamental principles of the moral law, the democratic system itself would be shaken in its foundations, and would be reduced to a mere mechanism for regulating different and opposing interests on a purely empirical basis.

Some might think that even this function, in the absence of anything better, should be valued for the sake of peace in society. While one acknowledges some element of truth in this point of view, it is easy to see that without an objective moral grounding not even democracy is capable of ensuring a stable peace, especially since peace which is not built upon the values of the dignity of every individual and of solidarity between all people frequently proves to be illusory. Even in participatory systems of government, the regulation of interests often occurs to the advantage of the most powerful, since they are the ones most capable of manoeuvering not only the levers of power but also of shaping the formation of consensus. In such a situation, democracy easily becomes an empty word.

"Happiness, Friendship, and the Good Life"

- *How does Christian beatitude differ from happiness as we commonly understand it?*
- *In what ways does our contemporary way of life help or hinder us from pursuing friendship with God?*
- *How does the promise of eternal life deepen our encounter with people in this life and shape our understanding of morality?*

Session 5

I | The Beatitudes (Matthew 5:1-12)

[1] Now when Jesus saw the crowds, he went up on a mountainside and sat down. His
disciples came to him, [2] and he began to teach them.

He said:

[3] "Blessed are the poor in spirit,
for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.
[4] Blessed are those who mourn,
for they will be comforted.
[5] Blessed are the meek,
for they will inherit the earth.
[6] Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness,
for they will be filled.
[7] Blessed are the merciful,
for they will be shown mercy.
[8] Blessed are the pure in heart,
for they will see God.
[9] Blessed are the peacemakers,
for they will be called children of God.
[10] Blessed are those who are persecuted because of righteousness,
for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

[11] "Blessed are you when people insult you, persecute you and falsely say all kinds of evil
against you because of me. [12] Rejoice and be glad, because great is your reward in heaven, for
in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you.

Session 5

II | Commentary on the Beatitudes (from *Jesus of Nazareth*)

Joseph Ratzinger

The Beatitudes are not infrequently presented as the New Testament's counterpart to the Ten Commandments, as an example of the Christian ethics that is supposedly superior to the commands of the Old Testament. This approach totally misconstrues these words of Jesus. Jesus always presupposed the validity of the Ten Commandments as a matter of course (see, for example, Mk 10:19; Lk 16:17). In the Sermon on the Mount, he recapitulates and gives added depth to the commandments of the second tablet, but he does not abolish them (cf. Mt 5:21-48). To do so would in any case diametrically contradict the fundamental principle underpinning his discussion of the Ten Commandments: "Think not that I have come to abolish the Law and the Prophets; I have come not to abolish them but to fulfill them. For truly, I say to you, till heaven and earth pass away, not an iota, not a dot, will pass from the Law until all is accomplished" (Mt 5:17-18). This statement, which only *appears* to contradict the teaching of Saint Paul, will require further discussion after our examination of the dialogue between Jesus and the rabbi. For the time being, it suffices to note that Jesus has no intention of abrogating the Ten Commandments. On the contrary, he reinforces them.

But what are the Beatitudes? First of all, they are situated within a long tradition of Old Testament teachings, such as we find in Psalm 1 and in the parallel text at Jeremiah 17:7-8: Blessed is the man who trusts in the Lord. These are words of promise. At the same time, though, they are criteria for the discernment of spirits and so they prove to be directions for finding the right path. The setting in which Luke frames the Sermon on the Mount clarifies to whom the Beatitudes of Jesus are addressed: "He lifted up his eyes on his disciples." The individual Beatitudes are the fruit of this looking upon the disciples; they describe what might be called the actual condition of Jesus' disciples. They *are* poor, hungry, weeping men; they *are* hated and persecuted (cf. Lk 6:20ff.). These statements are meant to list practical, but also theological, attributes of the disciples of Jesus—of those who have set out to follow Jesus and have become his family.

Yet the menacing empirical situation in which Jesus sees his followers becomes a promise when his looking upon them is illuminated in the light of the Father. The Beatitudes, spoken with the community of Jesus' disciples in view, are paradoxes—the standards of the world are turned upside down as soon as things are seen in the right perspective, which is to say, in terms of God's values, so different from those of the world. It is precisely those who are poor in worldly terms, those thought of as lost souls, who are the truly fortunate ones, the blessed who have every reason to rejoice and exult in the midst of their sufferings. The Beatitudes are

promises respondent with the new image of the world and of man inaugurated by Jesus, his "transformation of values." They are eschatological promises. This must not, however, be taken to mean that the joy they proclaim is postponed until some infinitely remote future or applies exclusively to the next world. When man begins to see and to live form God's perspective, when he is a companion on Jesus' way, then he lives by new standards, and something of the *eschaton*, of the reality to come, is already present. Jesus brings joy into the midst of affliction.

The paradoxes that Jesus presents in the Beatitudes express the believer's true situation in the world in similar terms to those repeatedly used by Paul to describe his experience of living and suffering as an Apostle: "We are treated as impostors, and yet are true; as unknown, and yet well known; as dying, and behold we live; as punished, and yet not killed; as sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; as poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, and yet possessing everything (2 Cor 6:8-10). "We are afflicted in every way, but not crushed; perplexed, but not driven to despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed" (2 Cor 4:8-9). What the Beatitudes in Luke's Gospel present as a consolation and a promise, Paul presents as the lived experience of the apostle. He considers that he has been made "last of all," a man under a death sentence, a spectacle to the world, homeless, calumniated, despised (cf. 1 Cor 4:9-13). And yet he experiences a boundless joy. As the one who has been handed over, who has given himself away in order to bring Christ to men, he experiences the interconnectedness of Cross and Resurrection: We are handed over to death "so that the life of Jesus may be manifested in our mortal flesh" (2 Cor 4:11). In his messengers Christ himself still suffers, still hangs on the Cross. And yet he is risen, irrevocably risen. Although Jesus' messenger in this world is still living the story of Jesus' suffering, the splendor of the Resurrection shine through, and it brings a joy, a "blessedness," greater than the happiness he could formerly have experienced on worldly paths. It is only now that he realizes what real "happiness," what true "blessedness" is, and, in so doing, notices the paltriness of what by conventional standards must be considered satisfaction and happiness.

The paradoxes that Saint Paul experienced in his life, which correspond to the paradoxes of the Beatitudes, thus display the same thing that John expresses in yet another way when he calls the Lord's Cross and "exaltation," an elevation to God's throne on high. John brings Cross and Resurrection, Cross and exaltation together in a single word, because for him the one is in fact inseparable from the other. The Cross is the act of the "exodus," the act of love that is accomplished to the uttermost and reaches "to the end" (Jn 13:1). And so it is the place of glory—the place of true contact and union with God, who is love (cf. 1 Jn 4:7, 16). This Johannine vision, then, is the *ne plus ultra* in concentrating the paradoxes of the Beatitudes and bringing them within reach of our understanding.

This reflection upon Paul and John has shown us two things. First, the Beatitudes express the meaning of discipleship. They become more concrete and real the more completely the disciple dedicatees himself to service in the way that is illustrated for us in the life of Saint Paul. What the Beatitudes mean cannot be expressed in purely theoretical terms; it is proclaimed in the life and suffering, and in the mysterious joy, of the disciple who gives himself over completely to following the Lord. This leads to the second point: the Christological character of the Beatitudes. The disciple is bound to the mystery of Christ. His life is immersed in communion

with Christ: "It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me" (Gal 2:20). The Beatitudes are the transposition of Cross and Resurrection into discipleship. But they apply to the disciple because they were first paradigmatically lived by Christ himself.

This becomes even more evident if we turn now to consider Matthew's version of the Beatitudes (cf. Mt 5:3-12). Anyone who reads Matthew's text attentively will realize that the Beatitudes present a sort of veiled interior biography of Jesus, a kind of portrait of his figure. He who has no place to lay his head (cf. Mt 8:20) is truly poor; he who can say, "come to me … for I am meek and lowly in heart" (cf. Mt 11:28-29) is truly meek; he is the one who is pure of heart and so unceasingly beholds God. He is the peacemaker, he is the one who suffers for God's sake. The Beatitudes display the mystery of Christ himself, and they call us into communion with him. But precisely because of their hidden Christological character, the Beatitudes are also a road map for the Church, which recognizes in them the model of what she herself should be. They are directions for discipleship, directions that concern every individual, even though—according to the variety of callings—they do so differently for each person.

Session 5

III | Charity as Friendship with God, *Summa Theologiae* II-II Q. 23, A. 1 Thomas Aquinas

John 15:15 - "I no longer call you servants, but my friends."

According to the Philosopher in Book 8 of the *Nicomachean Ethics*, not every sort of love has the character of friendship; rather, friendship is a love that exists with benevolence—more specifically, when we love someone in such a way as to will the good for him. By contrast, if we do not will the good for what we love, but instead will for ourselves the very good that belongs to them, then this is a love of concupiscence and not a love of friendship. For it is ridiculous to claim that someone has friendship with wine or friendship with a horse.

However, benevolence is not sufficient for the character of friendship; instead, a certain mutual loving is required, since friendship is between friend and friend.

Now this sort of mutual benevolence is founded upon something shared in common. Therefore, since man shares something in common with God insofar as God communicates His own beatitude to us, it must be the case that some sort of friendship is founded upon this sharing. 1 Corinthians 1:9 says of this sharing, "... the faithful God, by whom you have been called into the fellowship of His Son." But the sort of love built on this sharing is charity. Hence, it is clear that charity is a certain sort of friendship of man with God.

Session 5

IV | "An Itinerary of Hope: Called to a Magnanimous Way of Life", 2016

Paul Wadell

One of the biggest misconceptions about vocation is that the discovery of one's vocation is a momentary happening, an instant epiphany, or a lightning bolt that illuminates the rest of our life's path. The discovery of our vocation is, rather, a process, a journey. There may be significant, discrete moments of clarity along the way, but there is always more to be discovered and discerned. On the vocational journey we never "arrive." We are always "arriving."

Consider, for example, a vocation that all college students share: the calling to study and learn. This would seem easy enough for those who are engaged, inquisitive, able, diligent, and confident. But a semester is a long time; if the student struggles with the material of a course, does poorly on an exam, or wrestles with indifference, a once-stalwart confidence can diminish day by day. Discouragement, illness, or a family tragedy can imperil the goal of successfully completing a semester, as can a professor with high expectations or a text that seems impossible to read. Overcoming these obstacles requires courage, along with patience, perseverance, and hope-and perhaps even a certain boldness of spirit. Armed with such character traits, the disconsolate student in a stormy semester, has a much better chance of finishing the course successfully.

This example can be easily extended because, as we observe throughout this book, college students explore and discern their callings both in and out of the classroom; moreover, they face a wide range of new challenges as they do so. They meet people whose background, viewpoints, and experiences are very different from their own; they negotiate the diverse and sometimes conflicting responsibilities that accompany emerging adulthood; and they often experience loss, disappointment, and abandonment, even among those on whose support they thought they could safely rely. In the midst of such challenges and potential obstacles, persevering in one's calling will require a whole range of virtues: hospitality and humility, practical wisdom and self-control, loyalty and kindness and generosity. A life of virtue is a life well-equipped to keep taking the next step in an adventurous journey-recognizing that it is unscripted and unpredictable, and thus remaining open to surprises and to new possibilities.

The shape of a magnanimous life

A vocation entails making ourselves available to something good. It reminds us that to be

human is to want our lives to count for something worthwhile, while to live only for our own gratification depletes us. Regardless of its duration or depth or significance, every calling of our lives is a summons to fully inhabit our best selves-to become the people that we ought to be. Perhaps surprisingly, we become most fully ourselves when we focus, not on ourselves (through lives of careful calculation and strategic self-promotion), but on something greater than ourselves. This dynamic is the heart of every calling; when we say yes to a calling, in whatever way it presents itself, we grow into "the fullness of who we each have it in us to be." This process-growing into our best selves-is closely related to our discussion of the virtues, and in fact to a specific virtue: that of magnanimity, or "greatness of soul."

Thomas Aquinas (1225-1274) defined the virtue of magnanimity as "a certain aspiration of spirit to great things" and said that a magnanimous person is one who has "the spirit for some great act." This also describes a life lived with attention to vocation when we understand ourselves as called to the great work of attending to the world around us, rather than focusing only on ourselves. Today we often connect greatness with wealth, power, and celebrity; in contrast, the defining characteristic of magnanimity is a love for the good. The magnanimous person aspires not for fame and material wealth, but for the good. And yet, as with any virtue, this is not an isolated undertaking, as though we could simply wake up one day and decide to achieve "greatness of soul." Rather, we become magnanimous by faithfully embracing all the myriad callings of our lives, including the most mundane ones. Hence, a magnanimous life is possible for anyone-no matter what his or her circumstance might be.

Falling into a smallness of soul

If a magnanimous man or woman is a person of "great soul" or "great spirit," a pusillanimous person is the man or woman of "small soul" or "puny spirit." In his analysis of this vice, Thomas Aquinas begins by noting that everything has "a natural tendency to undertake action commensurate with its capability." Thus, pusillanimity causes us to fall short of our capabilities when we refuse to extend ourselves to achieve an aim that is "commensurate with" our powers; we refuse to be "who we have it in us to be." This can result from a number of possible causes: fatigue, trials and tribulations, fear of failure, the conviction that our callings ask too much of us, or simply a desire to gain what we desire on easier terms. We see pusillanimity at work in students who look to do the least amount of work possible for a course. We see it in tenured professors who withdraw or who never revise their courses. We see it in administrators who are much more interested in what is good for them rather than for the institution. As these examples indicate, pusillanimity means shrinking our horizons, shirking responsibilities, and abandoning our most noble and compelling aspirations; in short, we betray our callings.

If magnanimity involves looking to what is best, those tempted by the vice of pusillanimity tend to lower their sights by opting for what is easier or more immediately appealing. A

pusillanimous person has puny hopes, dreams, and goals-in short, too small an expectation about one's self and one's life. Pusillanimity is a dangerous habit to acquire; through it, we not only lose our taste for what is truly good and promising, but also grow comfortable with mediocrity. We begin to think that we never need to grow, never have to change or be challenged; we avoid any goals or commitments that would call us beyond ourselves in sacrifice, goodness, or love for the sake of another. The pusillanimous person plays it safe, preferring comfort and complacency to the demands of excellence. Of course, a magnanimous person does not suddenly become a pusillanimous person; rather, one gradually "withdraws from what is good," and often, as mentioned above, in ways that one does not recognize. Thus, this particular vice can be very hard to detect, yet relatively easy to fall into; its harvest is always harm and diminishment both to ourselves and to others.

Falling into a lethargy of soul

Acedia, which means "not to care," has traditionally been listed as one of the seven deadly or capital sins. It describes the moral and spiritual lethargy that descends on a person who has lost all aspirations for the good, either because that person no longer believes it matters or no longer believes it is possible. This pervasive malaise is debilitating because it gradually leads a person to disengage with life and to lose affection for what is truly good and worthwhile. Thomas Aquinas spoke of acedia as a "spiritual apathy" that results in "a kind

of oppressive sorrow which so depresses us that we want to do nothing"-the clearest sign of which is that the work that used to enthrall us no longer holds any interest for us. That "work" meant not only one's occupation or profession, but all the callings of one's life and their accompanying responsibilities. Eventually the despondency characteristic of acedia expands from an emotional state into the deliberate decision to flee from what we are called to do.

Josef Pieper insightfully describes acedia as "a perverted humility" and says that a person caught in acedia, instead of being grateful for all our gifts and talents, expressly wishes to have been left in peace.37 That is why acedia can be described not only as sorrow about the good but also, more seriously, as loathing the good. As the vice of acedia grows in us, we move from disillusionment and disenchantment about what is best, to despair of ever attaining it, and finally to an almost vehement disgust for it. This sounds like a dramatic shift, yet-as with pusillanimity-one can begin to slide into acedia without even being aware of it. This is especially true when we avoid the demands of our callings not so much through idleness or laziness, but by the restless busyness and endless activity that enables us to flee the demands of love and ignore the appeal of the good.

Acedia may be more pervasive than we would like to admit. The cynicism that characterizes acedia tends to dismiss anything noble or honorable as impossibly idealistic and to avoid investing in anything truly excellent, anything genuinely transcendent. It manifests itself in the arrogance that prevents us from receiving constructive criticism or correction (behavior not

unknown in academic circles). Moreover, acedia is fostered by a culture that encourages us to be constantly entertained, enticed, and distracted, that continually urges us to set aside substantive and enriching goods for the sake of lesser ones, and that teaches us to see our lives as little more than a series of disconnected events going nowhere. Such a culture seems to proclaim that there really is nothing noble and excellent to which one might aspire.

Educating for vocation requires opening our eyes to the reality of acedia, recognizing its dangers, and helping our students-as well as ourselves-to discover ways to resist it. This isn't easy, because often the very things we are told to see as the most important elements of a good and successful life (wealth, possessions, power, status, achievements) can be paths into acedia rather than ways out of it, especially if we allow desire for these things to rule us. Ancient Christian writers called this "worldliness," and described it as being so enamored with the things of this world that we shut the door on higher things, on better things.

Charles Pinches captured well the baneful effects of acedia when he said that it "casts down our spirits so that we cannot imagine any higher good for ourselves, any better path to travel. We become mired in small pleasures, shrunken creatures with ... low horizons." A path of drudgery and a low horizon are not very conducive to undertaking a journey-especially a journey so complex, eventful, and potentially exciting as the exploration and discernment of our vocations."

Virtues and practices to sustain a magnanimous life

How can we confront and overcome these vices in order to flourish in our callings and to grow in the joy of a magnanimous life? While many virtues and practices could be suggested as helpful in this regard, two will be discussed here: the virtue of hope and the practice of friendship.

Session 5

V | Excerpt from *Veritatis Splendor* on martyrdom

John Paul II

Martyrdom, accepted as an affirmation of the inviolability of the moral order, bears splendid witness both to the holiness of God's law and to the inviolability of the personal dignity of man, created in God's image and likeness. This dignity may never be disparaged or called into question, even with good intentions, whatever the difficulties involved. Jesus warns us most sternly: "What does it profit a man, to gain the whole world and forfeit his life? " (*Mk* 8:36).

Martyrdom rejects as false and illusory whatever "human meaning" one might claim to attribute, even in "exceptional" conditions, to an act morally evil in itself. Indeed, it even more clearly unmasks the true face of such an act: *it is a violation of man's "humanity",* in the one perpetrating it even before the one enduring it. Hence martyrdom is also the exaltation of a person's perfect "humanity" and of true "life", as is attested by Saint Ignatius of Antioch, addressing the Christians of Rome, the place of his own martyrdom: "Have mercy on me, brethren: do not hold me back from living; do not wish that I die... Let me arrive at the pure light; once there *I will be truly a man.* Let me imitate the passion of my God".

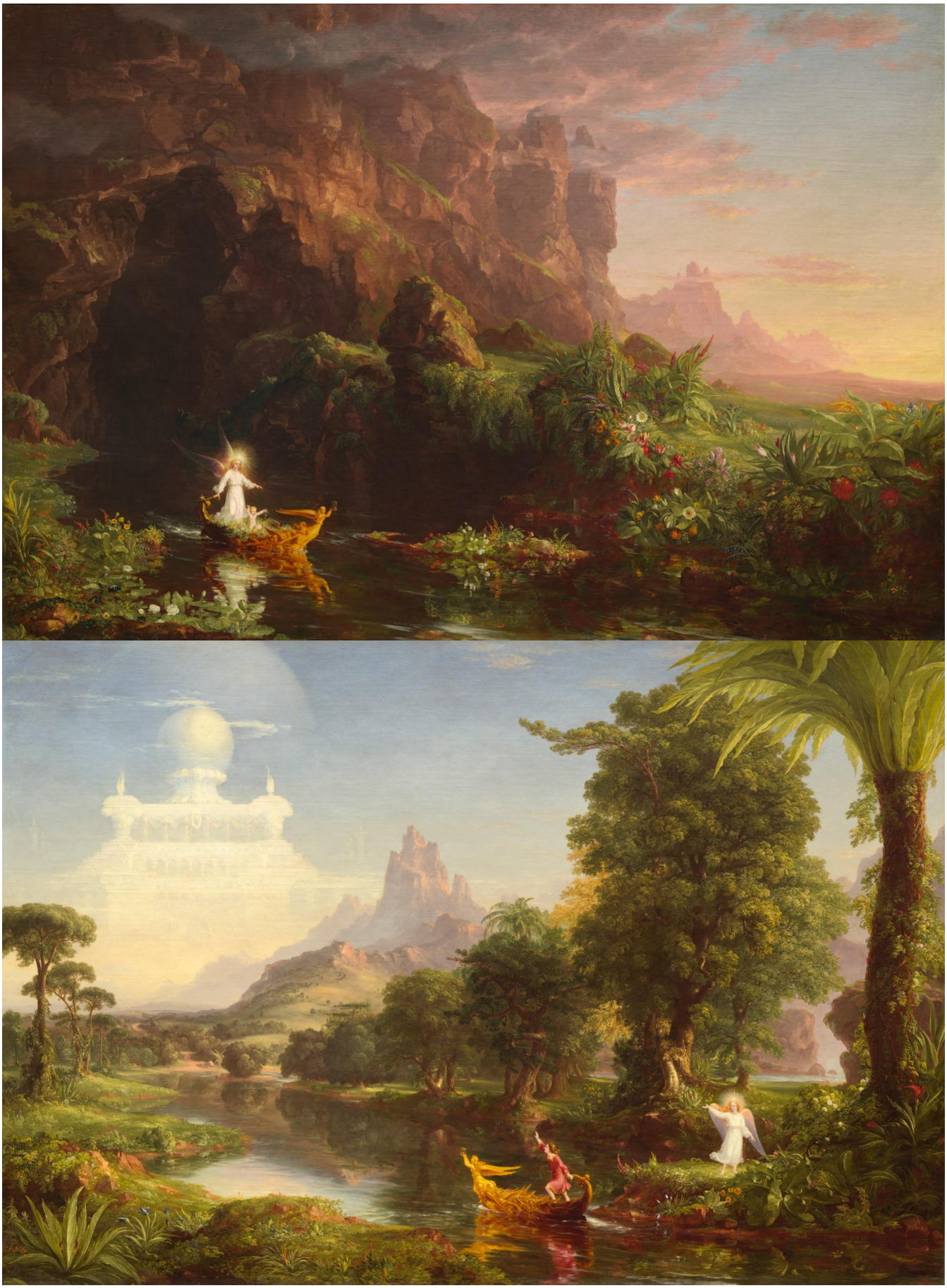
Finally, martyrdom is an *outstanding sign of the holiness of the Church.* Fidelity to God's holy law, witnessed to by death, is a solemn proclamation and missionary commitment *usque ad sanguinem,* so that the splendour of moral truth may be undimmed in the behaviour and thinking of individuals and society. This witness makes an extraordinarily valuable contribution to warding off, in civil society and within the ecclesial communities themselves, a headlong plunge into the most dangerous crisis which can afflict man: the *confusion between good and evil,* which makes it impossible to build up and to preserve the moral order of individuals and communities. By their eloquent and attractive example of a life completely transfigured by the splendour of moral truth, the martyrs and, in general, all the Church's Saints, light up every period of history by reawakening its moral sense. By witnessing fully to the good, they are a living reproof to those who transgress the law (cf. *Wis* 2:12), and they make the words of the Prophet echo ever afresh: "Woe to those who call evil good and good evil, who put darkness for light and light for darkness, who put bitter for sweet and sweet for bitter!" (*Is* 5:20).

Although martyrdom represents the high point of the witness to moral truth, and one to which relatively few people are called, there is nonetheless a consistent witness which all Christians must daily be ready to make, even at the cost of suffering and grave sacrifice. Indeed, faced with the many difficulties which fidelity to the moral order can demand, even in the most ordinary circumstances, the Christian is called, with the grace of God invoked in prayer, to a sometimes heroic commitment. In this he or she is sustained by the virtue of fortitude, whereby — as Gregory the Great teaches — one can actually "love the difficulties of this world for the sake of eternal rewards".

In this witness to the absoluteness of the moral good *Christians are not alone:* they are supported by the moral sense present in peoples and by the great religious and sapiential traditions of East and West, from which the interior and mysterious workings of God's Spirit are not absent. The words of the Latin poet Juvenal apply to all: "Consider it the greatest of crimes to prefer survival to honour and, out of love of physical life, to lose the very reason for living". The voice of conscience has always clearly recalled that there are truths and moral values for which one must be prepared to give up one's life. In an individual's words and above all in the sacrifice of his life for a moral value, the Church sees a single testimony to that truth which, already present in creation, shines forth in its fullness on the face of Christ. As Saint Justin put it, "the Stoics, at least in their teachings on ethics, demonstrated wisdom, thanks to the seed of the Word present in all peoples, and we know that those who followed their doctrines met with hatred and were killed.

"The End of All Things"

- *Can non-theological accounts of the good withstand the withering critiques of nihilism?*
- *Why does an all-knowing, all-loving, all-powerful God permit evil?*
- *How do distinctively Catholic conceptions of heaven and hell deepen our understanding of the good?*



Thomas Cole, *The Voyage of Life (Top: Childhood; Bottom: Youth) [1842]*

Thomas Cole, *The Voyage of Life (Manhood) [1842]*

Session 6

I | *The Sunset Limited* (excerpt)

Cormac McCarthy

Video: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xJq5tqJVX9c

WHITE. If people saw the world for what it truly is. Saw their lives for what they truly are. Without dreams or illusions. I dont believe they could offer the first reason why they should not elect to die as soon as possible.

BLACK. Damn, Professor.

WHITE. (*Coldly.*) I dont believe in God. Can you understand that? Look around you man. Cant you see? The clamor and din of those in torment has to be the sound most pleasing to his ear. And I loathe these discussions. The argument of the village atheist whose single passion is to revile endlessly that which he denies the existence of in the first place. Your fellowship is a fellowship of pain and nothing more. And if that pain were actually collective instead of simply reiterative then the sheer weight of it would drag the world from the walls of the universe and send it crashing and burning through whatever night it might yet be capable of engendering until it was not even ash. And justice? Brotherhood? Eternal life? Good god, man. Show me a religion that prepares one for death. For nothingness. There's a church I might enter. Yours prepares one only for more life. For dreams and illusions and lies. If you could banish the fear of death from men's hearts they wouldnt live a day. Who would want this nightmare if not for fear of the next? The shadow of the axe hangs over every joy. Every road ends in death. Or worse. Every friendship. Every love. Torment, betrayal, loss, suffering, pain, age, indignity, and hideous lingering illness. All with a single conclusion. For you and for every one and every thing that you have chosen to care for. There's the true brotherhood. The true fellowship. And everyone is a member for life. You tell me that my brother is my salvation? My salvation? Well then damn him. Damn him in every shape and form and guise. Do I see myself in him? Yes. I do. And what I see sickens me. Do you understand me? Can you understand me? (*The black sits with his head lowered.*) I'm sorry.

BLACK. That's all right.

WHITE. No. I'm sorry. (*The black looks up at him.*)

BLACK. How long you felt like this?

WHITE. All my life.

BLACK. And that's the truth.

WHITE. It's worse than rhar.
BLACK. I dont see what could be worse than that.

WHITE. Rage is really only for the good days. The truth is there's little of that left. The truth is that the forms I see have been slowly emptied out. They no longer have any content. They are shapes only. A train, a wall, a world. Or a man. A thing dangling in senseless articulation in a howling void. No meaning to its life. Its words. Why would I seek the company of such a thing? Why?

BLACK. Damn.

Session 6

II | *The Road* (excerpt)

Cormac McCarthy

The road beyond ran along the crest of a ridge where the barren woodland fell away on every side. It's snowing, the boy said. He looked at the sky. A single gray flake sifting down. He caught it in his hand and watched it expire there like the last host of Christendom.

***

I dont know how you made it this far. But you should go with me. You'll be all right.
How do I know you're one of the good guys?
You dont.
You'll have to take a shot.
Are you carrying the fire?
Am I what?
Carrying the fire.
You're kind of weirded out, arent you?
No.
Just a little.
Yeah.
That's okay.
So are you?
What, carrying the fire?
Yes.
Yeah. We are.
Do you have any kids?
We do.

***

He walked back into the woods and knelt beside his father. He was wrapped in a blanket as the man had promised and the boy didnt uncover him but he sat beside him and he was crying and he couldnt stop. He cried for a long time. I'll talk to you every day, he whispered. And I wont forget. No matter what. Then he rose and turned and walked back out to the road.

The woman when she saw him put her arms around him and held him. Oh, she said, I am so glad to see you. She would talk to him sometimes about God. He tried to talk to God but the best thing was to talk to his father and he did talk to him and he didnt forget. The woman said that was all right. She said that the breath of God was his breath yet though it pass from man to man through all of time.

Once there were brook trout in the streams in the mountains. You could see them standing in the amber current where the white edges of their fins wimpled softly in the flow. They smelled of moss in your hand. Polished and muscular and torsional. On their backs were vermiculate patterns that were maps of the world in its becoming. Maps and mazes. Of a thing which could not be put back. Not be made right again. In the deep glens where they lived all things were older than man and they hummed of mystery.

Session 6

III | *Revelations of Divine Love* (excerpts)

Julian of Norwich

THE FOURTEENTH REVELATION.

CHAPTER XLI

After this our Lord shewed concerning Prayer. In which Shewing I see two conditions in our Lord's signifying: one is rightfulness, another is sure trust.

But yet oftentimes our trust is not full: for we are not sure that God heareth us, as we think because of our unworthiness, and because we feel right nought, (for we are as barren and dry oftentimes after our prayers as we were afore); and this, in our feeling our folly, is cause of our weakness. For thus have I felt in myself.

And all this brought our Lord suddenly to my mind, and shewed these words, and said: *I am Ground of thy beseeching: first it is my will that thou have it; and after, I make thee to will it; and after, I make thee to beseech it and thou beseechest it. How should it then be that thou shouldst not have thy beseeching?*

And thus in the first reason, with the three that follow, our good Lord sheweth a mighty comfort, as it may be seen in the same words. And in the first reason,—where He saith: *And thou beseechest it*, there He sheweth [His] full great pleasance, and endless meed that He will give us for our beseeching. And in the second reason, where He saith: *How should it then be?* etc., this was said for an impossible [thing]. For it is most impossible that we should beseech mercy and grace, and not have it. For everything that our good Lord maketh us to beseech, Himself hath ordained it to us from without beginning. Here may we see that our beseeching is not cause of God's goodness; and that shewed He soothfastly in all these sweet words when He saith: *I am [the] Ground.*—And our good Lord willeth that this be known of His lovers in earth; and the more that we know [it] the more should we beseech, if it be wisely taken; and so is our Lord's meaning.

Beseeching is a true, gracious, lasting will of the soul, oned and fastened into the will of our Lord by the sweet inward work of the Holy Ghost. Our Lord Himself, He is the first receiver of our prayer, as to my sight, and taketh it full thankfully and highly enjoying; and He sendeth it up above and setteth it in the Treasure, where it shall never perish. It is there afore God with all His Holy continually received, ever speeding [the help of] our needs; and when we shall

receive our bliss it shall be given us for a degree of joy, with endless worshipful thanking from Him.

Full glad and merry is our Lord of our prayer; and He looketh thereafter and He willeth to have it because with His grace He maketh us like to Himself in condition as we are in kind: and so is His blissful will. Therefore He saith thus: *Pray inwardly, though thou thinketh it savour thee not: for it is profitable, though thou feel not, though thou see nought; yea, though thou think thou canst not. For in dryness and in barrenness, in sickness and in feebleness, then is thy prayer well-pleasant to me, though thou thinketh it savour thee nought but little. And so is all thy believing prayer in my sight.* For the meed and the endless thanks that He will give us, therefor He is covetous to have us pray continually in His sight. God accepteth the goodwill and the travail of His servant, howsoever we feel: wherefore it pleaseth Him that we work both in our prayers and in good living, by His help and His grace, reasonably with discretion keeping our powers [turned] to Him, till when that we have Him that we seek, in fulness of joy: that is, Jesus. And that shewed He in the Fifteenth [Revelation], farther on, in this word: *Thou shalt have me to thy meed.*

And also to prayer belongeth thanking. Thanking is a true inward knowing, with great reverence and lovely dread turning ourselves with all our mights unto the working that our good Lord stirreth us to, enjoying and thanking inwardly. And sometimes, for plenteousness it breaketh out with voice, and saith: *Good Lord, I thank Thee! Blessed mayst Thou be!* And sometime when the heart is dry and feeleth not, or else by temptation of our enemy,—then it is driven by reason and by grace to cry upon our Lord with voice, rehearing His blessed Passion and His great Goodness; and the virtue of our Lord's word turneth into the soul and quickeneth the heart and entereth it by His grace into true working, and maketh it pray right blissfully. And truly to enjoy our Lord, it is a full blissful thanking in His sight.

THE THIRTEENTH REVELATION

CHAPTER XXVII

After this the Lord brought to my mind the longing that I had to Him afore. And I saw that nothing letted me but sin. And so I looked, generally, upon us all, and methought: *If sin had not been, we should all have been clean and like to our Lord, as He made us.*

And thus, in my folly, afore this time often I wondered why by the great foreseeing wisdom of God the beginning of sin was not letted: for then, methought, all should have been well. This stirring [of mind] was much to be forsaken, but nevertheless mourning and sorrow I made therefor, without reason and discretion.

But Jesus, who in this Vision informed me of all that is needful to me, answered by this word and said: *It behoved that there should be sin;but all shall be well, and all shall be well, and all manner of thing shall be well.*

In this naked word *sin*, our Lord brought to my mind, generally, *all that is not good*, and the shameful despite and the utter noughting that He bare for us in this life, and His dying; and all the pains and passions of all His creatures, ghostly and bodily; (for we be all partly noughted, and we shall be noughted following our Master, Jesus, till we be full purged, that is to say, till we be fully noughted of our deadly flesh and of all our inward affections which are not very good;) and the beholding of this, with all pains that ever were or ever shall be,—and with all these I understand the Passion of Christ for most pain, and overpassing. All this was shewed in a touch and quickly passed over into comfort: for our good Lord would not that the soul were affeared of this terrible sight.

But I saw not *sin*: for I believe it hath no manner of substance nor no part of being, nor could it be known but by the pain it is cause of.

And thus pain, *it* is something, as to my sight, for a time; for it purgeth, and maketh us to know ourselves and to ask mercy. For the Passion of our Lord is comfort to us against all this, and so is His blessed will. And for the tender love that our good Lord hath to all that shall be saved, He comforteth readily and sweetly, signifying thus: *It is sooth that sin is cause of all this pain; but all shall be well, and all shall be well, and all manner [of] thing shall be well.*

These words were said full tenderly, showing no manner of blame to me nor to any that shall be saved. Then were it a great unkindness to blame or wonder on God for my sin, since He blameth not me for sin.

And in these words I saw a marvellous high mystery hid in God, which mystery He shall openly make known to us in Heaven: in which knowing we shall verily see the cause why He suffered sin to come. In which sight we shall endlessly joy in our Lord God.

Session 6

IV | Matthew 25:31-46 with Mother Teresa's Commentary

Matthew 25:31-46

31 "When the Son of man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, then he will sit on his glorious throne. **32** Before him will be gathered all the nations, and he will separate them one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats, **33** and he will place the sheep at his right hand, but the goats at the left. **34** Then the King will say to those at his right hand, 'Come, O blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world; **35** for I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, **36** I was naked and you clothed me, I was sick and you visited me, I was in prison and you came to me.' **37** Then the righteous will answer him, 'Lord, when did we see thee hungry and feed thee, or thirsty and give thee drink? **38** And when did we see thee a stranger and welcome thee, or naked and clothe thee? **39** And when did we see thee sick or in prison and visit thee?' **40** And the King will answer them, 'Truly, I say to you, as you did it to one of the least of these my brethren, you did it to me.' **41** Then he will say to those at his left hand, 'Depart from me, you cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels; **42** for I was hungry and you gave me no food, I was thirsty and you gave me no drink, **43** I was a stranger and you did not welcome me, naked and you did not clothe me, sick and in prison and you did not visit me.' **44** Then they also will answer, 'Lord, when did we see thee hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or sick or in prison, and did not minister to thee?' **45** Then he will answer them, 'Truly, I say to you, as you did it not to one of the least of these, you did it not to me.' **46** And they will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life."

Mother Teresa on Matthew 25:35-40

"Today, the poor are hungry for bread and rice – and for love and the living word of God. The poor are thirsty – for water and for peace, truth and justice. The poor are homeless – for a shelter made of bricks, and for a joyful heart that understands, covers, loves. The poor are naked – for clothes, for human dignity and compassion for the naked sinner. They are sick – for medical care, and for that gentle touch and a warm smile."

Session 6

V | *Canterbury Tales,* General Prologue (excerpts)

Geoffrey Chaucer

1 **Whan that Aprill with his shoures soote**
When April with his showers sweet with fruit
2 **The droghte of March hath perced to the roote,**
The drought of March has pierced unto the root
3 **And bathed every veyne in swich licour**
And bathed each vein with liquor that has power
4 **Of which vertu engendred is the flour;**
To generate therein and sire the flower;
5 **Whan Zephirus eek with his sweete breeth**
When Zephyr also has, with his sweet breath,
6 **Inspired hath in every holt and heeth**
Quickened again, in every holt and heath,
7 **The tendre croppes, and the yonge sonne**
The tender shoots and buds, and the young sun
8 **Hath in the Ram his half cours yronne,**
Into the Ram one half his course has run,
9 **And smale foweles maken melodye,**
And many little birds make melody
10 **That slepen al the nyght with open ye**
That sleep through all the night with open eye
11 **(So priketh hem Nature in hir corages),**
(So Nature pricks them on to ramp and rage)-
12 **Thanne longen folk to goon on pilgrimages,**
Then do folk long to go on pilgrimage,
13 **And palmeres for to seken straunge strondes,**

And palmers to go seeking out strange strands,
14 **To ferne halwes, kowthe in sondry londes;**
To distant shrines well known in sundry lands.
15 **And specially from every shires ende**
And specially from every shire's end
16 **Of Engelond to Caunterbury they wende,**
Of England to Canterbury they wend,
17 **The hooly blisful martir for to seke,**
The holy blessed martyr there to seek
18 **That hem hath holpen whan that they were seeke.**
Who had aided them when they were sick.

* * *

747 **Greet chiere made oure Hoost us everichon,**
Our Host made great hospitality to everyone of us,
748 **And to the soper sette he us anon.**
And to the supper he set us straightway.
749 **He served us with vitaille at the beste;**
He served us with victuals of the best sort;
750 **Strong was the wyn, and wel to drynke us leste.**
The wine was strong, and it well pleased us to drink.
751 **A semely man OURE HOOSTE was withalle**
OUR HOST was an impressive man indeed
752 **For to been a marchal in an halle.**
(Qualified) to be a master of ceremonies in a hall.
753 **A large man he was with eyen stepe --**
He was a large man with prominent eyes --
754 **A fairer burgeys was ther noon in Chepe --**
There was no better business man in Cheapside --
755 **Boold of his speche, and wys, and wel ytaught,**
Bold of his speech, and wise, and well mannered,
756 **And of manhod hym lakkede right naught.**
And he lacked nothing at all of the qualities proper to a man.
757 **Eek therto he was right a myrie man;**
Also moreover he was a right merry man;
758 **And after soper pleyen he bigan,**
And after supper he began to be merry,
759 **And spak of myrthe amonges othere thynges,**

And spoke of mirth among other things,
760 **Whan that we hadde maad oure rekenynges,**
When we had paid our bills,
761 **And seyde thus: "Now, lordynges, trewely,**
And said thus: "Now, gentlemen, truly,
762 **Ye been to me right welcome, hertely;**
You are right heartily welcome to me;
763 **For by my trouthe, if that I shal nat lye,**
For by my word, if I shall not lie (I must say),
764 **I saugh nat this yeer so myrie a compaignye**
I saw not this year so merry a company
765 **Atones in this herberwe as is now.**
At one time in this lodging as is (here) now.
766 **Fayn wolde I doon yow myrthe, wiste I how.**
I would gladly make you happy, if I knew how.
767 **And of a myrthe I am right now bythoght,**
And I have just now thought of an amusement,
768 **To doon yow ese, and it shal coste noght.**
To give you pleasure, and it shall cost nothing.
769 **"Ye goon to Caunterbury -- God yow speede,**
"You go to Canterbury -- God give you success,
770 **The blisful martir quite yow youre meede!**
May the blessed martyr give you your reward!
771 **And wel I woot, as ye goon by the weye,**
And well I know, as you go by the way,
772 **Ye shapen yow to talen and to pleye;**
You intend to tell tales and to amuse yourselves;
773 **For trewely, confort ne myrthe is noon**
For truly, it is no comfort nor mirth
774 **To ride by the weye doumb as a stoon;**
To ride by the way dumb as a stone;
775 **And therfore wol I maken yow disport,**
And therefore I will make a game for you,
776 **As I seyde erst, and doon yow som confort.**
As I said before, and provide you some pleasure.
788 **"Lordynges," quod he, "now herkneth for the beste;**
"Gentlemen," said he, "now listen for the best course of action;
789 **But taak it nought, I prey yow, in desdeyn.**
But, I pray yow, do not take it in disdain (scorn it).
790 **This is the poynt, to speken short and pleyn,**

This is the point, to speak briefly and clearly,
That ech of yow, to shorte with oure weye,
That each of yow, to make our way seem short by this means,
In this viage shal telle tales tweye
Must tell two tales in this journey
To Caunterbury-ward, I mene it so,
On the way to Canterbury, that is what I mean,
And homward he shal tellen othere two,
And on the homeward trip he shall tell two others,
Of aventures that whilom han bifalle.
About adventures that in old times have happened.
And which of yow that bereth hym best of alle --
And whoever of you who does best of all --
That is to seyn, that telleth in this caas
That is to say, who tells in this case
Tales of best sentence and moost solaas --
Tales of best moral meaning and most pleasure --
Shal have a soper at oure aller cost
Shall have a supper at the cost of us all
Heere in this place, sittynge by this post,
Here in this place, sitting by this post,
Whan that we come agayn fro Caunterbury.
When we come back from Canterbury.
And for to make yow the moore mury,
And to make you the more merry,
I wol myselven goodly with yow ryde,
I will myself gladly ride with you,
Right at myn owene cost, and be youre gyde;
Entirely at my own cost, and be your guide;
And whoso wole my juggement withseye
And whosoever will not accept my judgment
Shal paye al that we spenden by the weye.
Shall pay all that we spend by the way.
And if ye vouche sauf that it be so,
And if you grant that it be so,
Tel me anon, withouten wordes mo,
Tell me straightway, without more words,
And I wol erly shape me therfore."
And I will get ready early for this."

* * *

Amorwe, whan that day bigan to sprynge,
In the morning, when day began to spring,
Up roos oure Hoost, and was oure aller cok,
Our Host arose, and was the rooster of us all (awakened us).
And gadrede us togidre alle in a flok,
And gathered us together all in a flock,
And forth we riden a litel moore than paas
And forth we rode at little more than a walk
Unto the Wateryng of Seint Thomas;
Unto the Watering of Saint Thomas;
And there oure Hoost bigan his hors areste
And there our Host stopped his horse
And seyde, "Lordynges, herkneth, if yow leste.
And said, "Gentlemen, listen, if you please.
Ye woot youre foreward, and I it yow recorde.
You know your agreement, and I remind you of it.
If even-song and morwe-song accorde,
If what you said last night agrees with what you say this morning,
Lat se now who shal telle the firste tale.
Let's see now who shall tell the first tale.
As evere mote I drynke wyn or ale,
As ever I may drink wine or ale,
Whoso be rebel to my juggement
Whosoever may be rebel to my judgment
Shal paye for al that by the wey is spent.
Shall pay for all that is spent by the way.

Session 6

VI | *Canterbury Tales,* Parson's Prologue and Tale (excerpts)

Geoffrey Chaucer

By that the Maunciple hadde his tale al ended,
The sonne fro the south lyne was descended
So lowe that he nas nat, to my sighte,
Degrees nyne and twenty as in highte.
Foure of the clokke it was tho, as I gesse,
For ellevene foot, or litel moore or lesse,
My shadwe was at thilke tyme, as there
Of swiche feet as my lengthe parted were
In sixe feet equal of proporcioun.
Therwith the moones exaltacioun --
I meene Libra -- alwey gan ascende
As we were entryng at a thropes ende;
For which oure Hoost, as he was wont to gye,
As in this caas, oure joly compaignye,
Seyde in this wise: "Lordynges everichoon,
Now lakketh us no tales mo than oon.
Fulfilled is my sentence and my decree;
I trowe that we han herd of ech degree;
Almoost fulfild is al myn ordinaunce.
I pray to God, so yeve hym right good chaunce,
That telleth this tale to us lustily.

I wol yow telle a myrie tale in prose
To knytte up al this feeste and make an ende.
And Jhesu, for his grace, wit me sende
To shewe yow the wey, in this viage,
Of thilke parfit glorious pilgrymage
That highte Jerusalem celestial.
And if ye vouche sauf, anon I shal
Bigynne upon my tale, for which I preye
Telle youre avys; I kan no bettre seye.

With that the Manciple his tale ended,
The sun from the meridian descended
So low that he was no more, to my sight,
Than nine and twenty degrees in height.
Four of the clock it was, or so I guess,
For eleven feet or so, no more no less,
My shadow at that moment lay there,
Marking a foot as if my length were
Of six equal feet, in due proportion;
And the sign of Saturn's exaltation –
I mean Libra – beginning to ascend,
As we were entering a hamlet's end.
Upon which our Host, as he was pleased
To govern, as now, our jolly company,
Spoke in this wise: 'Lordings every one,
Now of tales we lack no more than one.
Fulfilled is my pronouncement and decree;
We've had a tale from each in their degree.
Almost fulfilled is all my ordinance.
I pray God brings him what of best may chance,
Who tells this last tale entertainingly!

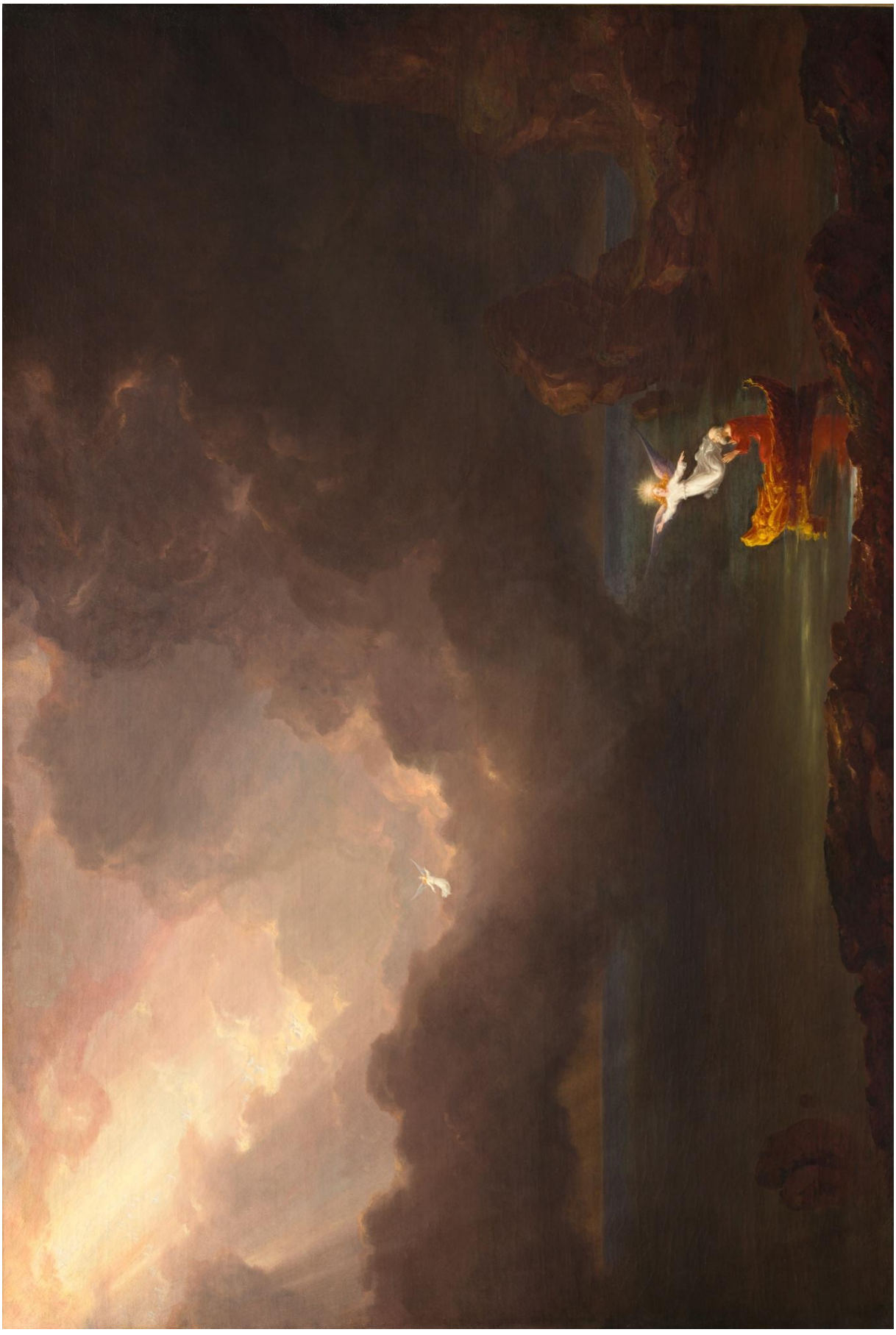
Rhyme and alliteration I'll dispose
With, and tell you a merry tale in prose,
To knit up all this game and make an end.
And Jesus, of his grace, may wit me send
To show you the manner, in this passage
Of that perfect glorious pilgrimage

That's called Jerusalem the celestial.
And if you all agree, anon I shall

§ 111 Thanne shal men understonde what is the fruyt of penaunce; and, after the word of Jhesu Crist, it is the endelees blisse of hevene, ther joye hath no contrarioustee of wo ne grevaunce; ther alle harmes been passed of this present lyf; ther as is the sikernesse fro the peyne of helle; ther as is the blisful compaignye that rejoysen hem everemo, everich of otheres joye; ther as the body of man, that whilom was foul and derk, is moore cleer than the sonne; ther as the body, that whilom was syk, freele, and fieble, and mortal, is inmortal, and so strong and so hool that ther may no thyng apeyren it; ther as ne is neither hunger, thurst, ne coold, but every soule replenyssed with the sighte of the parfit knowynge of God. This blisful regne may men purchace by poverte espiritueel, and the glorie by lowenesse, the plentee of joye by hunger and thurst, and the reste by travaille, and the lyf by deeth and mortificacion of synne.

Begin my tale, on which now I pray
Give your opinion; I can no better say.

§ 111 Then shall men understand what is the fruit of penance; and, according to the word of Jesus Christ, it is the endless bliss of heaven, where joy has no contrary of woe nor grievance; where all harms of this present life are passed; there is the safety from the pain of hell; there is the blissful company that rejoice themselves evermore, every one of others' joy; there the body of man, that formerly was foul and dark, is more clear than the sun; there the body, that formerly was sick, frail, and feeble, and mortal, is immortal, and so strong and so healthy that there can no thing injure it; there is neither hunger, thirst, nor cold, but every soul replenished with the sight of the perfect knowing of God. This blissful reign may men purchase by poverty spiritual, and the glory by lowness, the plenty of joy by hunger and thirst, and the rest by travail, and the life by death and mortification of sin.



Thomas Cole, *The Voyage of Life (Old Age) [1842]*

Session 6

VII | *Divine Comedy, Paradiso* I (1-3), XXXIII (142-145)

Dante Alighieri

Paradiso I, lines 1-3

La gloria di colui che tutto move
per l'universo penetra, e risplende
in una parte più e meno altrove.

The glory of the One who moves all
things
permeates the universe and glows
in one part more and in another less.

Paradiso XXXIII, lines 142-145

A l'alta fantasia qui mancò possa;
ma già volgeva il mio disio e 'l velle,
sì come rota ch'igualmente è mossa,
l'amor che move il sole e l'altre stelle.

Here force failed my high fantasy; but my
desire and will were moved already—like
a wheel revolving uniformly—by
the Love that moves the sun and the other
stars.