

## The Millennial Challenges Facing Catholic Intellectual Life

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IT IS an honor to offer the 2012 Blessed John Paul II theology lecture at the University of Dallas. John Paul the Great had a very long view of history. Centuries were too short a span for him. After all, his beloved Poland had disappeared from the world maps for more than 120 years (1796–1918). It reappeared only to be plunged into the immense sufferings and bloodshed of the Second World War and the tyrannies of Nazism and Communism. Through such underground darkness Catholicism kept alive, for the young Karol Wojtyła and for so many other Polish Catholics, its millennial transcending love of Jesus Christ. Their faith gave them a hope with which to resist despairing of reason and human dignity. Their Catholic faith was a light flickering in the night of nihilism; the reality of the risen Christ enabled them to love responsibly amid the horrors and hatred of warring tyrannies and genocides.

Studying great Catholic philosophers and theologians of the past two millennia against the backdrop of two world wars, the Holocaust consuming his Jewish friends, and the rubble of his beloved Poland, Wojtyła knew the challenges facing genuine Catholic intellectual life. Human intelligence was increasingly in need of a vibrant recovery of the wisdom and holiness that had taken up the massive histories of human suffering into the agony of Christ, true God and true man, crucified and risen to lead humankind into the glory of eternal beatitude. The natural and human sciences, the technological, political, cultural, and religious institutions of the modern world needed to be liberated from the destructive ideologies of relativism, nihilism, and totalitarianism. But Wojtyła knew well the long years of prayerful study and scholarly collaboration needed to learn the

natural, human and spiritual realities in the millennial treasures of philosophical and theological wisdom, in the scientific and scholarly advances, not to mention the glories of artistic genius.

The cultivation of intelligence is a cooperative enterprise down the ages. The languages, words, sciences, theories, arts—all we learn from others. There are no Robinson Crusoes or Cartesian universal doubters in the realm of reason. As Cardinal Newman astutely observed, traditions are crucial, not just for religious faithful, but for all human learners. With Flannery O'Connor, we could imagine it as a long, multi-millennial procession of teachers and learners down the generations. We are born into languages and cultures that sweep us along in the procession.

### Four Major Challenges Humanity Faces Today

In his many writings Karol Wojtyła provides guides for a renewal of Catholic intellectual life. He insisted on the fundamental importance of Catholic universities to meet the enormous challenges facing the world at the dawn of Catholicism's third millennium. Let me list some of the large challenges we all are facing today:

1. **Demographic:**<sup>1</sup> All the advanced European and Western societies, demographers indicate, are dying out. There is a birth derth among native European populations. One needs a total fertility rate (TFR) of 2.1 to maintain a population. Estimates put the TFR of native populations in the European Union as averaging about 1.40; the Muslims in the European Union have about 3.0 TFR average. Meanwhile, China's one-child policy, thanks to readily available ultrasound and abortion, has led to an imbalance of the sexes, there being some 20 million more boys than girls; demographic projections suggest dire consequences in several decades. Marriage and two-parent families are diminishing, as divorce, cohabitation, single-mother births, and polygyny increase in countries.
2. **Cultural:** Intellectual fragmentation has turned universities into multiversities, whenever schools abandon a unified integrating core in favor of a hodgepodge of unrelated majors, minors, degrees—as

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. Country Comparison of Total Fertility Rates in the CIA World Fact Book for 2013 projections. On global aspects of the demographic decline, cf. David P. Goldman, *It's Not the End of the World, It's Just the End of You* (New York: RVP Publishers, 2011) and his *How Civilizations Die (And Why Islam Is Dying Too)* (Washington, DC: Regnery, 2011). On America cf. Jonathan V. Last, *What to Expect When No One's Expecting: America's Coming Demographic Disaster* (New York: Encounter Books, 2013).

one successful student remarked, she graduated with an acute case of intellectual indigestion. Multiculturalism poses as a guardian of diversity, but so far has been unable to avoid a drab uniformity in art, architecture, media, clothes, fast food, malls, etc. the world over.

3. **Political:** Violence, war, crime, and all manner of vice are attributed to the human “state of nature” by empiricist human sciences. Political regimes of right and left then devise “social contracts or constitutions” that formulate human rights without recognizing any power above the state. Legality is substituted for morality, as intermediate communities and institutions diminish, isolating individual citizens over against the arbitrary powers of growing federal bureaucracies. Human rights are based not upon genuine human dignity but upon the power of interest groups to get state support in the defense of their “rights,” legal sanctions being imposed against those who disagree. Humanity lives with the specter of nuclear warfare and environmental destruction. Mega-disasters are regular fare on the science, discovery, and history channels.
4. **Ethical:** Secularism and fundamentalism have severed virtue and the good from intelligence and have placed them solely in the will. Moral truth claims, like religious ones, are relegated to purely voluntaristic, emotional options that cannot be applied to society or humanity as a whole. Love is equated with feelings of sexual attraction that pornography exploits to depersonalize human sexuality and love. These latter are disordered into egocentric pleasure and power. The moral teachings of religious institutions are seen as fundamentalist, arbitrary claims. Members and ministers of those institutions are encouraged to dissent (and to teach others to do so) and also to stay in the institutions in order to change the moral teachings. Opponents of religious institutions use scandals within the institutions to rationalize rejection of the teachings as having any moral authority. I don’t have to remind this audience of the painful illustration of this in Catholic and other sex-abuse scandals.

### ***Ex Corde Ecclesiae: Catholic Universities and Intellectual Life***

Before such challenges, many in the culture remarked on the irony of the Pope’s masterful encyclical *Fides et Ratio*. Here was a pope indicating how Catholic faith, far from blinding reason, was defending the truth and importance of reason in the face of the skeptical rejection of reasoned judgment and truth that was overshadowing all advanced cultures and societies. Catholic universities have an enormous responsibility to face up

to the challenges confronting genuine intellectual life. So in *Ex Corde Ecclesiae* John Paul II emphasized the importance of a “free search for the whole truth about nature, man, and God.” He continued:

The present age is in urgent need of . . . disinterested service, namely of *proclaiming the meaning of truth*, that fundamental good without which freedom, justice, and human dignity are extinguished. By means of a kind of universal humanism a Catholic University is completely dedicated to the research of all aspects of truth in their essential connection with the supreme Truth, who is God. It does this without fear but rather with enthusiasm, dedicating itself to every path of knowledge, aware of being preceded by him who is “the Way, the Truth, and the Life”, the *Logos*, whose Spirit of intelligence and love enables the human person with his or her own intelligence to find the ultimate reality of which He is the source and end and who alone is capable of giving fully that Wisdom without which the future of the world would be in danger.<sup>2</sup>

The responsibility to explore “the whole truth about nature, man, and God” means that today at the dawn of the third millennium of Catholicism there is a need to draw upon the achievements of the past, but not as if we were constructing a museum for dusty old relics. Rather we study those achievements for the important insights into the wisdom and science of great saints and scholars about “the whole truth” in order to meet the challenges of today and tomorrow.

### Nominalist Origins of the Challenges

Learning the sciences requires an intellectual asceticism, a training of the mind to move beyond the descriptive categories of sense to the explanatory categories of mathematical and scientific specializations of intelligence. The empirical natural sciences have transformed the world of nature and of history profoundly. The flourishing of the sciences, both natural and human, is matched by the immense labors of historical scholarship, and the brilliance of the many literary, artistic and architectural achievements. The third millennium of Catholicism demands the development of acquired wisdom and science with the humanities and arts. Blessed John Paul II and Benedict XVI imbue their teachings with the achievements of the first two millennia of Catholicism in order to address the challenges humanity faces in our times. Why?

If the second millennium began by differentiating wisdom and science in the European universities, it ended with a complete loss of any notion

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<sup>2</sup> John Paul II, *Ex Corde Ecclesiae* §4.

of wisdom as a serious theoretical attunement to the realities of material and spiritual objects. With the loss of wisdom traditions, modern cultures cultivated a fragmented attention to isolated individual particulars. As the environmental crises illustrate, there was no attention to the intelligibility and pattern of wholes; instead attention was focused only on the individual things, and any effort to pattern or order them is taken to be conventional and arbitrary. Wisdom is replaced by raw willpower, and reason is reduced to calculating how to get and keep such power. As George Weigel states, John Paul II's *Veritatis Splendor* was "an exercise in retrieval, reclaiming the venerable notion of freedom linked to truth and goodness that had gotten lost in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries under the influence of the philosophy called 'nominalism' and its equation of freedom with raw willpower."<sup>3</sup>

In confronting the nominalist/voluntarist challenges of the third millennium, John Paul II found a congenial collaborator in a German theologian, Joseph Ratzinger. In 1974, then-Cardinal Wojtyla gave a presentation, "The Personal Structure of Self-Determination," at a conference honoring the seventh centenary of the death of St. Thomas Aquinas at Fossanova, where the lecture was given. The eminent Thomist Josef Pieper was so impressed that he wrote to his friend Prof. Ratzinger that he should "begin a correspondence and exchange books with Wojtyla."<sup>4</sup> Their friendship grew over the succeeding years. Wojtyla appreciated how Ratzinger saw, thanks to his profound study of St. Augustine, that reason embraces both understanding and truth.<sup>5</sup> Wojtyla appreciated how Ratzinger's studies of Augustine, especially on the *De Trinitate*, emphasized the ways in which Catholic faith enlightens reason and fosters a keen intellectual life, by insisting on intellectual conversion: Logos and "Die Vernunft des Glaubens."<sup>6</sup>

Pope Benedict XVI's magisterial Regensburg lecture indicated that the divorce of science and scholarship from wisdom was begun in nominalism. Duns Scotus did not understand the theoretical way of living as founded on an intellectual conversion whereby one can know both sensible and spiritual realities, that the intelligible causes the sensible. In Ockham, metaphysics was dominated by a conceptualist logic that replaced potency-form-act

<sup>3</sup> See George Weigel, *Witness to Hope: The Biography of Pope John Paul II* (New York: HarperCollins, 1999), 694, on the import of *Veritatis Splendor* (e.g. §§76–78).

<sup>4</sup> George Weigel, *The End and the Beginning* (New York: Doubleday, 2010), 12.

<sup>5</sup> Cardinal Wojtyla used Ratzinger's *Einführung in das Christentum* when he gave, at the invitation of Pope Paul VI, the Lenten retreat at the Vatican.

<sup>6</sup> Cf. *Einführung in das Christentum*, 35–52, on logos and "Die Vernunft des Glaubens," 103–50.

with possibilities to be exploited by power calculations. Against the “intellectualism of Augustine and Aquinas,” Benedict XVI traces nominalist voluntarism to “the image of a capricious God [*voluntas ordinata*], who is not even bound to truth and goodness.” God’s otherness is “so exalted that our reason, our sense of the true and good, are not grounded in God.” So reason is blinded in the depths of dark “endless possibilities that are eternally unattainable and hidden behind His actual decisions.”<sup>7</sup>

Benedict traces the deepening rejection of the Hellenic discovery of logos and reason in successive nominalist philosophers and theologians through the Reformation and Enlightenment. Reason is bifurcated into sensations and concepts, so that we intuit only sensations or concepts rather than real beings. There was a massive eclipse of judgment as knowing the real. Universals are only “*flatus vocis*,” empty words used to arbitrarily label fragmented individual entities or, in Leibniz’s terms, monads. Cultures become distorted by relativism, historicism, nihilism, and fundamentalism.<sup>8</sup>

Nominalism exalted the will over reason—all living continuity with the great philosophical and theological traditions of the past was broken. Doctrinal and theoretical traditions were devalued into purely “textual” and “verbal” matters. Reason as an instrument of the will to power simply slaps labels on objects, and the more powerful do more labeling of objects and laws. Laws were not expressions of practical intelligence aimed at educating citizens in virtue but arbitrary exercises of will enforcing external behavior. How can Catholic intellectual life overcome the dualisms

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<sup>7</sup> Regensburg Lecture; see also James V. Schall, *The Regensburg Lecture* (South Bend, IN: St. Augustine Press, 2007), 63–68; and Etienne Gilson, *The Unity of Philosophical Experience* (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1999), 61–121.

<sup>8</sup> Benedict XVI, *Message for the Celebration of the World Day of Peace* (1 January 2006) §10. Benedict sees the world of today threatened by those who deny the truth of human nature and reason. Foremost among such denials he singles out, citing Popes Paul VI and John Paul II, are nihilism and fundamentalism that feed upon one another: “Looked at closely, nihilism and the fundamentalism of which we are speaking share an erroneous relationship to truth: the nihilist denies the very existence of truth, while the fundamentalist claims to be able to impose it by force. Despite their different origins and cultural backgrounds, both show a dangerous contempt for human beings and human life, and ultimately for God himself. Indeed, this shared tragic outcome results from a distortion of the full truth about God: nihilism denies God’s existence and his provident presence in history, while fanatical fundamentalism disfigures his loving and merciful countenance, replacing him with idols made in its own image. In analyzing the causes of the contemporary phenomenon of terrorism, consideration should be given, not only to its political and social causes, but also to its deeper cultural, religious and ideological motivations.”

between mind and body,<sup>9</sup> between subjects and objects, between empirical science and theoretical wisdom?

### **The Acting Person: Reason as Patterns of Experienced Acts and Objects**

What is common to Wojtyla and Ratzinger is how they learned from Catholic minds of the past—especially Augustine and Aquinas—how to articulate the universality of human reason across all times and cultures. This is the key to counteracting the distortions of nominalism/voluntarism and to meeting the intellectual challenges we face. Wojtyla realized how St. Thomas Aquinas had provided this key.<sup>10</sup> Moreover, this key also applies to the moral and theological tasks as well. *The key is that all human beings experience in their conscious living patterns of objects and acts.* It was obvious to Wojtyla, Ratzinger, and others that the logos of human reason means that all human beings, as endowed with God-given reason, experience related and recurrent acts that are moved by experienced objects. As Wojtyla wrote:

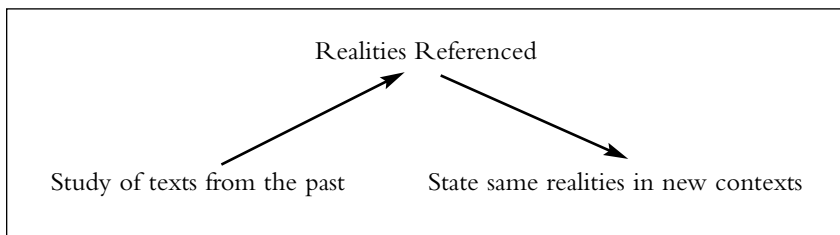
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<sup>9</sup> This is the significance of John Paul II's theology of the body to counteract the depersonalization of love in disordered pornography, which tries to wrench *eros* from its intrinsic orientation to *philia* and *agape*. In his encyclical *Deus Caritas Est*, Benedict XVI spells out how the infused love of the Triune God, *agape* or charity, in no way negates or minimizes the human forms of love as *eros* and *philia*, married love and the love of friendship. The redemption of creation heals erotic love and friendship from the disorders that sin had introduced. Indeed, agapic love transforms erotic love into the holy mystery of Christ's love for his Church in the sacrament of marriage. The higher does not negate the lower; so also the light of faith in no way "blinds" or negates the light of reason. These principles of the Holy Father's teachings were learnt well when as a student and then professor of theology he studied and appropriated the works of St. Augustine. Augustine profoundly explored the intimate bond between knowing and loving, between reason and will, in his reflections upon the human mind as an immaterial image of God in his *On the Trinity*. There Augustine spells out how we humans do not love the unknown, rather we love to know the unknown (*On the Trinity* 10, 1). Love always engenders a desire to understand and know the truth. Love always arises from the "logos" or "verbum" of reason that, in very Trinitarian language, spirates the love (ibid. 9, 2–12). This distinction, between loving the unknown and loving to know the unknown, is what separates Nietzschean nihilism (loving the unknown as such) and the dark night of Christian mysticism (longing to know the unknown).

<sup>10</sup> Cf. the important volume *John Paul II and St. Thomas Aquinas*, ed. Michael Dauphinais and Matthew Levering (Ave Maria, FL: Sapientia Press, 2006), especially the essays by Avery Dulles, Michael Sherwin, Reinhard Hüter, Guy Mansini, Thomas Weinandy, and Matthew Levering.

The expression “actus humanus” itself is not only derived from the verb *agere*—which establishes its direct relationship with action and acting because *agere* means to act or to do—but it also assumes, as it is traditionally used in Western philosophy, a specified interpretation of the action, namely, the interpretation found in the philosophies of Aristotle and St. Thomas Aquinas. This interpretation is realistic and objectivistic as well as metaphysical. It issues from the whole conception of being, and more directly from the conception of *potentia-actus*, which has been used by Aristotelians to explain the changeable and simultaneously dynamic nature of being.<sup>11</sup>

**Figure 1**



What Josef Pieper admired in Wojtyła’s lecture celebrating Aquinas was the realism of his reading of Aquinas. That realism is also present in Ratzinger’s reading of the Fathers and Augustine. Wojtyła knew that Aquinas was not interested in founding Thomism, just as Ratzinger knew that Augustine had no thought to found Augustinianism. The Fathers and Schoolmen knew that all human beings experience acts of sensing, of perceiving, of imagining, as well as acts of inquiring, understanding, conceiving, weighing the evidence, judging the truth of something

<sup>11</sup> Cf. Karol Wojtyła, *The Acting Person*, trans. Andrzej Potocki (Boston: D. Reidel Publishing, 1997); this translation is very poor and I am drawing upon the better German translation from the Polish by Herbert Springer, *Person und Tat* (Herder, 1982), 33. Joseph P. Rice has drawn upon the Polish original, and he emphasizes, as I do, Wojtyła’s transcendental approach that breaks through the dichotomies between subjectivity and objectivity. See his “Consciousness, Conscience, and Persons: A Reflection on Wojtyła’s ‘Trans-Phenomenological’ Approach to Subjectivity and Intersubjectivity” at the 2012 Fellowship of Catholic Scholars Conference. Also Rocco Buttiglione, *Karol Wojtyła: The Thought of the Man Who Became Pope John Paul II*, trans. Paolo Guitti and Francesca Murphy (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1997); as Vincent Potter, S.J., points out, it would be futile to oppose Wojtyła to Thomas Aquinas in this regard, since Potter acknowledges that Bernard Lonergan, S.J., adopts a similar way of seeing a key to human experience in Aquinas in his article “Philosophical Correlations among K. Wojtla, C.S. Peirce, and B. Lonergan,” in *The Thought of Pope John Paul II*, ed. John McDermott, S.J. (Rome: Gregoriana, 1993), 205ff.

understood, along with acts of deliberating what is good, of deciding, of acting, loving, etc. The acts are moved by all the sensible objects in the world around us, as well as by persons and realities that go beyond our senses. The universality of reason is oriented to the universality of being. Thus there is an implicit metaphysics in all human acting. Rendering metaphysics explicit requires a collaborative attuning of mind and heart to the whole of being and its causes down the ages.

Karol Wojtyła provides what might be described as a personalist formulation of the metaphysical elements that Aquinas related to the self-knowledge of the soul. As with Aquinas, Wojtyła carefully shows both how human beings experience a conscious awareness of objects around them as well as the many acts by which one is aware of objects. Repeating these acts becomes habitual, and the acts become habits. Aquinas drew upon both Augustine and Aristotle in his articulation of habits. Habits can be either virtues or vices. The powers or faculties of the human soul are intellect and will, which is the intellect's rational appetite. In his personalist formulation, Wojtyła speaks of "Personal Identity" instead of "Soul with its powers or faculties of intellect and will." He analyzes "Related and Recurrent Patterns of Acts" instead of "Habits." And he sees that "Acts and Objects" are "Conscious Experiences," so that consciousness can also include conscience.<sup>12</sup> These personalist formulations might be outlined as in Figure 2.

In calling Vatican II, Blessed John XXIII dramatized the twofold challenges of what he termed *Ressourcement* and *Aggiornamento*: appropriating the Catholic spiritual and intellectual traditions, and by this to inspire Catholics to reform and renew both church and world.<sup>13</sup>

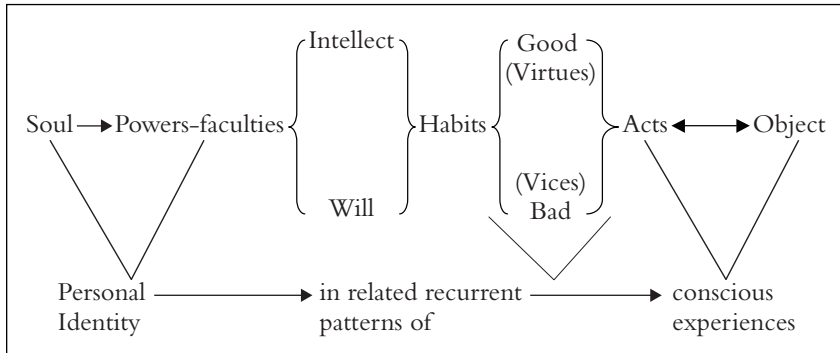
Wojtyła, coming from Communist Poland, had an advantage over the other bishops. The mass media in Poland did not report much on the council. So when he returned home he was able to teach what in fact the Council taught in terms of Tradition and reform. His *Sources of Renewal* is a masterful guide on how to realize the tasks set by the Council; it has extensive quotations from the documents. He uses the key of referring to the related patterns of conscious acts and objects constituting both the formation of reason and the formation of the Church. He situates the

<sup>12</sup> For a thorough study of St. Thomas Aquinas on the self-knowledge of the human soul, and how it draws upon St. Augustine and Aristotle, cf. Therese Scarpelli Cory, *Aquinas on Human Self-Knowledge* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013); also Richard Thomas Lambert, *Self-Knowledge in Thomas Aquinas: The Angelic Doctor on the Soul's Knowledge of Itself* (Bloomington, IN: AuthorHouse, 2007).

<sup>13</sup> Cf. Matthew Lamb and Matthew Levering, eds., *Vatican II: Renewal Within Tradition* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008) pp. 4–20.

renewal of Vatican II within the historical and eschatological self-realization of the Church in the redeeming Christ.<sup>14</sup>

**Figure 2**



### **A Purified Memory Integral to Catholic Intellectual Life**

Wojtyla explored the key of attending to the acts and objects of human reason and Catholic faith and practices, from his *The Acting Person* to his magisterial papal encyclicals and apostolic letters and audience presentations. Memory was so important to the renewal of Catholic intellectual life that he called for a “purification of memory”—given all the sins Catholics had committed—in order that the intelligence, wisdom, and holiness of the Church’s memory might be recovered. *Veritatis Splendor* was, as George Weigel writes, “part of John Paul II’s comprehensive program to implement the Second Vatican Council . . . [it] does so by a

<sup>14</sup> Foreign reporters from Western and first world countries from 1962–65 knew there were two places in the world where their stories would be assured top billing: the war in Vietnam and the council in Rome. So Rome was flooded with reporters who had little or no knowledge of Catholicism. It was then that they came up with the template of the council as a struggle between conservative/reactionary versus liberal/progressive forces. Those periti who bought into this template were quoted often and generously in the mass media. No attention was given to the daily Masses and prayers of the assembled bishops. When the constitutions, decrees, and directives of the Council were published, they were misinterpreted as political documents: whenever traditional Catholic principles were expressed, they were seen as “compromises” to get conservative votes for the “liberal” changes. So the dichotomy developed between the “spirit” of the council and the actual texts. Liberals were winning and the progressive Catholics should move beyond the popes and bishops with this disembodied spirit of liberal accommodations. The realities referenced in the texts were ignored as the texts were presented in conceptualist frameworks of ideologies of progress over reactionary forces.

method . . . of *Ressourcement*, the recovery of foundational theological themes from the Bible, the theology of the first Christian centuries, and medieval scholarship.”<sup>15</sup> *Fides et Ratio* begins with a strong injunction that shows the inextricable link of objects and acts in seeking the truth:

Know Yourself. . . . In both East and West, we may trace a journey that has led humanity down the centuries to meet and engage truth more and more deeply. It is a journey that has unfolded—as it must—within the horizon of personal self-consciousness: the more human beings know reality and the world, the more they know themselves in their uniqueness, with the question of the meaning of things and of their very existence becoming ever more pressing. *This is why all that is the object of our knowledge becomes a part of our life.*<sup>16</sup>

Metaphysics for Wojtyła is the theoretical analysis of the really existing causes of the beings known by the related and recurrent patterns of experienced acts and objects. Metaphysics is foundational in the search for truth, and is implicit in all knowing and moral striving aimed at the supreme Good who is God. He insists:

Here I do not mean to speak of metaphysics in the sense of a specific school or a particular historical current of thought. I want only to state that reality and truth do transcend the factual and the empirical, and to vindicate the human being’s capacity to know this transcendent and metaphysical dimension in a way that is true and certain, albeit imperfect and analogical.<sup>17</sup>

Like Aquinas, Wojtyła wants the student acquiring the wisdom of metaphysics not to be joining a school, but knowing being and its causes, material, formal, efficient, and especially potency and act along with the final causes.<sup>18</sup>

In 1994, at the end of a most bloody twentieth century, John Paul II’s call for the Church to celebrate the Jubilee year of 2000<sup>19</sup> carried the provocative title *Tertio Millennio Adveniente*.<sup>20</sup> He came back to the millennial theme again in 2001 at the close of the Jubilee year in *Tertio Millennio Ineunte*. He first of all reiterated his call for a “purification of memory”

<sup>15</sup> George Weigel, *Witness to Hope*, 694.

<sup>16</sup> John Paul II, *Fides et Ratio*, §1; also §§24, 46, 55, 61, 76.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid. §83, also §84.

<sup>18</sup> Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae* (henceforth *ST*), II–II, q. 1, a. 2, ad 2.

<sup>19</sup> Cf. George Weigel, *The End and the Beginning* (New York: Doubleday, 2010), 197–98.

<sup>20</sup> Apostolic Letter of John Paul II, *Tertio Millennio Adveniente* §7.

in the light of all the evils and sins Catholics have committed down the centuries.<sup>21</sup> With the Church's memory thus purified through repentance, the proper way to prepare for the future is to enliven the Church's memory with insights from the treasures of wisdom, intelligence, and holiness in the past millennia:

It is not therefore a matter of inventing a 'new programme'. The programme already exists: it is the plan found in the Gospel and in the living Tradition, it is the same as ever. Ultimately, it has its center in Christ himself, who is to be known, loved and imitated, so that in him we may live the life of the Trinity, and with him transform history until its fulfillment in the heavenly Jerusalem. This is a programme which does not change with shifts of times and cultures, even though it takes account of time and culture for the sake of true dialogue and effective communication. This programme for all times is our programme for the Third Millennium.<sup>22</sup>

In his 2005 book *Memory and Identity: Conversations at the Dawn of a Millennium*, he reiterates how the many challenges facing Catholicism in the new millennium should lead us to appropriate, make our own, the great intellectual, moral, and theological achievements of the past two millennia. At the very beginning of his remarks, the Holy Father indicates how there is a dialectic operative in Western cultures. The massive evils of Fascism, Nazism, and Communism at the end of the twentieth century are not the whole story. "The modern history of Europe, shaped—especially in the West—by the influence of the Enlightenment, has yielded many positive fruits. This is actually characteristic of evil, as understood by Saint Thomas, following in the tradition of Saint Augustine. Evil is always the absence of some good which ought to be present in a given being; it is a privation. It is never a total absence of good." He illustrates

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<sup>21</sup> Ibid. §6: "*The purification of memory*: To purify our vision for the contemplation of the mystery, this Jubilee Year has been strongly marked by the *request for forgiveness*. This is true not only for individuals, who have examined their own lives in order to ask for mercy and gain the special gift of the indulgence, but for the entire Church, which has decided to recall the infidelities of so many of her children in the course of history, infidelities which have cast a shadow over her countenance as the Bride of Christ. For a long time we had been preparing ourselves for this examination of conscience, aware that the Church, embracing sinners in her bosom, 'is at once holy and always in need of being purified'. Study congresses helped us to identify those aspects in which, during the course of the first two millennia, the Gospel spirit did not always shine forth."

<sup>22</sup> Apostolic Letter *Tertio Millennio Ineunte* §27.

this with the parable of the wheat and the weeds (Mt. 13:29–30).<sup>23</sup> The Pope then illustrates how the positive fruits of the Enlightenment could be harvested from the documents of Vatican II so that the proclamation of human liberty, equality, and fraternity would be based by the Council on the God-created dignity of human beings. The discernment that Catholic theologians and the Council exercised in this dialectical process is due, the Pope states, to the attention paid to the wisdom of the first millennium of Catholicism:

These formulations are the fruit of the Church's profound doctrinal reflection during the first millennium, concerning the correct way to speak of the mystery of the Incarnate God. The question was addressed by almost all the Councils, which continually return to different aspects of this fundamental mystery of faith. The Second Vatican Council bases its teaching on the great wealth of earlier doctrinal reflection on Christ's divine humanity, so as to draw forth a conclusion that is essential for Christian anthropology. This is where its innovative character lies.<sup>24</sup>

If the first millennium of Catholicism is important in the dialectical discernment needed for the third as regards a proper understanding of equality and fraternity, John Paul II sees the crucial importance of Aristotle and St. Thomas Aquinas to discern what is human freedom. Against the voluntarism that divorces the will from reason in nominalism, the Pope calls upon Aristotle:

What is human freedom? The answer can be traced back to Aristotle. Freedom, for Aristotle, is a property of the will which is realized through truth. It is given to man as a task to be accomplished. There is no freedom without truth. Freedom is an ethical category. Aristotle teaches this principally in his *Nicomachean Ethics*, constructed on the basis of rational truth. This natural ethic was adopted in its entirety by Saint Thomas in his *Summa Theologiae*. So it was that the *Nicomachean Ethics* remained a significant influence in the history of morals, having now taken on the characteristics of a Christian Thomistic ethic.<sup>25</sup>

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<sup>23</sup> John Paul II, *Memory and Identity: Conversations at the Dawn of a Millennium* (New York: Rizzoli, 2005), 3–4.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*, 111–12. Christ as the Son of God, the Second Person of the Most Holy Trinity, unites in Himself His divine nature and human nature. In this chapter Pope John Paul II shows how *Gaudium et Spes* §22 links human nature and all of human history to the Mystery of Jesus Christ, so that all of human suffering and sin is redeemed by Christ on the Cross. Christ's resurrection destroys death, and his dying—into which we are baptized—atones for the sins that crucified Him.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*, 39.

He goes on to show how Aquinas was able to order the intellectual, moral, and theological virtues, thanks to the Aristotelian definition of right reason discerning the mean from the extremes, thereby knowing the truly good from merely apparent good. The Pope also briefly relates this Thomistic ethic to the development of the social teachings of the Church.<sup>26</sup>

Following the lead of Pope John Paul II, the next two sections will highlight some of the dialectical developments in the first two millennia of Catholicism. The difference between historical and dialectical accounts might be illustrated by the difference between color photographs and x-rays. Historical accounts are multivalent, open to choose among the many events occurring at places and times. Dialectical accounts are bivalent, seeking out key factors that promote development or cause decline. Fortunately, for more historical details I can refer to two recent works. On the first millennium of Christianity there is the book by Robert L. Wilken, *The First Thousand Years: A Global History of Christianity*.<sup>27</sup> For the two millennia of Catholicism, there is the recent work by James Hitchcock, *History of the Catholic Church: From the Apostolic Age to the Third Millennium*.<sup>28</sup>

### **Memories from the First Millennium of Catholic Intellectual Life**

If one looks back upon the first millennium of Christianity, one sees that the life of learning and communities of men and women in monastic, cathedral, and convent schools carried teaching forward. Most of the literature, philosophy, science, and theology of antiquity comes to us through these communities. Christian intellectuals in the first millennium knew that the life of the mind, if it was to avoid the darkness of pride and what St. Augustine called “the disordered desire for domination,” had to be cultivated in communities dedicated as well to the quest for both wisdom and holiness.<sup>29</sup> The sins, the idolatry and bloody wars of the empires of history (even though these empires have left great monuments of skill and beauty) convinced the first-millennium Christian intellectuals of two things. Firstly, learning and teaching needed to

<sup>26</sup> Ibid., 39–50.

<sup>27</sup> Robert L. Wilken, *The First Thousand Years: A Global History of Christianity* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2012).

<sup>28</sup> James Hitchcock, *History of the Catholic Church: From the Apostolic Age to the Third Millennium* (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2012).

<sup>29</sup> In this section I draw upon both original sources and the excellent Apostolic Letter of Pope John Paul II “Augustinum Hipponensem—On the 16th Centenary Anniversary of the Conversion of St. Augustine,” 28 August 1986. Most likely the Holy Father discussed this letter with then Cardinal Ratzinger.

occur within a moral life that both ordered human desires toward the truly good and also was inspired by the grace of Christ's holiness. Secondly, the intellectual life, if it was not to derail into an egocentric love of honor, vanity, and power, had to be formed, through prayer and sacramental worship, into a Christ-like love of wisdom and truth in the service of all humankind.

Early in the millennium St. Irenaeus wrote that "those who receive the Spirit are not enslaved to distorted sensual desires but in all things walk according to the light of reason."<sup>30</sup> From the Greek and Roman philosophers, Augustine glimpsed the importance of striving for wisdom, attuning his mind and heart to the whole of reality, and ordering his appetites and emotions intelligently toward the truly good. Yet he also saw how these philosophers were unable to give adequate accounts for why so few—and Augustine knew he had not—attained the life of speculative or contemplative wisdom. The evil and injustice so evident in human history, and in Augustine's own wayward life, were wrongly attributed to matter or something in human nature.<sup>31</sup>

Fundamental to Augustine's conversion is his discovery of an ordered practice of intelligence and reason. The intellectual aspects of Augustine's conversion are especially present in books five through nine of his *Confessions*. His ascent to God was accompanied by an awareness of the importance, not only of understanding (*intellectus*) but also of judging that the understanding is true—of *Veritas*. For Augustine, the nature of the human mind is given and to be discovered—it is not self-constructed, as for many moderns.<sup>32</sup> His intellectual conversion was an experience of his own reason, his mind, as a spiritual self-presence. At the beginning of book seven of the *Confessions*, Augustine mentions how he was so "gross of mind" (*incrassatus corde*) that he had not come to the realization of how the mind, while it generates all images, is not itself an image "but altogether different from such images."<sup>33</sup> Augustine uses "*cor*" or heart to designate the mind with its orienting desire or will.<sup>34</sup> His own attentive self-consciousness

<sup>30</sup> Irenaeus, *Adversus Haereses* V, 8, 2. Also Pope John Paul II, "Mary was united to Jesus on the Cross," General Audience 25 October 1995, §2.

<sup>31</sup> See M. Lamb, "Eternity Creates and Redeems Time," in *Divine Creation in Ancient, Medieval, and Early Modern Thought: Essays Presented to the Reverend Dr. Robert D. Crouse*, ed. M. Treschow, W. Otten, and W. Hannam (Leiden: Brill, 2007), 116–40.

<sup>32</sup> Cf. Ernest L. Fortin, *The Birth of Philosophic Christianity: Studies in Early Christian and Medieval Thought*, ed. J. Brian Benestad (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 1996), 10–11, 21–122.

<sup>33</sup> *Confessions* 7.1.

<sup>34</sup> Cf. Edgardo de la Peza, *El significado de 'cor' en San Agustín* (Études Augustiniennes: Paris, 1962).

(*intentionem*) had been so dulled by his disordered desires and sinful living that he could not grasp that the mind both forms all images and transcends them. This twofold aspect of mind, both forming all images and yet not being itself a material image, is developed in his *De Trinitate*, where Augustine explores the human mind as an *immaterial* “*imago Dei*.”<sup>35</sup>

In *Confessions* 7.17 Augustine reflects on the nature of human intelligence as it judges something to be true and another thing false. “So, as I reflected on how it was that I came to make these judgments which I did make, I discovered above my changing mind an unchanging and true eternity of truth.”<sup>36</sup> He then recounts how he ascended from sensible and corporeal things to the faculty of reason and the intelligible and intelligent light by which he is led to prefer the true and eternal to the changeable. The realism of this presencing of eternal truth is clear when Augustine narrates that this intellectual conversion to truth is a discovery of Being: “*And in the flash of a trembling glance my mind came to That Which Is. I understood the invisible through those things that were created.*”<sup>37</sup> But he immediately adds that this discovery was not yet habitual. For he could not live the theoretic or contemplative life demanded by the discovery until Christ gave him the strength to do so.<sup>38</sup> Stop for a moment and reflect on the fact that truth is infinitely sharable. Also that your intellectual memories (when did you first discover that  $2 + 2 = 4$ ) are not intrinsically conditioned by space and time. You do not have to return to where you were when you knew it. So, Augustine says, intellectual memory is our rational self-presence—very different from sensible memories.<sup>39</sup>

<sup>35</sup> Cf. D. J. Merriell, *To the Image of the Trinity: A Study in the Development of Aquinas' Teaching* (Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, 1990), 13–35, 98–110 on Augustine. Cf. also John M. Rist, *Augustine: Ancient Thought Baptized* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 92–147, on Augustine's non-Platonic understanding of body, soul, and mind.

<sup>36</sup> *Confessions* 7.17: “hoc ergo quaerens, unde iudicarem, cum ita iudicarem, inueneram incommutabilem et ueram ueritatis aeternitatem supra mentem meam commutabilem.”

<sup>37</sup> *Ibid.*: “et peruenit ad id, quod est in ictu trepidantis aspectus. tunc uero inuisibilia tua per ea quae facta sunt intellecta conspexi.”

<sup>38</sup> Cf. the end of *Confessions* 8, where Augustine converts to Christ. That conversion enables him to live morally and intellectually. This is a classic expression of the ascent to truth as God that Augustine shares with his mother; it illustrates how the light of faith enables souls to enjoy a contemplation of the divine even if they lack formal intellectual training (Cf. *Confessions* 9.10).

<sup>39</sup> Cf. Karol Wojtyła, *Person und Tat*, 120–300, on how human acts both manifest the transcendence of human nature in the self-conscious acts of intelligence and at the same time manifest the integration of this transcendence by properly ordering human somatic appetites and human psychic emotions.

### Memories from the Second Millennium of Catholic Intellectual Life

The second millennium began with the growing affluence of cities and the ability they provided for learning and teaching in the monastic, cathedral, and convent contexts. Guilds of teachers and students spread within the towns of Europe during the eleventh and twelfth centuries. Then came the “*studia generalia*” which by the thirteenth century flowered into universities. Teaching and learning, while remaining in the monasteries, cathedral schools (seminaries), and convents would now also be carried out in colleges and universities dedicated primarily to science and scholarship. At the beginning of this process, St. Bernard of Clairvaux (1090–1153) in his debates with Peter Abelard worried that the new ways of learning and teaching might end up divorcing science and scholarship from wisdom and holiness.<sup>40</sup> The mendicant orders arose to infuse the new universities with teachers and students whose love for science and scholarship would be deepened by their commitment to Christ’s wisdom and the holiness of the Church. One thinks of St. Thomas Aquinas (1225–74) and St. Bonaventure (1217?–74). Cultures informed by Catholic faith were the matrix within which universities were born and flourished.

St. Thomas Aquinas wrote: “It is actually natural to man to strive for knowledge of the truth.” Blessed John Paul II writes of the perennial “*novitas*” of the work of Aquinas.<sup>41</sup> The English “originality” does not capture the meaning of “*novitas*” as newness, surprising unfamiliarity. The Holy Father himself experienced this startling strangeness of Aquinas’s work. Wojtyla realized that Aquinas’s writings illustrate recurrent patterns of acts of knowing that constitute a theoretical way of living, a way that attunes mind and heart to truth and wisdom. This opens us to the universal patterns of knowing and loving acts, which cultivate attitudes open to discovery of patterns in the whole of creation and redemption.<sup>42</sup> Indeed, if we are to bring together the quest for wisdom and holiness with the quest for science and scholarship, the Pope stresses the foundational importance of metaphysics.<sup>43</sup>

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<sup>40</sup> See St. Bernard’s *De Consideratione* and his 80th sermon on the Song of Songs. Also John R. Sommerfeldt, *Bernard of Clairvaux on the Life of the Mind* (New York: Newman Press, 2004).

<sup>41</sup> *Fides et Ratio* §43.

<sup>42</sup> *Ibid.* §44.

<sup>43</sup> *Ibid.* §83: “We face a great challenge at the end of this millennium to move from *phenomenon* to *foundation*, a step as necessary as it is urgent. We cannot stop short at experience alone; even if experience does reveal the human being’s interiority and spirituality, speculative reflection must penetrate to the spiritual substance

With Augustine and the Fathers, Aquinas distinguishes between the orientation of the mind toward the sensible and imaginable and the orientation of the mind to know itself and, through understanding its own spiritual nature,<sup>44</sup> to reach a true analogical knowledge of angels and God.<sup>45</sup> By attending to the rational soul's operations of knowing and loving, Aquinas grasped the central importance of this immaterial image of God as the highest created analogue to understand the central mystery of the Triune God.<sup>46</sup>

Since the human mind longs for correct answers, so this desire for truth leads to wisdom. Wisdom is acquired, according to Aquinas, insofar as the human mind moves from knowing sensible objects (e.g., physics), through imaginative objects (e.g., mathematics), to attending to spiritual or immaterial realities (e.g. metaphysics of being). The higher in no way negate the lower. Metaphysics provides a wise understanding of an open and ongoing intelligible order in the whole range of beings, material and spiritual, as well as in the range of sciences and mathematical disciplines.<sup>47</sup>

To understand what Pope John Paul II in *Fides et Ratio* calls "the surprising newness" of Aquinas is to grasp how Aquinas links the way of wisdom with judgment. Thinking and concepts are not enough. We know in the act of correctly judging; and true judgments are not limited to sensible and imaginative beings. "There are realities that transcend both the senses and the imagination, namely, those that are entirely independent of matter both with respect to their being (*esse*) and with respect

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and the foundation on which it depends. Therefore, a notion of philosophy which denies any room for metaphysics would be radically unsuited to the task of mediation in the understanding of Revelation."

<sup>44</sup> Cf. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa theologiae* I–II, qq. 55–70. Metaphysics is important, not only for serious theology, but as a foundation for the sciences, humanities, and arts, if these are to overcome fragmentation and the isolation that hinders interdisciplinary collaboration. Metaphysical wisdom provides a comprehensive heuristic framework capable of attuning the mind to an intelligibility in the whole of reality—to being as being. Aquinas clearly grasped how wisdom is both a divine gift and a natural aspiration of the human mind that seeks the acquisition of speculative and practical wisdom as intellectual excellence or virtues. Divine gifts neither deny nor denigrate human abilities. For these natural capacities are themselves the gifts of God's creative love. So the theological virtues call forth and encourage the journey of acquiring the human intellectual and moral virtues.

<sup>45</sup> From Augustine Aquinas takes the teaching on "ratio inferior" and "ratio superior"; cf. Robert Mulligan, S.J., "Ratio Superior and Ratio Inferior: The Historical Background," *The New Scholasticism* 29, no. 1 (1955): 1–32.

<sup>46</sup> Cf. the important book by Matthew Levering, *Scripture and Metaphysics: Aquinas and the Renewal of Trinitarian Theology* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2004).

<sup>47</sup> Aquinas, *In Boethius de Trinitate*, 5–6.

to their being understood. So, when we know realities of this kind through judgment, our knowledge must terminate neither in the imagination nor in the senses.”<sup>48</sup>

While our spiritual minds can know—not just think about—spiritual realities, our minds have as their proper objects material realities. The higher in no way negates the lower. There is here neither a Platonist nor a Cartesian opposition between the spiritual and the material, between mind (*res cogitans*) and bodies (*res extensa*). Aquinas analyzes in detail how the light of active intelligence illumines the human imagination, grasping the intelligibility in the phantasm (*species qua*) and understanding the universal in the particular (*species quae*), then intelligently formulating the universal common to many in the concept (*species in qua*). The intelligible is not a kind of “looking” with the senses alone; nor is it an imaginative looking at images alone. All the senses and the imagination provide the mind with givens to be understood. It is the light of active intelligence that grasps the intelligible and so the universal in the particular.<sup>49</sup>

There is no antinomy between the universal and the particular, no contradiction between the singular and the species and genus to which singular things belong. Aquinas states how by that light of active intelligence we can know truly very changeable and contingent things and events. He states: “For the light of agent intellect is needed by which we can know unchangeable truth in changeable things, and distinguish the things themselves from the likenesses of things.” Aquinas related Augustine’s understanding of divine illumination to Aristotle’s comment on the light of agent intellect. As Aquinas states: “it is a certain participation in every human being of the divine light.”<sup>50</sup>

### **American Contest with Nominalism for the Good of Science and Scholarship**

Pope John Paul II was particularly attentive to the developments in the United States of America. On his visits he would refer to the importance of truth for genuine freedom. He would also refer to the importance of

<sup>48</sup> Ibid., 6, 2c.

<sup>49</sup> On this see Bernard Lonergan, *Verbum: Word and Idea in Aquinas* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1997), 1–105.

<sup>50</sup> ST I, q. 84, a. 6 ad 1. This indicates how the experience of human consciousness in act is identical with the highest created experience of being (*esse*). God is Pure Act and Pure *Intelligere et Amare*. Note also that Wojtyła’s recovery of Aquinas situates personhood with being as *esse*, and so does not succumb to modern dichotomies between subjectivity and objectivity. This aspect of Wojtyła’s recovery of Aquinas would further develop Joseph P. Rice’s work referenced in note 11 above.

biblical faith, both Jewish and Christian.<sup>51</sup> Equivalently to Pope Benedict XVI, John Paul II saw that religious faith properly understood heals and enlightens reason, never blinding it.<sup>52</sup> This cooperation of faith and reason was threatened by the influence of Benedict Spinoza's radical Enlightenment.<sup>53</sup> His *Political-Theological Treatise* fragmented the Bible just as nature had been fragmented, so that all order is arbitrary power imposing order. Spinoza reduced the Bible into discrete sentences; there are no whole books, let alone the Bible as a whole. One text can find meaning only relative to other texts. He provided historicist reductive foundations to an historical-critical method that treated the Bible as any other text. As Newton's mechanics sought only three-dimensional perceptible motions, so Spinoza's canons of interpretation recognize only those perceptible textual meanings found in the Scriptures as a perceptible book. The texts are not to be taken as true when they are referring to any realities not perceptible by the human senses. Spinoza makes clear that biblical interpretation does not concern itself with the truth of the texts, but only with perceptible meanings. There can be no spiritual realities revealed in Scripture.<sup>54</sup>

This development has a special philosophical meaning for American culture. The new Enlightenment culture of the United States was particularly vulnerable to nominalism with its insistence that only isolated individual things exist and that all orders are imposed arbitrarily by will. From late-medieval nominalism through the Reformation and nineteenth-century romanticism, Americans, along with their modern European counterparts, sought to liberate human life and nature from Logos and what they considered the "cold constraints of reason." Science was handed over to mathematical hard-headedness, and voluntarism took over the fields of morality and religion. Hobbes and Locke did away with the Hellenic Christian cosmos of an Eternal and Loving Triune God. Humans were orphaned in a cold indifferent nature. Monads without purpose, they had to turn to what Hobbes termed the "prosthetic divinity" of their

<sup>51</sup> Cf. *The Pope Speaks to the American Church* (New York: Harper Collins, 1992), 97, 105–8, 144–55, et passim.

<sup>52</sup> Cf. Karol Wojtyła, *Sources of Renewal: The Implementation of Vatican II* (New York: Harper & Row, 1980), 13–60; and Richard A. Spinello, *The Encyclicals of John Paul II: An Introduction and Commentary* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2012), 135–53 on faith and reason.

<sup>53</sup> On the pervasive influence of Spinoza, cf. Jonathan Israel, *The Radical Enlightenment: Philosophy and the Making of Modernity 1650–1750* (New York: Oxford, 2001).

<sup>54</sup> Cf. Spinoza, *Theological-Political Treatise*, ed. Jonathan Israel (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 97–100. Also, Michael C. Legaspi, *The Death of Scripture and the Rise of Biblical Studies* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010).

engineering and technology in the war against hostile environments and other men. The so-called wars of religion led Spinoza, Hobbes, Locke, and other political philosophers to privatize revealed religion—or to reject it outright, as did Marx. Religion could no longer provide a wisdom for ordering societies, while war was read into the very marrow of nature and humanity. They threw out the baby (religion) and kept the bloody bath-water of wars and violence as intrinsic to nature, both cosmic and human.

Two Nobel laureate European scientists, Werner Heisenberg and John Eccles, contested strongly the materialist and empiricist rejection of past wisdom. Heisenberg studied the Greek philosophers as a teenager, his father being a Classics professor. A founder of quantum mechanics, he indicates the importance of recovering Aristotle's notions of *potency-form-act* as the ontological (metaphysical) framework of emergent probability.<sup>55</sup> The neurophysiologist John Eccles has demonstrated that conscious events cannot be in a one-to-one correlation with brain events. Indeed, he sees such reductionism as blocking progress in neurophysiology.<sup>56</sup> One of the greatest of American mathematicians and philosophers, Charles S. Peirce, realized the enormity of the threat posed by nominalism. He saw nominalism as pervasive throughout the modern era. Professor Paul Forster has provided a thorough analysis of Peirce's analysis and critique of nominalism.<sup>57</sup> Unfortunately, Peirce saw in Duns Scotus an ally for realism. He sought to disengage Scotus from Ockham's more radical nominalism. Had he studied more carefully the Augustinian and Thomist attention to the operations of intelligence in act, as the source of both concepts and the true propositions, he would have grasped that true judgments know real things. He would have had thereby a more solid realist alternative to nominalism than his pragmatism.<sup>58</sup> Peirce's pragmatism is still caught

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<sup>55</sup> Cf. Werner Heisenberg, *Physics and Philosophy: The Revolution in Modern Science* (New York: Harper Perennial, 2007, reprint of 1958 edition), 133–40, 154–60; on Kant and Augustine on infinity, 98–99. Also see Patrick Heelan, *Quantum Mechanics and Objectivity: A Study of the Physical Philosophy of Werner Heisenberg* (The Hague: Nijhoff, 1965). In a letter to Fr. Heelan, Heisenberg emphasizes how an ontology grounds his quantum mechanics.

<sup>56</sup> John Eccles and Karl Popper, *The Self and Its Brain: An Argument for Interactionism* (London: Rutledge, 1984 reprint). Joseph Ratzinger refers to Eccles in his *Eschatology: Death and Eternal Life*, trans. Michael Waldstein (Washington, DC: The Catholic University of America Press, 1988), 255–56, 264.

<sup>57</sup> Paul Forster, *Peirce and the Threat of Nominalism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011).

<sup>58</sup> Cf. John F. Boler, *Charles Peirce and Scholastic Realism* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1963); Karl-Otto Apel, *Charles Peirce: From Pragmatism to Pragmatism* (New York: Humanities Press, 1995).

in a Scotistic conceptualism, and so is a half-way house between nominalism and a fully verifiable and verified ontological realism.<sup>59</sup>

### **Conclusion: John Paul II as a Prophet of a New Humanism**

A long procession of saints, scholars, scientists, and artists in the last two centuries of the second millennium sought to defend the dignity of human life and to overcome the fragmentation of an instrumentalist degradation of human reason. Popes John Paul II and Benedict XVI call attention to the saints, martyrs, holy scholars, and artists who have kept alive the intellectual apostolate that proceeds from the heart of the Church. For the two-millennial procession of Catholicism means that its third millennium offers hope. The procession is not, despite all appearances to the contrary, doomed to wander aimlessly amid the rows and hedges of a nominalist-fragmented shadow world that is condemned to death. Whenever Catholics feel lost in a maze of modernity or post-modernity and are tempted to break off participation in the procession, to withdraw into a total rejection of contemporary science, scholarship, and art, we need to recall, with Flannery O'Connor, that a procession is not a march or regimented parade.<sup>60</sup> These latter she saw as Pelagian efforts to march mechanically with a false conviction that human progress has replaced Divine Providence: ever forwards, never backwards or sideways. In comparison with such marches, processions tend to meander, depending upon countless interactions of the participants, each moving in answer to a Divine Call of the Teacher, being fascinated by this or that object or person.

Like processions coming up against unexpected obstacles, Catholicism has had to improvise and meander around obstacles, oppositions, and delays. Is this not the way that God has created the universe? Do not contemporary scientists and artists confirm the wisdom of St. Thomas Aquinas, echoing the Fathers, that creation is a "procession" rather than a mechanistic, clock-like march? The mechanistic rationalism of the recent past does not do justice to reason; the divine order of creation consists in its procession from God and return to Him.

<sup>59</sup> Cf. Vincent Potter, "Objective Chance: Lonergan and Peirce on Scientific Generalization," in his *Peirce's Philosophical Perspectives* (New York: Fordham University Press, 1993); also Michael Forest, "Lonergan and the Classical American Tradition," in *Method: A Journal of Lonergan Studies* 23, no. 1 (2005): 17–42.

<sup>60</sup> Cf. Arthur Kennedy, "A Hope Embodied in Story: Flannery O'Connor's Vision," in *Lonergan Workshop* (Chestnut Hill, MA: Boston College, 1984), Vol. IV. Also Kennedy's "The Good under Construction: Flannery O'Connor's Gift," published in the *College of Saint Thomas Magazine* (Autumn, 1989), and his "Processions Are Our Rightful Home," Commencement address, University of St. Thomas Graduation, December 16, 1994.

Given sin and the massive injustices in human history, the importance of holiness and the theological virtues cannot be overestimated for participation in this Catholic intellectual procession as the Church makes her way at the beginning of her third millennium. The fact that theology has disappeared from the cultural patrimony of our post-nominalist intellectual establishment has meant that the human sciences are bereft of a wisdom they desperately need. Empiricist human sciences study and chart how human beings behave, how they act. They tend to take any behavior—no matter how disordered and sinful it is—as normative. On the basis of such studies social policies are formulated, and so disorder and sin are structured into society and culture—in such laws as those condoning and supporting contraception, abortion, euthanasia, same-sex marriage, all to the detriment of religious liberty.

Catholic universities need to recover the roles of philosophy and theology in interdisciplinary collaboration with the natural and human sciences, the liberal arts, humanities, and professional programs. Only the labors of universities over centuries will build up an architectonic wisdom open to, and integrative with, all true advances in science and scholarship. Our graduate programs in philosophy and theology should lead the way in reintegrating science, scholarship, and the humanities with wisdom and holiness.

If we cultivate sound scholarly judgment and are intelligent and faithful, we may discover that the Catholic intellectual traditions are, in fact, a vast and complex cathedral of the mind and heart to which each generation of human beings is called to contribute. A cathedral of the mind and heart, far more enduring than those of stone, wherein dwells an attentive reverence for the goodness and holiness of genuine knowing and loving. In such a cathedral of the mind and heart every discovery of truth is ultimately a gift, a finite, created participation in the embracing Mystery of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit: Infinite Understanding generating Infinite Wisdom spirating Infinite Love. For this cathedral of the mind and heart is the whole Body of Christ in the City of God. Blessed John Paul II was, as his biographer George Weigel reminds us, a prophet of a new humanism calling us in the third millennium of Catholicism to “a new springtime of the human spirit” dedicated in faith and love to the true dignity of human beings created in the image and likeness of God and redeemed by the passion, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. To Father, Son, and Holy Spirit be all honor and glory now and forever. Amen.