From *Truth* and *truth*

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Volume II—
Faith and Reason in Dialogue

By

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FOREWORD

In his introduction to this second volume in his trilogy on faith and reason Francis Etheredge offers us a picture of a sprawling Catholic home in which a large family is gathered around the table, sharing not only their meals together, but working and studying there. It is a home of 'failed consumers', but where communication is the watchword. The natural setting of the family table might almost be taken as an image for the easy flow of dialogue that is present in these pages themselves as ideas move conversationally in the ebbs and flows so characteristic of mealtime discussions. Portions of chapters can begin with a consideration of the philosophical anthropology of St John Paul II and move – almost by interjection – to a proposal about the use of compost. This is "table-talk", and like its predecessors in the genre, it is engaging, often unexpected (even enjoyably tangential), suddenly iridescent with insight, and with a thoughtful autobiographical strand running through the text and footnotes.

The personal voice is very much present in these chapters as we are offered the opportunity to join in the author's own journey of discovery as he seeks to lace his experiences into the closely woven cloth of reason and revelation. One of the questions that he puts to himself at various points in the text, for example, is what kinds of insight might be gained into the questions he raises from the particular lay and family vocational setting and experiences of his own life. This personal voice, then, is one that is situated firmly in a setting *with others*. It is also always in *dialogue*: with the Scriptures in the first place, and then with Karol Wojtyla in particular (who rarely leaves the table). From there the dialogue extends in an open-ended way with numerous figures who come to share in the conversation.

Dialogue has a long philosophical pedigree, of course, and the volume highlights both philosophical and theological aspects of a Christian anthropology that are needed to provide a rationale for such a pathway to the seeking of truth. Dialogue is predicated upon alternating voices and a careful listening and there is a strong willingness to embrace "difference" here, as well as a recognition of the time that is needed to hear voices speaking clearly. This patience in turn is made possible by a trust that the final outcome of such a recognition is not that of mutually uncomprehending figures, as in Derrida's "différance", where the meaning of every conversation is endlessly deferred, but rather a rich account of

integration, an integration that reaches far beyond co-existence because of the character of being as *being-for*. As the author notes, the perennial Christian understanding is that any theology of creation is that of *gift*.

This careful articulation of an understanding of being as gift is in turn closely related to a welcome and timely exploration of the gendered nature of the human person. The chapters probe the question that was continually offered to the Church by St John Paul II: why did God choose to create in both male and female forms? There are two related discussions in these pages that I think particularly worth attending to in this exploration of gender, difference and integrality, and the doors to these two discussions are both unlocked by the author by the same hermeneutical key, the Person of Christ. One discussion revolves around the question of how the Trinitarian Persons-in-Unity shed light on the gendered reality of human persons, especially in the concrete settings of family and ecclesial community. Here the points raised are often vivid and helpfully specific. "Home" is a recurring image. A second area of interest is the investigation of how gendered being is revealed in the work of salvation – again, treated in the concrete as well as at a theological level.

—Petroc Willey

INTRODUCTION TO VOLUME II: FAITH AND REASON IN DIALOGUE[1]

'[T]here is a twofold order of knowledge, distinct not only in its principle but also in its object; in its principle, because in the one we know by natural reason, in the other by divine faith; in its object, because apart from what natural reason can attain, there are proposed to our belief mysteries that are hidden in God, which can never be known unless they are revealed by God' (*Dei Filius*[2]). In view, then, of that general background, there are numerous ways that faith and reason can reflect the fact that the person is a 'dialogical being'[3]. Thus, just as natural and supernatural knowledge can enter into dialogue, so **'science and religion, with their distinctive approaches to understanding reality, can enter into an intense dialogue fruitful for both' (*Laudato Si'*, 62).** A dialogue, however, is not without its difficulties; and, therefore, it is as well to heed the following, general advice: **"Pray as if everything depended on God and work as if everything depended on you" (CCC, 2834[4]).** Even in the context of the vocation to pray, then, there is a kind of "imitation" of 'a twofold order of knowledge ... because apart from what natural reason can attain, there are ... mysteries that are ... revealed by God' (*Dei Filius*). On the one hand there is the invitation to pray 'as if everything depended on you'; but on the other hand, there is the invitation to work 'as if everything depended on you.' Prayer and action, however, are two complementary dimensions of the one human act; and, while this is generally applicable to all that we

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[1] These essays are a part of the material that originally formed one book proposal but grew to three volumes. Once again I am indebted to Mr. Martin Higgins for both his proof reading and linguistic advice. I apologise, however, for any remaining grammatical omissions or confusions.

[2] *Dei Filius: Chapter IV: Faith and Reason*, p. 45 of *The Christian Faith in the Doctrinal Documents of the Catholic Church*, edited by J. Neuner and J. Dupuis, New York: Alba House, 1982.

[3] Cf. Cardinal Ratzinger, now Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI, "Concerning the notion of person in theology", *Communio: International Catholic Review*, 17, (Fall, 1990), pp. 459, 441-442.

[4] Footnote 122: Attributed to St. Ignatius Loyola etc.

do, what is actually relevant here is the *distinction between reason and revelation.*

The distinction between reason and revelation, however, entails a corresponding relationship between the two, as expressed by the recognition that it is 'the same God who reveals mysteries and infuses faith [who] has bestowed the light of reason on the human mind' (*Dei* Filius[5]). Thus there is, as it were, a natural complementarity, analogous to man and woman, between faith and reason. In other words, as it became obvious that there was too much material for one book, it was natural to look at the possibility of a subdivision of the material; and, in this excerpt from *The First Vatican General Council's Dei Filius*, in 1871, there is a clear distinction between two orders of knowledge: natural and supernatural. Faith and Reason is, then, the schema which enabled this work to proceed; and, in the light of that distinction, it was clear that a number of essays drew on very different sources. It was in this sense, then, that even if there is a certain path between the natural and supernatural nature of truth[6], there is also a "graced common reason" (cf. *Laudato Si'*, 205): a common intelligence and wisdom which is at work in the human being. But, more significantly, "faith" and "reason" can also signify the tendency for there to be *very different points of departure.*

It is this characteristic of knowledge, having two different points of departure, then, that indicated the structure of this volume: volume two; for, in various ways, it was noticeable that a number of essays brought into dialogue what, on reflection, had very different origins. In other words, it is not as if there is a natural antipathy between faith and reason; rather, they 'are like two wings on which the human spirit rises to the contemplation of truth' (*Fides et Ratio*, Prologue) and, like wings, belong together.

I. General Introduction

General Introduction to Volume II: Faith and Reason in Dialogue. The emphasis of this volume, however, is not on the integral nature of faith and reason, as expressed in the imagery of 'two wings'; but, rather, on an image of two complementary, but different "poles" or points of

[5] *The Christian Faith*, p. 46, *Dei Filius: Chapter IV: Faith and Reason.*

[6] This view developed, in part, through a previous discussion in sections of Chapter 6 of this volume (an introduction being generally written after the work as a whole); but, on the basis of considering the work as a whole, it also came into aspects of Volume I.

departure, then there is more of a sense of a constructive, dynamic tension, between them. The dialogue of faith and reason is about two, if not three tendencies: the tendency to an unnatural opposition or "polarisation" of what belongs together; the natural process of bringing together what had different and complementary starting points; and, thirdly, the reciprocal benefit of a critical dialogue between them (cf. *Lumen Fidei*, 34). This volume, then, entails an element of each of these tendencies; however, it is particularly concerned with the constructive, if critical dialogue between faith and reason. On the one hand, it is necessary to build on the first volume's account of how reason is a function of the whole person; and, on the other hand, it is necessary to draw on the whole range of human experience which, as such, includes the "experience" of the conversion to faith[7]. Thus the general characteristics of natural and supernatural truth are "rooted" in the life of a particular person. While it seems, then, that this dialogue is about a dynamic tension in society, between the Church and the world, *it is also* a dialogue which belongs "within" each one of us as well as "between" each one of us. In other words, given the structure of the history of salvation in the context of creation, there is a "place" in the common good for the multifaceted dialogue between faith and reason.

Cosmological considerations, then, "naturally" pose questions about the universe as a whole. The principle, for example, that particular phenomena "need" the rest of the universe to exist is a wonderful illustration of the "balance" between a part and the whole. In "complementary contrast" to the cosmological science of the universe, there is the biblical, "existential expression" of the mystery of the person, male and female, perfectly proportioned to exist on the earth. In other words, although these "points of departure" are vastly different, *they arise from the same universe, they are the concern of the same subject, man, male and female, and they express and refer to the same God.* Cosmology, however, is the broad context of articulating the "dynamic of natural dialogue"[8]. The particular area of dialogue chosen to further the discussion here is that of the relationship between ecology and man, male and female.

[7] There is an account of this in the third part of the General Introduction to all three volumes in Volume I.

[8] Aspects of this question were addressed in the essays on "What is Philosophy?" and "What is Being?" in Volume I, Chapters 1 and 2 of this trilogy.

From the general to the particular interaction of reason and faith

Taking account, then, of the encyclical, *Laudato Si'*, it is clear that Pope Francis is concerned with a particular type of this dialogue between faith and reason; and, as such, it could be called a dialogue between a philosophically and a theologically informed ecological study of the environment (cf. *Laudato Si'*, 17). In other words, on the one hand there does need to be an 'empirical science' (*Laudato Si'*, 199) of the environment which both records and reflects on the present reality of the situation; however, a study of this kind would need to recognise the positive and negative progression of what has been done, what is being done and the various possibilities of what can be done. Furthermore, it cannot be assumed that "technological" solutions are a solution: 'Technology ... sometimes solves one problem only to create others' (*Laudato Si'*, 20 and cf. 34, 60). There does, then, need to be a further kind of reflection: a disinterested kind of objectivity which is, in its way, an expression of love in that it lets the painful truth teach us what is actually happening and what actually needs to be done (cf. *Laudato Si'*, 19).

On the other hand, however, it is unrealistic, uninformed and even unscientific for an environmental science to restrict its vision to what is measurable (cf. *Laudato Si'*, 107); indeed, there are enormous and plain interrelationships between a system of business that can move goods and waste products on a global scale and its effects on the home environment of the vulnerable poor (cf. *Laudato Si'*, 51). There are immense issues of justice, too, particularly in view of the interrelationship between international business and the detritus left by its departure (cf. *Laudato Si'*, 51). In other words, there is the profoundly global-ethical question: What is it wise to do for the good of our planetary home and the people in it?

Why is it unscientific to exclude the variety of interrelationships which constitute the natural model (cf. Laudato Si', 22) of an ecological grasp of the environment?

It is clear that there are many sources of knowledge, from the everyday witness of change to complex studies. Thus there can be many well founded "local" observations of changes, such as a decline in plant, animal or marine fertility, unexplained rise in birth defects or an increase in problems with local water which obviously indicate the need for more precise research to identify its causes.

However, equally "co-incident" changes in the local environment may well have a bearing on this environmental and social degradation, such as

a parallel industrial development in the region. In other words, identifying and testing industrial waste may well be a practical and immediate point of departure for a more wider ranging study of a whole area. Thus there may well be connections between airborne gases and rainfall, seepage and underground water supplies and, in general, the more subtle and intricate "routes" by which pollutants impact on an environment through food chains and other "ecological" pathways. It is possible, too, that there are a multitude of changes which accumulate, such as the disappearance of smallholdings and the emergence of corporate farms, the use of heavier machinery and its compaction of the soil, the desertification of vast areas owing to the increase in the size of fields and the effects of prevailing winds, the rise in unemployment, the need for the poor to find fuel and the local intensification of problems owing to real, broader changes in the extent and frequency of rainfall. Some of these changes may be "driven" by more remote causes being "transmitted" by sea currents, prevailing winds and product and market changes in other parts of the world. 'The warming caused by huge consumption on the part of some rich countries has repercussions on the poorest areas of the world, especially Africa, where a rise in temperature, together with drought, has proved devastating for farming' (*Laudato Si'*, 51).

Just as a company's exploitation of a people and a place has a concrete expression, so there needs to be that natural development of the empirical to the philosophical: of a scientific to a philosophically sound ecological environmentalism.

The simplest of solutions are profoundly difficult to "live"

If a human being cannot recognise the need for a change in levels of consumption, for example, then there is the danger of "victimising" others with a solution; indeed, what takes place individually, with a person "avoiding blame" through blaming someone else, could well be translated into global "anti-population politics"[9]. The Church herself is regarded as a "cause" of the problem: 'John Vidal of the *Guardian* accuses ... Pope

[9] Cf. Consider, for example, the growing prevalence of "forced" or "coerced" population measures ("The plot to sterilise the poor", Dennis Sewell, pp. 16-17 of the *Catholic Herald*, June 19th, 2015); indeed, consider the prophetic words of Blessed Pope Paul VI in *Humanae Vitae*, 17: 'the danger of ... power passing into the hands of those public authorities who care little for the precepts of the moral law.' This quotation has been altered by the omission of the word 'this' in order to bring out the very wide dangers attached to the passing of power to 'those public authorities who care little for the precepts of the moral law.'

[Francis] of "glossing over" the Church's role in the population growth "overwhelming" so many countries'[10]. In other words, whether it is each of us recognising our actual reality or it is families, social pressure groups, companies or international organisations, *there is a definite requirement that each person is involved in being delivered from hidden motivations (cf. Ps 19: 12) that render imperfect if not immoral an otherwise good concern for our 'common home'*[11]. Thus, albeit it appears remotely connected with an environmental concern for our "home", there is in fact a direct impact of our hidden motivations on our objectivity; and, therefore, the grace of a 'global ecological *conversion*' (*Laudato Si'*, 5[12]) is an obvious and radical faith contribution to the love of the poor and the care of our 'common home' (*Laudato Si'*, 13). It is very striking, in fact, that our objectivity is indeed served by the following: 'Our goal is not to amass information or to satisfy curiosity, but rather to become painfully aware, to dare to turn what is happening to the world into our own personal suffering and thus to discover what each of us can do about it' (*Laudato Si'*, 19).

At the same time, however, it is interesting to note that Pope Francis says: 'On many concrete questions, the Church has no reason to offer a definitive opinion; she knows that honest debate must be encouraged among experts, while respecting divergent views' (*Laudato Si'*, 61). Thus, while there remains much to be said about the theological contribution of the Church, it is as well to recognise that there is a clear differentiation of competence and expertise in the context of a common concern, if not love of the world in which we live. Having said that, however, if self-interest is a problematic vantage point from which to view what is going on world-wide, then it is possible that the Church's role of *listening to a wide range of experts, experiences and points of view is a definite aid in the facilitation of an 'honest debate'*[13] *about the whole situation.*

More generally the very existence and nature of the Church could be said to express an openness to God; indeed, it is almost her unique charism to communicate to man, male and female, *man's permanent need of the help of God* (cf. *Laudato Si'*, 71). Clearly, however, this is not a treatise on

[10] From the "Week in Review": "What the British media are saying [in response to Pope Francis' 'environmental encyclical']", p. 6 of the *Catholic Herald*, June 26, 2015.
[11] Pope Francis uses this expression in numerous place in *Laudato Si'* e.g. 13; its use here is with added italics.
[12] Pope Francis is quoting St. John Paul II; but, also, consider the following: *Laudato Si'*, 8, 15, 19 etc.
[13] *Laudato Si'*, 61.

the Church and, therefore, her mystery is more of a presence of God among us (cf. *Laudato Si'*, 99) than that of thinking through her being an "openness to God" (cf. *Laudato Si'*, 119 and cf. *Lumen Gentium*, 7). Nevertheless, from the point of view of the dialogical nature of the Church in the world, *her very presence is a constant sign that man needs the help of God: to convert, to love the truth and to focus on the priority of the person.* In the context, then, of this particular discussion about our common home, we need to pray together, to act together and to dialogue about our differences; and, indeed, we need to recognise that 'nature as a whole not only manifests God but is also a locus of his presence' (*Laudato Si'*, 88).

Conversion to the common good: compost; seeds; and families

Compost: What biodegrades at the same rate and what is helpfully different?

It might seem simplistic to discuss compost; however, in view of the fact that Pope Francis mentions 'turning off unnecessary lights' (*Laudato Si'*, 211), clearly the least among our initiatives to help the planet and the poor is not to be rejected. It was, then, while using the contents of a composter in the back garden that it was noticeable that banana skins, fruit waste generally and vegetable peelings had rotted far more quickly than flower stems, avocado stones and their thick skins; indeed, the remains of cut-flowers were "stacked" on top of the vegetable peelings which had rotted to a soil type of mixture, interspersed with what did not breakdown in the same timescale, such as coconut shells, avocado stones and skins and eggshells. Thus what emerges from even such a domestic project is that owing to different organic items rotting at different rates, the differentiation of organic waste could lead to the production of organic fuel; for example, the cut-flower stems, avocado stones and skins all remained relatively intact while the rest, apart from the eggshell, had more or less rotted down. Thus the avocado stones, plentiful in places like Dominica, could possibly be used as an "organic" coal[14]; indeed, there may be other types of organic coal available, such as the pine cones from the vast forest re-plantations in different parts of England and Scotland.

[14] Indeed, it was while on a teaching visit to Dominica (in 2013, for one week, staying with Bishop Gabriel Malzaire) that it became apparent that the island had a need to devise, discover or invent an energy efficient system that was less costly than imported fuel.

Clearly, however, these kinds of rudimentary observations need the support of various kinds of practical tests. Nevertheless, there is clearly a case for investigating the alternative use of "common" organic waste, besides sophisticated and expensive initiatives that, ultimately, could only be made possible by international cooperation.

Local variations, sharing biodiversity and domestic industries

It is noticeable, too, that over the last winter, a number of plants had started to grow in the grass in the back garden; and, as there were patches of dirt instead of grass, we weeded them out in order to plant more grass for the children to play on. It turned out that there are several sycamore trees over the back fence and, unnoticed to us, there were hundreds of sycamore seeds taking root in a little patch of grass. The point of this observation is that given that these seeds had sown themselves so easily, sycamore might be one of those trees which would grow easily elsewhere. Thus, thinking about the need for biodiversity (cf. *Laudato Si'*, 8[15], 32-42, 86, 169), it could be possible to collect a variety of what grows in "domestic" abundance and "post them" to other parts of the world: a kind of "seed" sharing (cf. *Laudato Si'*, 93). Ordinary people, then, could simply distribute seeds of various kinds through the post. In other words, if people from different parts of the world sent a selection of seeds to places suffering all kinds of environmental degradation, it might provide another source of vegetation and, possibly, allow for a kind of resurgence of biodiversity[16]. Furthermore, given the historical fact of different people going on expeditions and collecting the biodiversity indigenous to other places, it would seem a fitting act of generosity to return a variety of these species to places where, for reasons of pollution or changes in the climate, their natural occurrence has either diminished or disappeared.

In between, then, the domestic initiatives and the necessary international cooperation that will have to emerge if progress is going to be made across our planetary home, there is the whole range of local and national businesses. Thus it is not so much about rejecting technology as utilizing a wide range of "low" levels of technology. Indeed it a case of combining a more expert knowledge of foodstuffs, the diverse "value" of

[15] Footnote 15 of the Encyclical was to Patriarch Bartholomew: '*Address in Santa Barbara, California* (8 November 1997); cf. John Chryssavgis, *On Earth as in Heaven: Ecological Vision and Initiatives of Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew*, Bronx, New York, 2012.'

[16] Clearly, however, there is a kind of common sense caution that can be applied; for example, not sending something from an obviously diseased source.

the "waste", "calorific" or heat values of different and commonly available organic materials and a more human and "bio-friendly" type of help. It is almost as if there is a need, not only for international "domestic sharing" but, more generally, for a restoration and resurgence of smallholdings and cottage industries; indeed, the scale of consumerism has made "manufacturing goods" a premium, but in fact there needs to be more local, small, "domestic" types of resourcefulness: what my mother called "sheddery". With the coming of the industrial revolution and the "scaling up" of the concentration of labour, technology and all the problems of large scale enterprises, there was the destruction of a more modest but widely distributed type of work and its benefits; and, therefore, it is not a matter of returning to the past but of redeveloping the variety of ways of working which, in their own way, are a kind of renewed cultural "bio-diversity" of work (cf. *Laudato Si'*, 114, 124-129).

Instead of a big family being seen as the problem it is in fact a part of the cure[17]

> "My family and many Catholic families I know are almost complete failures as consumers"[18]

To begin with, we rent our home and, as such, this is a challenge to the almost indigenous mentality of home ownership. Whether it is improving the soil in the garden or the general condition of the interior or reporting the repairs that need doing, we are enriching the property we use. Each time there is an improvement, whether it is putting down a floor covering, painting and decorating or putting up shelves, there is a "consciousness" of returning what we are given in a better condition than we received it; and, indeed, adding to the nature of the house as a home, a place to cultivate family life and beauty, the talents of the children, hospitality and neighbourliness, is also about passing on a "legacy". Thus, without personal ownership, there can nevertheless be appreciation, enhancement and that sense of "passing on" to others the transformations of our own work, ingenuity and investment. It is also a place for children to learn to express themselves in dialogue with others, to decide and do things, to recognise interests and receive instruction, somewhat in the Jewish

[17] Cf. "The best of the Catholic blogosphere": "Big families are green", p. 7 of the *Catholic Herald*, June 26th, 2015, a summary of Simcha Fisher: 'Big Families say "Laudato Si"', at: http://www.patheos.com/blogs/simchafisher/2015/06/19/big-families-say-laudato-si/

[18] Simcha Fisher: 'Big Families say "Laudato Si"'.

tradition and, as such, as an expression of the natural desire of one generation to transmit skills of all kinds to the next generation. In a small way, then, this is our contribution to the environment; and, as such, while some things will need replacing when we go, it is nevertheless true that a home will be available for others[19].

More generally, however, the practicalities of having eight children are about praying, buying a second hand car and running it for as long as possible; and, as it happens, buying another one twelve years later, for less, because the cost of mending the last one had finally amounted to the cost of another, "new to us", second hand car[20]. Thus we end up, through the wisdom and generosity of others, with a vehicle which is already fifteen years old and affordable and, what is more, following a service is recommended to us with the words: "it needs using". We also cannot all fit into our car and so, as required, we share another vehicle with my mother-in-law and, on occasion, other members of our family and Church. Thus, instead of one or two people in a "bus", our car use is very economical; and, in addition, we use bus tickets, scooters and bicycles to vary our transport costs. As regards children's beds, one bunk bed was a present, another one came from my family, a third was from a neighbour and we bought a fourth.

Our dining room table, which can still take four guests "at a squeeze" and, therefore, fourteen people "comfortably", was thirty pounds from a recycling centre, presumably because nobody else wanted it; and, at the same time, it is big enough for a variety of simultaneous uses, from cooking to games and homework. The house furniture as a whole comes from very different sources, like our clothes and books; and, although some of it is new, much is recycled, reused and even, on occasion, redesigned for another use. In-house skills are not only good for the children to develop, helping them to have an all-round education, but essential to the running of the household; and, as such, help with the garden, fence painting, decorating, cooking and general clearing up and mending, if possible, what is broken, are all necessary activities.

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[19] Cf. also Synod of Bishops, XIV Ordinary General Assembly, *The Vocation and Mission of the Family in the Church and the Contemporary World, Instrumentum Laboris*, Lorenzo Cardinal Baldisseri, 23 June, 2015, paragraphs 48, 50.

[20] In Volume III, Chapter 12, of this collection, there is an account of the beginning of our married life. Also in Volume III, Chapter 15, there are other aspects in Part I on Witness, in Part II on Pilgrimage and, more briefly, in Part III on Person and Place. Finally, in Chapter 2 of *Scripture: A Unique Word*, 2014, there is an account of the father, however imperfect, as servant and catechist.

The home culture, then, taken as it is within a framework of an "ends-meet" budget, involves the challenge to develop interests, play group games as well as have time on something electronic, read, draw, write, design slide-shows, build models, invent games, discuss, dialogue, argue and hope to resolve conflicts quickly and good naturedly, especially before bedtime. The encouragement, therefore, of a wide range of interests and a proportion of real work stimulates personal observation and the multi-faceted conversations that are possible round the table or at different times. Consider, for example, the explosion of hydrogen and oxygen at a science fair and the production of a small amount of water; and then "add-in" all the questions that are raised by the vast quantity of water that is on our planet and the kind of energy required to "make it". Indeed, if water was made by an explosion "in space", then why did it not disperse; and, if it was made on an earth already formed, how was that possible? But then also consider the desperate need that many people have for clean water. What, in fact, are the conditions which favour a recovery of the sources of the world's drinking water and, in particular, the meeting of the needs of the poor and of our common home (cf. *Laudato Si'*, 27-31)?

Conversion "assists" the changes we need; and, in general, helps us to see the more wider-ranging reality to which each of us contributes, either positively or negatively

What is the connection, then, between conversion and this kind of "domestic" science, economic intelligence and cultural development? Principally, our resistance to change is not simply unwillingness, it is also motivational (cf. *Laudato Si'*, 216[21]); but, more than reasons which motivate, we need an action which is a greater good than we can bring about on our own. The whole environmental tragedy and the immense discrepancies of wealth, power, access to good water, reasonable working hours and a generous share of the profits, all testify to man's inability to live the *Gospel of a Common Home: the Gospel of Creation*. The kind of motivation that we need is not just the rational account of the situation of the environment, a recognition of injustice and the poor on whom it impacts so severely, but the grace of God which purifies good changes and makes them salvific for us, the poor and the planet.

[21] Cf. too, what it says in the *Book of Wisdom*: "Let us lie in wait for the righteous man, because he is inconvenient to us and opposes our actions; he reproaches us for sins against the law, and accuses us of sins against our training" (Wis 2: 12).

In conclusion, then, *Laudato Si'* is a keystone[22] of Catholic social teaching; however, it is not just a keystone of Church doctrine, it is a challenge to the world to change. This encyclical brings to a wholesome conclusion a whole tradition of modern reflection on society, morality, truth, human life and now the environment; and, as such, shows that they are not separated: that doing good and avoiding evil is a comprehensive moral norm, excluding nothing in its "orbit" or "radius". In this introduction, however, *Laudato Si'* has provided a vivid example of the two directions of human thought, the one inspired by the present state of our common home and the other inspired by the gift of God called conversion; and, as such, it shows how subtle and involved is that common dialogue, albeit it also shows that there is no contradiction between the good of each one of us and the common good of all.

It is, then, to this theme of dialogue, as it is further expressed in this present volume, that it is now necessary to turn.

II. An Overview of the Themes in Volume II: Faith and Reason in Dialogue

Just as dialogue implies difference, so it also implies community. Therefore, although each of these essays takes up the discussion of a "difference", it is in order to establish the *integral* truth of the human person which we are called to recognise, to promote and to investigate. On the one hand, then, there are the "polarities" of philosophy *and* theology, natural truth *and* the call to conversion, psychology *and* spirituality, the mission of the Church *and* its dialogue with society and the planet *and* the love of our neighbour as ourselves. On the other hand, there is a need for there to be an account of these "dialogue" partners in terms that indicate their complementary sources, methods and institutions; and, as such, these chapters build on the general foundations of chapter one, volume one, which considered a number of interrelated areas of philosophy, from anthropology to politics. Ultimately, however, this is not, and cannot be, an exhaustive account of each discipline or dimension of life nor can it anticipate the fact that this is a person-to-person conversation which will, inevitably, entail an enormous variety of attitudes and subtle differences.

Nevertheless, it is increasingly clear that there needs to be a recognition of the *difference that a lay vocation makes to the whole conversation*; indeed, '[t]he Council stresses that the ... [lay apostolate] is exercised above all by the presence of Christians in the world, among

[22] https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Keystone_(architecture)

men, in their various walks of life': a 'presence' that is also a bearing 'witness'[23]. Throughout these three volumes, then, there is both what is clearly the fruit of study and, at the same time, there are various references to personal experience. The balance, however, is in favour of searching for that integral structure of human personhood and activity; and, in that respect, it is clear that there are natural limits to the range of personal experience. The analysis of what is particular can, at the same time as it recognises what is uniquely characteristic of a particular person, open onto what is universalizeable; and, therefore, as with the Scripture as a whole, there is a natural need to "go between" the particular and the general.

III. A Brief Account of Each Essay

In what follows there is a brief response to each of the four chapters that constitute this volume of essays. Thus these introductions are not simply summaries of their content, although that is indicated. Each 'General Introduction' is also repeated at the start of each chapter to help orientate the reader to what they had previously read.

General Introduction to Chapter 5: The Human Person in the Light of the Anthropology of St. John Paul II. What is man? The *Answer of Reason* and the *Answer of Faith*. Within the limitations of this particular study of the work of St. John Paul II it is possible to see a wider question: the contrast between a philosophical and a theological anthropology as the contrast between an anthropology which "abstracts" from gender and a theology which "starts" from man, male and female. There is, too, a certain question about why philosophy, in general, has been so slow to take up the question about the nature of the gendered person when, from a philosophical point of view, the evidence of man, male and female has been with us from the beginning. Even if, however, there is the obvious departure for reason in the "fact" of gendered personhood, the focus of such a question is beyond the parameters of this essay. Thus the contrast here is between a philosophical account of the rational person and the departure of the word of God.

Startlingly, almost, even if the word of God was not always understood to be giving an account of the "primordial" interrelationship between the mystery of God being the Blessed Trinity and the mystery of man, male and female, yet the biblical account has proceeded with a remarkable realism and, at the same time, an incredible ingenuity of expression. Thus,

[23] Wojtyla, *Sources of Renewal*, translated by P. S. Falla, London: Collins, Fount Paperbacks etc., 1980, p. 347.

in a certain way, the biblical account has expressed the profoundest of questions expressed in the very common fact of man, male and female; indeed, it is almost one of the deepest anthropological questions: the reason for the complementary difference between man and woman: the reason for the existence of *two forms of being a human person.* In other words, man, male and female is definitely in the foreground of this essay; however, these complementary forms of personhood are indicative of the deeper mystery which it discloses.

Thus there is a "rediscovery" of the word of God being able to illuminate our "origin" in the mystery of the Blessed Trinity through the very facts that philosophers have found it difficult to recognise. Sin and redemption, for example, transpire to be *fundamentally "ordered" to man, male and female.*

General Introduction to Chapter 6: Morality and Conversion to Christ. In the history of an individual it is possible to see, vividly, the exhaustion of the moral life; and, on the other hand, the tragic truth of St. Paul's words that I do the very thing that I do not want to do (cf. Rm 7: 13-20). As a person emerges from the ignorance of the times in which we live, it is possible to discover that the *Second Vatican Council* distilled both the structure and detail of the dynamic life of the Church for our times: a dynamism which God seeks to be manifest in the whole Church. It is in the context of this animating dynamism that there occurs both the renewal of a particular person and, more generally, the moral life of the Christian that is both lived and expressed in moral theology. Thus we discover that there is a kind of multiplicity of roots to the work of salvation which are implicitly and explicitly ordered to the paschal mystery of Jesus Christ; and, in view of the dramatic nature of our times, the work of salvation requires an urgent recognition of the *moral value of the natural law as a valid path to a global ethic of the common good.*

The sap of life, as it were, that pulses through this vine and its many roots and branches (cf. Jn 15: 1-17) is the *mysterious life of the Blessed Trinity lived in Christ and the Church and which constitutes a transfiguring love of God's creation of man, male and female.* With the indispensable help of a word which reveals us to ourselves and draws us into communion, the renewal that we need to live involves everything that we are given in the mystery of Christ and His Church.

Finally, we need what makes possible that intimate transformation of the heart through which love proceeds from the shrivelling of sin. But we also need to "experience" afresh the splendour of the universal Church "showing forth" an inalienable attractiveness to the men and women of our time of a moral life that befits and benefits us all.

General Introduction to Chapter 7: A Psychological and Spiritual Principal at the Centre of the Family: Loving Communication. It is possible to come to the study of psychology with a preconception about it being to do with the processes of mental illness, whether psychological, physical or some combination of the two or, more recently, to think that psychology is about studying "measurable" human activity. It is important, therefore, to "root" psychology in its history of being a philosophical account of the ontological being of the person, one in body and soul; and, at the same time, to *develop an integrated account of how, on the basis of a prior, ontological unity, the psychological identity of the human person unfolds.* This is important because of the question of the meaning of human behaviour: a concern that is with us generally but, most acutely, in the times of suffering and difficulty. If, then, there is not an adequate account of what "constitutes" the human being, then there is an inadequate account of the meaning of a person's behaviour. Just as activity manifest being, so *the manifold meaning of human behaviour manifests the multifaceted "being" of human personhood.* The process and variety of human communication is, then, a central concern of this essay.

This essay unfolds in a number of parts, beginning with a semi-historical account of psychology's passage to the present; and, wherever possible, different "schools" of thought are taken as a part of the manifold variety of human activity and its meaning. More deeply, then, this process of assimilating whatever is helpful to an account of the actual reality of the human person-in-relationship entails an account, too, of the "place" of spiritual discernment to the development of a "transparent" person: a person able to love in reality through the grace of God and human enlightenment. Finally, there is a concluding section which returns, again, to the interrelationship of philosophy and psychology**.**

General Introduction to Chapter 8: On the dialogue about the family between the Church and the emerging social institutions of Europe and the world. Almost inevitably a reflection on the dynamics of the times in which we live is subject to the problem of "perceiving the present" clearly; however, the focus of this chapter is not just the geo-political present but a kind of structural characteristic of dialogue. On the one hand, then, there is the modern dynamic of the constant "impulse" of the "methodological" renewal of the Church. This has entailed both the loss of political "power", with the relinquishing of the Papal States in 1870[24], and the renewal of her spirituality. The Church is holy in view of

[24] For a brief account of the background to this development cf.

the presence of the Holy Spirit[25] and the love of Christ[26] *and yet is in constant need of purification from the sins of her members*[27]*, particularly the sin of abuse.* The renewal of the Church, in the poverty of her powerlessness, makes her a fitting voice in the forums of the world for both revealed and rational truth; both ancient wisdom and modern trends call for an increasingly open dialogue in the truth that will benefit mankind as a whole.

On the other hand, there is a growth in international organizations and a general trend towards global authority and action, with an attendant fear of its misuse (cf. CCC, 407-408) and a hope against hope[28] for it to benefit the whole world. However, as we shall see, there is already evidence that a fear of overpopulation is leading to the tragic consequence of the widespread promotion of abortion; and, at the same time, an inseparable mentality of instrumentalizing the human person. Thus the death of the human person is being increasingly regarded by the "powerful" as a "solution" to social problems: the embryonic human person is experimented upon; the "uncertain dead" are harvested for body parts; and the death of the elderly is viewed as an economic "advantage". Thus there is a tremendous need to rediscover a global ethic that begins with the recognition of the reality of a human person coming to exist at conception and maturing to the right of participation in the global good of world governance. At the same time, life is to be lived in terms of the pursuit of truth, training and the right to discern a vocation and the resources of the world to be distributed according to the needs of all. Finally, death is to be understood as a "passive", non-coercive departure to be recognized as having objectively transpired.

In general, then, there are immense challenges and immense opportunities. This essay ranges over some of the basic characteristics of our age, recent developments and the need for clear, principled points of reference and departure. In a word, we are desperately in need of the wisdom of a dialogue between Church and "State", world faiths and philosophies, and all men and women of goodwill, particularly the voiceless and "enslaved" men and women of our societies, which will ensure the integrity of a dynamic interaction for the good of all. Moreover, as marriage and family are at the centre of so many "crises", it is

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http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/441848/PapalStates/284194/The-15th-century-to-the-French-Revolution

[25] Cf. *Lumen Gentium*, 8, 39, 44

[26] Cf. *Lumen Gentium*, 39, 41-42, 44, 46-47.

[27] Cf. *Lumen Gentium*, 39-47 and *Gaudium et Spes*, 39, 43.

[28] CCC, 1819, but also 1817-1818.

desperately urgent that modern man comes to a renewed and profoundly true starting point for "his" self-understanding: one which both "points" to the common reality of man, male and female and, at the same time, is open to the subtlety of human experience.

CHAPTER FIVE

"BUT WHO DO YOU SAY THAT I AM?" (MK 8: 29). IN THE LIGHT OF ST. JOHN PAUL II:[1] THE *ANSWER OF REASON*: THE RATIONAL NATURE OF THE PERSON[2]; AND THE *ANSWER OF FAITH*: THE PERSON-AS-GENDERED IN THE LIGHT OF THE WORD OF GOD AND THE BLESSED TRINITY. FINALLY, MAN, MALE AND FEMALE, SIN TOGETHER, ARE REDEEMED TOGETHER AND ARE "TAKEN UP" IN CHRIST AND HIS CHURCH TOGETHER

General Introduction to Chapter 5: What is man? The *Answer of Reason* and the *Answer of Faith*. Within the limitations of this particular study of the work of St. John Paul II it is possible to see a wider question: the contrast between a philosophical and a theological anthropology as the contrast between an anthropology which "abstracts" from gender and a theology which "starts" from man, male and female. There is, too, a certain question about why philosophy, in general, has been so slow to take up the question about the nature of the gendered person when, from a

[1] In a small way this essay, originally coming so shortly after the death of St. John Paul II, is an opportunity to "give thanks" for his influence on my life and thought; and indeed a wider gratitude is necessary to the many people who, in one way or another, have helped me find my way. This work is an expanded version of the John Paul II Memorial Lectures given at Prinknash Abbey on the 4th and the 18th June, 2005.

[2] In "Faith and Reason", *Fides et Ratio*, London: CTS, Do654, 1998, art 68, John Paul II says: 'moral theology requires a sound philosophical vision of human nature ...'.

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Chapter 5: Introduction. In a very broad brush way and with a view to a very specific "route" through our subject, I realize from the dialogue between Christ and his disciples, between God and man, that our question of who or what is the person is framed within two questions that Christ addressed to his disciples. On the one hand, "Who do men say that I am?", gives us the answer of reason and the philosophical dimension of the work of Karol Wojtyla. But on the other hand, "Who do you say that I am?", gives us the answer of faith and the theological work of St. John Paul II. In other words, this is an investigation in the light of Christ and His Church but not *directly* of Christ and His Church.

Although there is a very general development to be pursued, starting with a philosophical and going onto a theological anthropology, there are seven main sections to the development of this theme. However, the seven sections traverse three main parts; and the three main parts are the following. Part One draws principally on St. John Paul II as the philosopher Karol Wojtyla and is a primarily philosophical section on the

rational nature of man. Part Two is a middle discussion on three questions that arise: an original unity of each person; male and female "iconography"; and a natural argument for the mystery of the Blessed Trinity[3]. Part Three, finally, draws on St. John Paul II's more theological explorations of man, male and female.

The possible contrast between a philosophical anthropology of rational man and a theological anthropology of man, male and female; and, at the same time, the interrelatedness of personal experience and the contribution of "lived" experience to an anthropological dialogue (Part One: Ii).

In the midst of this discussion a great contrast emerges. On the one hand there is the generic perception of the human person as non-gendered, which seems to correspond to a certain philosophical approach to the person, certainly as evidenced in one of the major works of Karol Wojtyla, *The Acting Person*. And then on the other hand there is the approach of Scripture, *God made man male and female*, which gives to theology, in particular to the theology of Karol Wojtyla as St. John Paul II, a *certain impulse to the theological exploration of the person-as-gendered.*

In one sense our theme is simple: In the context of creation and salvation, God comes in Person to reveal that both He and man are a person-in-communion; and that there is a corresponding history of human thought which attains to the recognition that God is a person
and that therefore man is a person.

In another sense, our theme is the identity of man "today" as we encounter the twin dimensions of atheism: the denial of God and the denial of the person[4]. Thus in the noise, the "outward" busyness, the loneliness in the crowd of our own culture, the democratic violence against life, we find the tendency to use each other, to deny personhood to

[3] The notion of a natural argument for the existence of the Blessed Trinity is somewhat paradoxical in that, until this mystery of God was revealed it was not known; but, on being revealed, it illuminates the whole mystery of man, male and female, and points, convincingly, to the origin of human communion in the divine communion.

[4] Karol Wojtyla, "The Constitution of Culture through Human Praxis" p. 265 of pp. 263-75 of the *Selected Essays entitled Person and Community: Catholic Thought from Lublin*, Vol. 4, translated by T. Sandok, New York: Peter Lang, 1993.