



Dominican Studies Journal

Centennial Edition

2011

A large, stylized black and white cross with decorative, rounded ends, centered on the page.

CENTENNIAL

A CENTURY OF TRANSFORMING LIVES
OHIO DOMINICAN UNIVERSITY

The entire centennial graphic is set against a background of a repeating, embossed pattern of circular floral motifs on a light beige surface.

Dominican Studies Journal Editorial Council

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Dominican Studies Journal
Centennial Edition

Published by the Center for Dominican Studies
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Dear Friends:

During this year of celebration, the Centennial edition of *Dominican Studies*, provided through The Center for Dominican Studies, looks both to the past and to the future with gratitude and hope for what is possible during the next hundred years.

The last decade of Ohio Dominican's history has been marked by a time of transition and transformation. New leadership, programs, buildings and the founding of The Center for Dominican Studies have played a part in preparing for the future. Most importantly, all of our efforts to move forward sustaining our rich inheritance of the past has been rooted in our Catholic and Dominican mission and identity. This journal exemplifies a few examples of our efforts to provide opportunities for members of the University and the community to understand and experience the meaning and value of a Dominican education.

For 100 years, our institution has engaged in carrying on a rich tradition of academic excellence that challenges us to be stewards of the dialogue between faith and reason, by transmitting and engaging the community in study and conversation that supports our seeking of truth.

Dominican Studies looks to the future. It provides yet another venue for that pursuit of truth and that sharing of truth with others which lies at the heart of the Dominican charism. I congratulate all who contributed in any way to this centennial issue of *Dominican Studies*.



Peter Cimboric, PhD
President
Ohio Dominican University



Dear Friends:

It is my honor to present this special Centennial Journal published by Ohio Dominican University's Center for Dominican Studies. During his last visit to the United States, **Benedict XVI** addressed an assembly of Catholic educators giving words of inspiration, encouragement and hope that were marks of both a universal pastor and scholar. In his words, he indicated:

“The apostolate of hope is the center of Catholic education. ..Education is integral to the mission of the Church to proclaim the Good News. First and foremost every Catholic educational institution is a place to encounter the living God who in Jesus Christ reveals his transforming love and truth (cf. *Spe Salvi*, 4).”

It is with this spirit of hope in the future for our next 100 years that we share several of the lectures prepared over the past seven years through the Center for Dominican Studies programs and events.

We are indeed proud of the rich heritage and blessings that have been a part of our lives over the past 100 years and offer this centennial journal and pictures for your reflection and study. In this issue, our authors reflect on the many aspects of the Catholic Intellectual Life from various vantage points with their feet planted in the riverbed of tradition and their hearts open to the gift of the spirit, presenting the reader with both inspiration and challenge.

We are grateful for the scholarly and creative contributions shared with our readers. This is only a snapshot of the treasures of thought, word and example that have been a part of the century of transforming lives that have reached far beyond our campus.

It is our hope, that in keeping with the Dominican tradition of sharing the fruits of one's study and contemplation, this issue will serve as another experience of sharing St. Dominic's legacy of "the holy preaching."

Catherine Colby, OP, EdD

Vice President for Mission and Identity
 Director: The Center for Dominican Studies



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Challenges for Colleges and Universities in the New Millennium

Donald J. Goergen, OP, PhD

To ponder challenges facing colleges and universities in this millennium from a Dominican perspective is in itself a challenge. So I have decided to proceed by taking up the three primary mottos of the Dominican Order in its 800-year history and asking what challenge each presents. These mottos, the wording of which does not go back to Dominic himself, are: *veritas* or truth; *contemplare et contemplata aliis tradere* or to contemplate and to hand on the fruits of contemplation to others; and *laudare, benedicere, praedicare* or to praise, to bless, to preach. In one sense the first of these, Truth, undergirds all of them: the passionate pursuit of truth, the passion of the Western mind.¹

Veritas

“What is truth?” of course, has been a foundational philosophical question in the West for centuries, ever since those friends of wisdom thought its pursuit to be what life was about. In the Gospel of John the question is placed on the tongue of Pontius Pilate as he faces in retrospect the most important decision of his life (Jn 18:37-38). Universities are communities in search of truth. Gandhi entitled his autobiography, “The Story of My Experiment with Truth.” We recognize, of course, that there are different kinds of knowledge (objective knowledge, personal knowledge, and symbolic knowledge)² and that knowledge and truth themselves are not to be simply equated. Knowledge is one of the paths that the pursuit of truth takes but truth itself transcends while at the same time including various forms of knowledge. And some even distinguish between knowing the truth and doing the truth, wherein the pursuit of truth lies in *orthopraxis*, in praxis, and not simply in orthodoxy or correct understanding, if the two can even be separated. But we cannot raise nor

resolve all the questions that pertain to this word *veritas* which some would even see as ultimately God’s very Self.

If we place this within the context of a Dominican perspective, we must call to mind a little Dominican history. The Cathars³ (or Albigensians), a 12th and 13th century heretical, dualist, Manichaean movement, first became an organized church in southern France in 1167 when Cathar bishops were appointed for Toulouse, Carcassonne, and Albi. A little over thirty years later, 1198, Innocent III became pope at the age of 37. In 1203 two Cistercians were sent to southern by Innocent III on a mission of conversion. The next year the pope sent a third, Arnaud Amaury, Abbot of Citeaux. In Spring of 1206, Dominic and his bishop, Diego, accidentally met the three papal legates in Montpellier, where their methods of preaching were challenged and a new form of preaching began to take shape which focused not on the content of the preaching but the manner in which it took shape, preaching in a style of evangelical simplicity which came to be known as the Holy Preaching. In late December of 1207 Bishop Diego died and Dominic was on his own.

Diego died. Dominic settled in Fanjeaux, a Cathar stronghold, an “inferno of heresy,” as one writer describes it,⁴ where Dominic and Diego had established a hospice or nunnery for some converted Cathar women.⁵ On January 14, 1208, Pierre de Castlenau, one of the three papal legates, was assassinated and the pope called for a crusade.



The holy preaching was judged insufficient and ineffective. It would now be holy war and one of the most brutal religious wars in history. During the brutal holy war, where was Dominic? Dominic never joined the crusade.⁶

Arnaud Amaury, the Abbot of Citeaux, the third of the papal legates, had been appointed the spiritual leader of the crusade. On July 22, the feast of Mary Magdalene, in 1209, the massacre at Béziers took place. By mid-August of that same year, 1209, partly due to fear of another Béziers, Carcassonne surrendered to the crusaders after two weeks⁷ and in that same month Simon de Montfort, from one of the aristocratic dynasties of northern France, was chosen to lead the crusade, a military genius, devout Catholic, but ruthless man. Dominic, however, limped along from town to town, unostentatiously, preaching, trusting in the power of truth, often unsuccessful, holding debates, some lasting for days, making a handful of conversions, fostering peace. He never followed the church's lead from holy preaching to holy war.

In 1215,⁸ Dominic founded a diocesan order of preachers. War was ravaging the countryside, the pope had decided on a crusade, but Dominic continued his mission of preaching. In March of 1212 Arnaud Amaury had become Archbishop of Narbonne. Dominic had not joined the crusade. Nor did Dominic acquiesce to being made a bishop.⁹ Dominic's life itself had been threatened yet Dominic remained committed to a mendicant, itinerant, evangelical life, in a countryside ravaged by war, hatred, and greed. The crusade collapsed, more or less, by 1224. Dominic was then dead.

What sustained Dominic day in and day out, month after month, year after year, when there were few conversions, when his program for preaching proved inadequate to the task at hand, when the church itself concluded that only war could accomplish the task? The passion for Dominic and the early Dominicans seems to have been a love of truth. This is the underlying Dominican passion. I do not know who said it anymore, I attribute it to Augustine, "Plato amicus, sed magis amica veritas" (I love Plato, but I love truth more), but this is very Dominican, "amica veritas," my friend Truth. It is no accident that "Veritas" became one of the mottos of the preaching friars.

But just as it is possible to be passionate about truth, it is possible for that passion to be misguided. It did not take long for this to happen among the early friars. I refer to Dominican involvement in the Inqui-

sion. Holy preaching had been superceded by a holy war which was then superceded by the holy inquisition. Just as the crusade was a complex historical reality, the Inquisition was even more so. One ought to heed the advice of Lord Acton: "The prime historical fallacy is judging the past with the ideas of the present."¹⁰ Nevertheless involvement in the Inquisition manifested how a passion for truth can also be misled.

Dominic died in Bologna on August 6, 1221. The holy war against the Cathars ended a few years later.¹¹ By 1233 the Inquisition had been more or less established, although one cannot say that it was actually founded at any one moment.¹² Before 1233 the bishops were primarily responsible for investigating heresy; after 1233 the responsibility was vested more and more in specially appointed inquisitors who were often drawn from the Order of Preachers.¹³ Pope Honorius III had confirmed the Order in 1216. Honorius died in 1227, succeeded by Gregory IX who established a Catholic university in Toulouse in 1229 and its faculty of theology was placed in the hands of Dominicans.¹⁴ It was to be an institution to help in the ongoing battle against heresy. The Inquisition was officially established by the pope a little over ten years after Dominic had died.

Would Dominic have approved?¹⁵ He had never joined the crusade,¹⁶ never preached the crusade, never chose to be bishop but nevertheless was a loyal son of the church. Dominic saw the truth of the gospel manifest in an evangelical way of life, a life of voluntary poverty. Where would his love of truth have taken him if he were still alive ten or fifteen years later? The pope himself had established the Inquisition. But the pope had also called for the crusade. Dominic was no crusader. Nor were the early friars. Would Dominic have been an inquisitor?

The early growth and expansion of the friars was amazing. Thomas Aquinas was born (between 1224 and 1226) not long after Dominic died. One tends to think of Thomas as a man of pure reason. "Passion" is not a word we might ordinarily apply. Thus I was pleased to find that precise word used by Fergus Kerr to describe Thomas, "The imperturbable Buddha-like serenity attributed to him in the standard iconography is belied by the surviving manuscripts in his own hand: physical evidence of raw intellectual energy and passion."¹⁷ Thomas had probably never met a Cathar. His own theology was an excellent response to Catharism however. He would have been aware of the role of the Order in the struggle against

Catharism and may well have met friars who had been or were inquisitors.¹⁸ Thomas' stupendous theological output primarily manifested the Dominican love of truth, *mea amica veritas*. This love more than anything helps us to understand Thomas as it did Dominic. Thomas did not live in an ivory tower. He was more than aware of the politics of his day, of the struggles between emperor and popes. His family lived on the conflict-stricken border between the papal states and the kingdom of Sicily and was involved in the tensions. There were also the power struggles within the theology faculty in Paris between diocesan clergy and the new friars of which Thomas was intimately a part. There were the conflicts with the Aristotelians and his contact with Muslim learning. Thomas by no means lived in a narrow world. Within that world and among those conflicts, however, Thomas remained a seeker. That truth was his concern is reflected in his own opening comments to the *Summa Contra Gentiles*.

I have set myself the task of making known, as far as my limited powers will allow, the truth that the Catholic faith professes, and of setting aside the errors that are opposed to it. To use the words of Hilary, "I am aware that I owe this to God as the chief duty of my life, that my every word and sense may speak of God."¹⁹

This pursuit of truth, this sense of duty toward God, is equally well reflected in Thomas' decision later in life to discontinue writing, not that what he had written was unworthy but that he now himself had come closer to Truth inexpressible: "I cannot do any more. Everything I have written seems to me so much straw compared with what I have seen."²⁰

And so one of the first challenges to colleges and universities from a Dominican perspective is what is their commitment to truth. Does the pursuit of truth wherever it leads hold a place of primacy in the university? To some degree this requires the recognition of the value of a liberal education. Specialization is both important and necessary but do we promote such compartmentalization in our education that we rarely see the whole picture? And what about the dialogue between the sciences and the humanities, or between science and religion? Is the tenor of our work that these are such separate worlds that there is no need for them to meet? Does not the next millennium require a holistic approach to learning and understanding?

Contemplata aliis tradere

Another of the mottos of the Order of Preachers can be traced more directly back to Thomas Aquinas who saw the purpose of the Order as twofold: to contemplate, and to hand on to others the fruits of that contemplation. Both sides of the coin are essential. As Eckhart,²¹ the fourteenth century Dominican mystic theologian, would later put them together, Martha is as essential to Mary as Mary is to Martha, that each of us is called to be a virgin wife, both a virgin who gives birth to the Word in the ground of the soul and wife who bears fruit for others, for one cannot give birth without being pregnant nor remain pregnant without giving birth, or for water to boil over (*tradere*) it must first of all boil (*contemplari*). So let us consider for a moment this contemplative dimension to the Order and the contemplative approach to truth.

Our world today is quite pragmatic, and it is certainly true that usefulness is an important value. What good is something if it isn't good for something? But a contemplative attitude cautions us lest we jump too quickly or only to the question of utility. It makes us pause, and think, and pray, and enter more deeply into ourselves; it calls for a deeper level of awareness than what we might first encounter at a more surface level. We then ask "useful for what" at a deeper level.. Are we speaking about material gain, material comforts, and if so for whom, and for how many? What is the kind of world we are hoping to create, to which we wish to contribute? What are our values? A Dominican search for truth is grounded in a life of study and prayer, while at the same time recognizes that in the end we find ourselves in the grips of what we thought we could grasp. There is a line from an Indian sage that I think captures the contemplative approach to life: It doesn't make any difference how fast your going if you're headed in the wrong direction.

Much in our modern and Western world today prefers that we not think, that we allow others to do the thinking for us, that we allow ourselves to be told what we need and want, that happiness consists in having more rather than becoming more, that we are entitled to our privileged place in the universe, that the universe is there for us, or for me, rather than my being a part of the universe, part of a bigger picture, part of something more than myself alone, that one's getting ahead is what counts rather than the whole human community's moving forward. It doesn't make any difference in what direction one is headed, what makes the difference is how fast you get there. But a

contemplative life does ask about the direction of one's life, what one is doing with the one life one has been given, about the direction of one's country and the planet earth, about the place of one's faith tradition in the context of a plurality of religious traditions each with its spiritual wisdom.

While clearly present in the mystical traditions of the West, the interior journey into the depths of one's soul, the silence within, is a strength of the East. In fact, the East has enabled us to acknowledge and realize how strongly present that search for the soul of one's soul is within the mysticism of the West, something that we had almost forgotten as we moved more and more into the modern world. The East challenges us to retrieve the contemplative dimension of human life.

Early in the twentieth century, Teilhard de Chardin, a Jesuit mystic and scientist, had already spoken about all of matter as having two sides: a "within" and a "without." They go together. There is no "within" without a "without," and no "without" without a "within." In some ways Teilhard can be seen as foreshadowing the spirituality still to come. For him, the "depths" of the person are a sacred adventure, but likewise incumbent upon us is our commitment to building the earth. The outer world and the inner world must move together in harmony. What difference does it make if we change the face of the earth, if the world loses its "soul"? In fact, is that what we are on the verge of doing - creating a technological world that has no soul? The modern West has an overdeveloped "without" and an underdeveloped "within". We have lost our center, our purpose, our meaning.

Many speak about the crisis of meaning, but the world of matter, materiality, science, and technology, although all of them are good in themselves, they do not have meaning in and of themselves. They are not ends in themselves. We are fools if we think that they contain the secret to life. Only as expressing human values do they acquire meaning. The earth has no future separated from the contemplative's quest. Each of us is called to that contemplative venture, the journey to truth, the uprooting of egoism, from which all true compassion emanates.

The interior journey will blossom as the dialogue among all the religions of the world deepens. We need not enter that dialog fearful, nor as Christians with a sense of superiority. We need not leave behind any conviction we hold dear. But we do have to enter it with the desire to learn, with the conviction that oth-

ers have something to offer us, to teach us, that we learn more about the world of the spirit by sharing our gifts rather than by hoarding them or refusing to receive wisdom from others. The goal of dialogue is not to evaluate the various religious traditions, not even to compare them, although that may happen along the way, but the goal is simply that we might learn from one another.

This is one of the great challenges facing us in the next millennium. Can the religions get along with each other? Can they talk to each other? Just as it took the Christian Church centuries to forge a language for expressing its faith and understanding about the triune God, so likewise it will take a long time before we find the best or even an adequate way to state our conviction about the salvation present in all religious traditions while at the same time remain faithful to our belief in the pre-eminence of Christ. But we do not come together in order to agree, or to convert one another, but rather in order to understand each other, and love one another. It is from within the contemplative core of each religious tradition that dialog can most easily take place, harmony happen, and fear be set aside. The externalities of the religions, their "withouts", are valuable, but we do not come together on the basis of those, nor with the intention that there might be only one religion. We come together at the level of the "within" wherein souls can touch each other without losing their identities.

The Dominican commitment to the contemplative dimension of life raises another challenge for us. What matters in life? Few things in life are in the end significant. Are we attentive to these? What values do we inculcate in our education? Are we content with life on the surface or are we willing to explore the deeper recesses of the human mind, heart, soul and spirit?

Laudare, Benedicere, Praedicare

We come now to the last of the three mottos: to praise, to bless, to preach. The preaching here can be seen as the bubbling over of contemplative living as the Word of the living God reaches out to touch all of creation. A life of praise, laud, gratitude acknowledges the reality and grandeur of God: it is the soul of contemplation – the deep awareness that we are in the presence of Someone, something, that is sacred, to be revered. Let us focus today on the word "bless," *benedicere*, to speak or wish well. As God blesses us, so we are to be a blessing to one another and to the world. There is contained in this motto an element of

hope, a kind of optimism. We can go back to that early blessing of the Hebrew people centuries before Christ recorded in the Book of Numbers (6:22-27): The Lord bless you and keep you! The Lord let his face shine upon you, and be gracious to you! The Lord look upon you kindly and give you peace!

It reveals to us how profound a blessing can be. Who would not want to be blessed in this way? Who would not want to be such a blessing in for others? The Lord is with you. You are wrapped up, embraced by God. God's face shines on you and looks kindly upon you. God brings us peace. All that is wished here is seen later by Christians as embodied in Jesus, Immanuel, the One in whom God is with us. God is not only "the One Who Is" as so well pointed out in the Book of Exodus (3:14; 33:19), but also as pointed out there "the One Who Is With Us" (3:12), the one who led us out of the land of Egypt, the one who guides us on our way, the one who cannot not be present to us, the one whose very unfathomable transcendence is intimate presence at the core of who we are.²²

The Lord bless you and keep you! The Lord let his face shine upon you, and be gracious to you! The Lord look upon you kindly and give you peace! As God has blessed us, and promised to be with us, so likewise we must do or be for one another. We praise God, and through God's life within and among us, we are to be a blessing, a sign of hope, an act of love, a thirst for justice, a truth proclaimed.

We get a glimpse of what hope is if we turn to St. Paul's letter to the Romans. Paul writes: "We know that the whole creation has been groaning in labor pains until now; and not only the creation, but we ourselves who have the first fruits of the Spirit... Now hope that is seen is not hope. For who hopes for what is seen? But if we hope for what we do not see, we wait for it with patience" (8:22-25). In other words, all of creation, including ourselves, in our present condition, are living by hope. To hope is to wait for that which we do not see. Once it comes into the range of sight and is assured, it is no longer hope. Earlier in the same letter, it is hope that marks the lives of Abraham and Sarah. Abraham is described as "hoping against hope" (4:18).

Hoping against hope is sheer hope, undiluted hope, not necessarily something comforting. Paul continues: suffering produces endurance, endurance produces character, and character produces hope (5:3-4). Thus it is ultimately suffering that produces hope.

Paul's rhetorical skills come into play, but we are clearly left with the impression that hope is both a precious gift as well as a disturbing companion. Hope is no guarantee. That which is certain is not the proper object of hope. Like creation, we groan but groan hopefully. The hope does not diminish the groans. Hope does not come easily. For Thomas Aquinas, hope is, simply put, "leaning on God" (ST II-II, q 17, a 1 & 2).

We get a sense of what to expect from God by taking a look at the word cup as it is used by Jesus. "You do not know what you are asking. Are you able to drink the cup that I drink, or be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with?" (Mk 10: 38; Mt 20:22; Lk 22:42). And in Gethsemane, "My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from me; yet not what I want but what you want" (Mt 26:39; Mk 14:36). "Put your sword back into its sheath. Am I not to drink the cup that the Father has given to me?" (Jn 18:11). The use is reminiscent of "cup" in the prophetic tradition around the time of the exile. "For thus says the Lord: If those who do not deserve to drink the cup still have to drink it, shall you be the one to go unpunished? You shall not go unpunished; you must drink it" (Jer 49: 12). At the same time one's portion may be a cup of blessing, the cup of salvation (Ps 116:13) or the Lord himself: "The Lord is my chosen portion and my cup" (Ps 16:5). The cup is often not a cup from which one wants to drink. The question is haunting: Are we able to drink the cup from which Jesus drank?

This haunting cup surfaces again in Jesus' last festive meal with his disciples as it does for us when we celebrate Eucharist together. After the supper Jesus takes the cup and interprets for us an impending sequence of events. He even embraces the cup that he had prayed not long before to be spared: "This cup that is poured out for you is the new covenant in my blood" (Lk 22:20; Mt 26:26; Mk 14:22; 1 Cor 10:16). And in the Eucharist, of course, routinely and without thinking as we so often do, when the cup is passed we take it and drink oblivious of its significance, of what we are saying yes to by drinking it, for when we accept the cup, take and drink, we forget what it is to which we are saying yes. We forget that Jesus prayed, "Please, God, let this cup pass me by."

Thich Nhat Hanh, the exiled Vietnamese Buddhist monk, in reflecting on the tragedy of the tsunami in Asia, recalls how the French poet Victor Hugo lost his daughter when she was about twenty. He suffered deeply and asked God why this could have happened.

She too had drowned in water. He went back to his birthplace Villequier and wrote a poem from there in which he wrote: "Mankind can see only one side of reality. The other side is plunged in the darkness of a frightening mystery. Mankind bears the yoke without knowing why. Everything he sees is short-lived, futile and fleeting." He continues, "I come to you, God, the Father in whom we must believe. Calmly I bring you the pieces of my heart filled with your glory, which you have broken. I accept that only you know what you do, and that mankind is only a reed that trembles in the wind."

We do not want to get too somber, but we do want to be mindful of our world, its blessings and its challenges, its beauty and its wounds. Its tragedies are so clearly with us these days following the unprecedented tsunami. I recall a Jewish midrash on the Moses/Sinai story (Ex 31:8; 32:19; 34: 1, 29; 40:20; Deut 10: 1-5). After Moses had broken in anger the first tablets God had given him, what became of those broken, shattered tablets? The whole ones given later were placed in the Ark of the Covenant. The midrash narrates that so were the broken ones. Both sets of tablets were placed in the Ark. Each of us as well as our churches and world are both broken and whole. We do not always see our brokenness as a gift. We hide it and it remains unhealed. But it too is to be an offering to the Lord.

I am also reminded of the Tibetan Buddhist prophecy of the Shambhala warriors.²³ At a time when the earth and the world hang in the balance by a thread and there is the danger of falling back into a state of barbarism with its increased capacity for annihilation, Shambhala warriors will come forth. They will not be recognized. We will not know who among us may be one of them. Their only weapons will be mindfulness, egolessness, and compassion,²⁴ the fruits of contemplation. They do not fear the pain of the world. Their mission is healing. I invite each of us to become a Shambhala warrior and accept our responsibility for the universe, for God's creation, for our human family. We need a new way of thinking, of seeing, of understanding. Is this not one of the goals of education?

Teilhard de Chardin saw the evolution of the universe moving both forward (albeit slowly, one hundred steps forward, ninety-nine backwards) and upwards, not simply in a linear progressive fashion, nor simply in a circular way, but more as a dynamic spiral, upward and forward.²⁵ He also saw one of the most

significant social ministries or responsibilities as being that of education.²⁶ For it is particularly through education that consciousness evolves. We, seekers of Truth, active contemplative people, God's blessings in our midst, can be midwives of a new consciousness? This is our challenge, and perhaps our destiny. I think the challenges our Dominican heritage brings to colleges and universities today might well be this challenge to contribute to the birthing of a new consciousness about which I can hardly say more here. But perhaps I can conclude by placing my reflections in the form of questions:

- Do you seek the Truth? Do you love the Truth? What understanding of Truth does your college or university hand on?
- Does our education prepare us in both scholarly and practical pursuits but also enable us to live more mindful, contemplative, caring lives? Is there nourishment for the soul as well as for the mind and an integration of the two? Are we concerned not only with what we can or will do but with who we become?
- Am I able to pick up the challenge of responsibility for our universe, to be a blessing in God's creation, to lead others both upward and forward, as wounded yes, but also as a guide, like a Shambhala warrior? Am I willing to offer my life to the universe that has given me life?
- In the midst of struggle and upheaval, Dominic left behind a movement, an Order, because he persevered in trusting that what God had entrusted to him would bear fruit – even in the midst of doubt, confusion and sadness. Am I able to set aside short-term gratifications in order to contribute my gifts and talents to a bigger picture which will not be of my making but of which I will be a part?

Donald J. Goergen, OP, PhD

On February 10, 2005, The Center for Dominican Studies inaugurated the first public event as a special opening of The Centers' programs. The lecture topic was "Challenges for Colleges and Universities in the New Millennium: A Dominican Perspective." Deliv-

ered by Fr. Donald J. Goergen, OP, a Dominican friar, theologian and lecturer, Fr. Goergen framed his inspiring and challenging comments around the mottoes of the Dominican Order.

Donald Goergen is a Dominican priest, teacher, lecturer, and author. He has published many articles and ten books in the areas of Christology and Christian Spirituality. His most recent book was Fire of Love, Encountering the Holy Spirit. He has taught, lectured and given retreats in Asia, Africa, and throughout North America. He was previously Provincial for the Dominican Friars of the Central Province as well as President of the Dominican Leadership Conference. He co-founded the Dominican Ashram, a contemplative Dominican community and ministry of prayer, in which he lived for nine years. He previously taught and currently teaches at the Aquinas Institute of Theology in St. Louis, MO, where he is also prior of the formation community. His doctorate is in systematic theology, his dissertation on Pierre Teilhard de Chardin, and his current interests include contemplative traditions, East and West, the evolution of consciousness, and the thought of Thomas Aquinas as a spiritual master. Among other honors awarded him, he is the recipient of the 2010 Yves Congar Award from Barry University in Miami.

Notes

¹This latter expression comes from the book by Richard Tarnas, The Passion of the Western Mind (New York: Ballantine Books, 1991).

² Donald Goergen, Jesus, Son of God, Son of Mary, Immanuel (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 1995): 184-99.

³ Malcom Lambert, The Cathars (Oxford: Blackwell Pub., 1998). Steven Runciman, The Medieval Manichee (Cambridge University Press, 1947).

⁴ Aubrey Burl, God's Heretics, The Albigensian Crusade (England: Sutton Pub. Ltd., 2002): 58-59.

⁵ Aubrey Burl, xv-xviii, 3-12.

⁶ The suggestion that Dominic was present at the battle of Muret has no credible historical basis. Guy Bedouelle writes: "A reference made by Bernard Gui (1261-1331) in a Life of St. Dominic does not hesitate to claim for his Founder the title of First Inquisitor, following the 'legendary' texts of the thirteenth century. Nor has the author of the celebrated "Manual for Inquisitors" hesitated to interpolate on his own authority the Albigensian History of Pierre des Vaux de Cernai in order to prove Dominic's presence at the Battle of Muret during the bloody Albigensian Crusade on September 12, 1213: the Saint is pictured holding in his hands a crucifix riddled with wounds, which is still shown at St.

Sernin in Toulouse." Cf., Guy Bedouelle, "The Holy Inquisition: Dominic and Dominicans," on line at the Order's website. Cf. Guy Bedouelle, Saint Dominique. The Grace of the Word (Ignatius, 1987).

⁷ Aubrey Burl, 48-55. On the first campaign of the crusade at Béziers and Carcassonne, also see Joseph Strayer, The Albigensian Crusades (Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 1971): 55-72.8

⁸ Aubrey Burl 89, 92, 142.

⁹ The question of whether Dominicans should become bishops or not was an issue from the beginning. Dominic refused several bishoprics himself. See Albert and Thomas, Selected Writings, ed. by Simon Tugwell, Classics of Western Spirituality (New York: Paulist Press, 1988): 18. Also see M.-H. Vicaire, O.P., Saint Dominic and His Times (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Co., 1964): 152.

¹⁰ J.S. Cummins, A Question of Rites, Friar Domingo Navarette and the Jesuits in China (Brookfield, VT: Ashgate Pub. Co., 1993): 11.

¹¹ Some accounts state that the war ended in 1224. This refers to the end of involvement on the part of the de Montforts. The siege of Avignon by King Louis VIII and its fall took place in 1226 and Louis died a couple months later. Some note the treaty in Paris of 1229 as the conclusion of the crusade. The siege and fall of Montségur (1243-44) was the end of any armed resistance by the Cathars.

¹² Aubrey Burl, 179-90. Strayer, 143-62.

¹³ History of the Church, ed. Hubert Jedin, 10 vols. (New York: The Seabury Press, 1980), vol. 4, 208-16.

¹⁴ Cf., M. Michèle Mulchahey, "First the Bow Is Bent in Study," Dominican Education before 1350 (Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Medieval Studies, 1998): 357, 359, 371. In 1229 Gregory IX created a studium in Toulouse and in 1233 granted it the right to confer a universal license. Also see Strayer, 136-137.

¹⁵ J.S. Cummins, 17: "It is ironical that an intellectual order, founded to correct error by reasoned persuasion, should have been chosen to suppress dissent by force." Cf., M.-H. Vicaire, 483, n. 69.

¹⁶ Vicaire, 147, 151.

¹⁷ Fergus Kerr, After Aquinas, Versions of Thomism (Oxford: Blackwell Pub., 2002): 2-3. Also see Kenelm Foster, ed., The Life of St. Thomas (London: Longmans, Green, 1958): 22, where he writes, "To turn from that conventional impassive countenance to the handwriting of Aquinas -- surviving in such abundance -- may surprise one by the contrast: 'traquil' is hardly the word for this ferociously rapid script."

¹⁸ Kerr, 4-5. Thomas O'Meara, Thomas Aquinas, Theologian (University of Notre Dame Press, 1997): 1-40.

¹⁹ Thomas Aquinas, On the Truth of the Catholic Faith (Summa Contra Gentiles), Book One (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1962): 62 (Bk I, Chap 2). The quote from Hilary comes from De Trinitate, I, 37.

²⁰ Kerr, 1. Cf., James Weisheipl, Friar Thomas D'Aquino, His Life, Thought and Works (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday & Co., 1974): 320-323.

²¹ Cf. Bernard McGinn, The Mystical Thought of Meister Eckhart, The Man from whom God Hid Nothing (New York: Crossroad Pub. Co., 2001).

²² Cf., Donald Goergen, Jesus, Son of God, Son of Mary, Immanuel (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 1995); Samuel Terrien, The Elusive Presence (New York: Harper & Row Pub., 1978); Yves

Congar, The Mystery of the Temple (Westminster, MD: The Newman Press, 1962).

²³ Joanna Macy and Molly Young Brown, Coming Back to Life, Practices to Reconnect Our Lives, Our World (Stony Creek, CT: New Society Publishers, 1998): 60-61. See Chögyam Trungpa, Shambhala, The Sacred Path of the Warrior ((Boston: Shambhala, 1988).

²⁴ Cf., Sogyal Rinpoche, The Tibetan Book of Living and Dying ((San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco, 1992).

²⁵ One could draw out here the implications for education of Don Beck's Spiral Dynamics (Oxford: Blackwell Pub., 1996).

²⁶ See especially, "Social Heredity and Progress," in The Future of Man (New York: Harper and Row, 1964): 61-81.

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Let It Be

Scott Steinkerchner, OP, PhD

We have all experienced failure. Small failures we can simply take in stride. Sometimes, however, we are forced to reflect deeply on our failures because they are large and touch something central to our own sense of self. The apostle Paul's failure to convert the Jews was to him a large and very painful failure. As Luke tells the story, Paul was so frustrated at his lack of success in converting the Jews in the synagogue in Corinth that he shook the dust from his clothes and proclaimed "Your blood be on your own heads! I am innocent. From now on I will go to the Gentiles" (Acts 18:4-6). Of course, Paul had great success in converting the Gentiles, and so he became the apostle to the Gentiles, in parallel with Peter being the apostle to the Jews (Gal 2:7-8).

Years later, when writing his letter to the community in Rome, Paul was able to prayerfully reflect on this failure and came to some rather surprising conclusions—that the failure of Jews to believe in Jesus as Christ was not Paul's fault nor was it the Jews fault. It was part of God's plan, which would allow the good news to be preached to the entire world. Thus, God himself had hardened the Jews hearts against belief (Rom 11:7,25).

This conclusion is surprising, because for Paul, belief in Jesus is the *sine qua non* of salvation, and so he asked the question, "Has God rejected the Jews?" Paul answered that God's election of the Jews was irrevocable, and that God would save all Israel at the end of the age by his own means (Rom 11:25-30).

The Jewish people had stumbled in their faith, but they had not fallen. By their stumbling, God had opened the door to salvation to the gentiles, so it has been a great boon to the world. So Paul asked rhetorically, "if their stumbling means riches for the world, and if their defeat means riches for Gentiles,

how much more will their full inclusion mean!" (Rom 11:12).

How are we to understand this "hardening" that has come upon Israel? Paul is using the divine passive, signifying that this is God's doing. Thomas Aquinas in his commentary on Romans explains that this is not done by God inserting malice into their hearts, but by withholding the grace necessary for people to believe (par 789). In this case, for Aquinas and for us the "divine passive" is not simply a grammatical construct. As we know, faith is a gift: "no one can say 'Jesus is Lord' except by the Holy Spirit" (1Cor 12:3). God has not widely distributed this gift to Jews.

Aquinas goes on to assert that this hardening was willed by God out of justice. It would be unjust for God to punish the Jews for their disbelief in Jesus if their disbelief were not their own fault. But Paul argued in the first chapter of his Letter to the Romans that the Jews were not completely innocent in their disbelief since they already knew God through their natural reason. If the Greeks could not claim that they were ignorant of God, and therefore innocent of their disbelief, how much more would this apply to the Jews?! We could further suppose that the Jews would have a limited amount of culpability in this matter, since their disbelief was rooted in their belief in God, and therefore perhaps their punishment would be limited. In this case, their punishment might be limited to being deprived of being Christians in this life, while nonetheless attaining salvation in the end.



This fits well with Paul's argument, though there could be other explanations.

Paul admits that this is speculation on his part, because God's ways are inscrutable; "For who has known the mind of the Lord?" (Rom 11:34) Paul's explanation is reasonable for his day, but two thousand years later, things look somewhat different, causing us to consider speculating slightly differently. This is because we think of the relationship between obedience to God and salvation a bit differently than is evidenced in the Letter to the Romans. This allows us to have a greater respect for the witness of the Jews as a group.

Certainly, we must still affirm Paul's major starting points. The Jews are forever God's chosen people. This gift of grace and calling is forever irrevocable. God has not changed his mind in implementing the plan of salvation, and ultimately, God is in charge of salvation.

But the Catholic Church today has a more nuanced view of how obedience to God's plan connects to salvation. Paul affirms that God has bound salvation to faith in Jesus as Christ, but we today acknowledge that this does not bind God's power to save (c.f. CCC 1257). Thus the Church affirms that, "Everyone who is ignorant of the Gospel of Christ and of his Church, but seeks the truth and does the will of God in accordance with his understanding of it, can be saved" (CCC 1260). "Obedience to God" is now understood to have a subjective component. People need to be obedient to God as they understand God, not by some absolute criteria that is identical for all humanity.

How this might apply to modern Jews is unclear, since one might think that few of them are entirely "ignorant of the Gospel of Christ." It is here that I would like to make reference to Paul's argument, that perhaps God is responsible not for Jewish ignorance of the Gospel, but for their failure to embrace it. Let us not forget that faith is a gift from God. We can reject faith, but we cannot manufacture it ourselves. Simply being presented the Gospel message does not allow one to accept it. God must also give the gift of faith.

Paul muses that God was intentionally withholding that gift of faith from the majority of Jews in order to create a space for gentiles to be grafted into the Church. Thus, the non-conversion of Jews was the work of God, not a failure of the evangelists to convince, nor a failure of the Jewish response to God.

Furthermore, we can expect this condition to persist "until the full number of the Gentiles has come in." Paul expected that day to be very soon, since he anticipated Jesus' immanent return. Two thousand years later, we understand that Jesus was not coming right back. This time of evangelization of the gentiles is quite protracted. Has the full number come in yet? Apparently not. RCIA programs are full.

The first question we need to ask is about the salvation of individual Jews, all of those Jews whose hearts were hardened in order to make room for the gentiles. Paul was critically worried about this for his own brothers and sisters in faith, for whom he was willing to be cut off from Christ if by that they would be saved (Rom 9:2-3). In Paul's understanding, justification by faith put an end to the law; "For Christ is the end of the law so that there may be righteousness for everyone who believes" (Rom 10:4). More simply Paul writes in Galatians 2:16, "no one will be justified by the works of the law."

In our perspective 2000 years later, we do not imagine that God has completely cut off from salvation all those who have not arrived in explicit faith in Jesus as Christ. Harkening back to CCC 1257 (cited previously) allows us to reframe the question. We do not have to ask simply if Jews are *justified* by following the law of the original covenant. We can ask a different question: does following the law of the original covenant constitute seeking the truth and doing the will of God in accordance with one's understanding of it? If so, we know that God can save such a person. Further, the fact that this law was given by God should make us fairly optimistic about the prospect of salvation for those who follow it.

Our salvation is accomplished in the birth, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. There is no salvation outside of Christ. If the original covenant, therefore, is to have any salvific efficacy, this power must derive from its connection to the Christ event. The connection between the original and the new covenants is easy to see. Just like the Immaculate Conception of Mary, the original covenant is an essential step in preparation for the incarnation. We could not understand Jesus without the original covenant. And, like the Immaculate Conception, the benefits of the Christ event work backwards in time to prepare for it.

The next question we need to ask is about the conversion of the Jewish people as a whole. This question is currently being reevaluated under the im-

petus of many factors, not the least of which is renewed relations and dialogue between Catholics and Jews symbolized by John Paul II's 1986 historic visit to the Great Synagogue in Rome where he embraced the chief rabbi, the first recorded visit of a pope to a synagogue in modern times.

Walter Cardinal Kasper, President of the Pontifical Commission for the Religious Relations with the Jews gave voice to new thinking in this area in a speech at a Jewish-Christian dialogue conference in Jerusalem in November of 2001 (*The Jewish-Christian Dialogue: Foundations, Progress, Difficulties and Perspectives*, Jerusalem, 19-23 November, 2001).

In his speech, Kasper pointed out that while there is an ongoing dialogue between Catholics and Jews, there is no Catholic missionary organization for Jews, and he gave some reasons for this. First, Jews already believe in the one, true God, and the term "mission" properly belongs to the conversion of peoples from false gods. Second, and most importantly here, Kasper said that while Christians witness to the hope they find in Jesus Christ, Jews "give witness of their faith, witness of what supported them in the dark periods of their history and their life." The world, he argued, which is often disoriented, needs both witnesses. Thus, Catholics and Jews in dialogue with each other feel no need to proselytize. Referencing arguments similar to the ones made above, Kasper concludes, "The Church believes that Judaism, i.e. the faithful response of the Jewish people to God's irrevocable covenant, is salvific for them, because God is faithful to his promises."

More recently, in his second volume of *Jesus of Nazareth*, Pope Benedict XVI has taken up this line of thinking in relation to "the time of the Church," which began in the apostolic age and continues to this day. As Benedict says, "the urgency of evangelization in the apostolic era was predicated not so much on the necessity for each individual to acquire knowledge of the Gospel in order to attain salvation, but rather on this grand conception of history: if the world was to arrive at its destiny, the Gospel had to be brought to all nations" (44). Paul saw his preaching as intimately connected to this time of the Church, an age that will end when "the full number of Gentiles" had entered the Church (Rom 11:25).

Paul did not assert a positive role for Israel during this time of the Church. However, Benedict cited Hildegard Brem, a contemporary German theolo-

gian, who went further, asserting: "the Jews themselves are a living homily to which the church must draw attention, since they call to mind the Lord's suffering" (45). Thus Benedict agrees that Israel retains its own mission today.

Getting back to the issue at hand, we could affirm with Paul that perhaps God is ultimately responsible for the Jewish people's refusal to embrace Christianity because God is using this to further the salvation of the world. It is impossible for us to know for sure, "For who has known the mind of the Lord?" (Rom 11:34). This is a path we should explore very tenderly, however, because down it are many changes in the way we are used to thinking of the mission of the Church.

While we would embrace Paul's arguments, we would stand against Paul's desire to renew conversion efforts aimed at Jews. As Walter Kasper has pointed out, this has already happened in fact, and we would now give this practice a theological foundation.

While we would have to affirm that Jews do not have "the fullness of the faith" of Catholic Christians, such an affirmation would have to include that God had already given the Jewish people the faith he would like them to have for now, and that this faith is sufficient for their salvation. This would focus our missionary efforts on those who have no explicit relationship to the living God, indefinitely postponing any concerted proselytizing effort aimed at Jews.

At the very least, embracing this belief would remind us that it is not always our job to convince those who disagree of the truth of our religious vision. Rather, our call is to witness to the truth as we see it, and to leave the rest in God's hands. Sometimes it is our failure that furthers God's plan.

Why is this important to educators? We, like Paul, try to convey information to others that we believe is vitally important. We teach in disciplines that we think are essential to human flourishing. We, like Paul, want our students not only to understand, but also to believe, and to make use of this knowledge in their lives. In a Catholic liberal arts university, we are not simply giving our students information, we are trying to pass along an entire way of seeing the world. As John Paul II's Apostolic Constitution on Catholic Universities, *Ex corde ecclesiae*, explains—truth is one, based on the unity of the One God who is Truth itself. The goal of higher education is to help students to see the deep unity between the "truths" that one I am tempted to push this understanding one step fur-

ther. If Christianity, while ultimately fulfilling Judaism, does not theologially supplant it in this current age, might that leave room for other alternative viewpoints as well? I am not referring here to other non-Christian religions—though this question is worth exploring—but of other over-arching philosophical systems. If, as a Christian, I can respect the ongoing utility of the Jewish religion, can I not also, as a critical-realist, respect the ongoing utility of critical-idealist Eastern philosophical systems?

All-embracing philosophical systems are absolutely critical in helping us to see beyond the pettiness of this or that presenting problem into the depth of better understanding that not only solves this particular problem, but makes the world a better place. In fact, I find these overarching systems of understanding so helpful that I think everyone should have several of them at their disposal so that they could employ the right one for the best results in various situations. Just as God is better proclaimed with Christians witnessing to hope and Jews witnessing to faithfulness, I believe that the world is better off with some people (most?) analyzing the world as critical-realists while encouraging others to offer insights from critical-idealist perspectives. In fact, these alternative ways of picturing the same reality are so important to human flourishing, I believe that every thoughtful person should have a few different and mutually exclusive over-arching philosophical systems from which to choose in any particular situation.

Having only one overarching system of belief seems too limiting. Granted, one of the hallmarks of “overarching systems of belief” is that they integrate all knowledge, so that no way of thinking is outside their umbrella. They lead us to think that any truly intelligent person can have only one of such “overarching” system of belief. I simply do not believe that this is very “human.” Our ways of knowing are plural and finite. God’s understanding alone is infinite and thus able to bear the weight of integrating all understanding. We cannot do that, and we warp our own gifts when we pretend that we can.

Human understanding is always tentative and always mixed with an element of faith. What we come to believe is affected by what we already believe. That is not simply unfortunate bias, it is the gift of human culture—it has allowed us to build on the understanding of past generations.

Paul was at least as concerned as we are about conveying his subject matter. When he failed he was

forced, in prayer, to reassess the situation. Eventually, he concluded that what he saw as a failure was more profoundly God’s inscrutable will be worked out in the world. While Paul did not proclaim a moratorium on converting Jews, this realization at least allowed him to see his own call in a larger context. It allowed him to let his failure be, freeing his time and his heart to be available for the work that was more truly his. Can we as educators have a similar holy detachment? Do we proclaim our truth as best we can and then leave it in God’s hands? Do we see that our students come with particular histories that might be leading them to ways of seeing the world that are persistently different from our own; and can we acknowledge this fact as a richness, rather than a lamentable defect in their understanding?

When we find ourselves in times of frustration, can we, like Paul, learn to let it be?

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Transformation: Catholic Agenda in the Dominican Tradition The Biblical Notion of Hospitality as the Model of a Catholic University

Aurelie A. Hagstrom, STD, STL

The time is ripe for re-claiming Catholic identity in higher education. It is, sadly, not an exaggeration to say that many of our Church-related schools have downplayed, or even, forsaken, their Catholic heritage and identity. Catholic identity, which was often taken for granted in the past, has become a source of debate, contention, and even embarrassment. No longer is it the case that “everyone knows” what it means to be Catholic. No longer can we solely rely on such things as mandatory Mass, compulsory theology classes, or strict student life policies to insure our Catholic identity. What is needed today on the campuses of Church-related colleges and universities, in my opinion, is not only excellent Catholic scholarship, but also a revival of some concrete, integrative practices to sustain the life of the Christian community. One such practice is hospitality.

My argument, in short, is for the sake of recovering hospitality as a theologically significant moral category that benefits both the cultivation of community at Catholic universities and the pursuit of scholarly inquiry in the classroom. Hospitality is helpful for those struggling with Catholic identity precisely because it applies both inside and outside the classroom—it integrates both ideas and practices. It is grounded not only in the conceptual theological framework of being Christian, but also in the concrete embodiments of Christian practices. Hospitality is fundamentally an expression of and witness to God’s grace, since all of us our guests of God’s hospitality and are called to embody that hospitality to others through word and deed. As such, it may help bridge the conversation of those concerned about whether a university is sufficiently “Catholic” in its daily campus life, and those who are

concerned to protect academic freedom in the scholarly inquiry of the classroom.

An obvious question at this point would be: What do I mean by “hospitality”? By hospitality I am not referring to a home cooked meal or the hotel industry. Hospitality is rather a biblical phenomenon as well as a moral category for the Christian life. An historic Christian practice, hospitality is a distinctly communal self-giving practice that embodies a way of being and thinking about the “other” or the “stranger.” It rests on the basic conviction that in welcoming others, we are also welcoming God, and by welcoming God we are participating in God’s reconciling love for the world, manifest in God’s triune nature. The practice of hospitality represents fruitful terrain for colleges and universities that want to cultivate stronger, more faithfully Catholic ways of regarding such diverse aspects of university life as academic freedom, faculty hiring, and student life policies.



Applications of Metaphor to a Catholic University

How can this provocative metaphor of hospitality be employed as a moral category for the life of a Catholic university? I think it can help us to frame questions of diversity on our campuses. For example, students that are from different religious traditions who are welcomed to our campuses are guests of our hospitality. They are the “Others” who challenge us to make room, be receptive, and remain attentive to their worldviews. The sponsoring religious community of the university is the “Host”

-here it is a Catholic, Dominican host. And those students, faculty, administrators, or staff from diverse religious traditions, who are part of the campus community are the “Guests.” The definition of these roles is important, because it allows the hosts and the guests to be true to their own religious identities in an atmosphere of mutual acceptance and welcome without compromising into a bland relativism which diminishes the uniqueness and gifts of these identities.

In hospitality it is important to remember who is the host—who set the table, in other words. The “table is set” in a certain way according to the sponsoring religious community – in your case, Dominicans. The guests are welcomed to the table, but the hosts are not expected to change the table setting simply because the guests are not used to these habits and customs. The religious identity, praxis, and worship of the host are not abandoned in the interchange of hospitality. Indeed, it is only the clear identity of the host which makes the guest feel secure and welcome. If the customs or habits of the table manners of the host are unclear or ambiguous, the guest feels awkward and unsure of how to behave or react. The Catholic identity of the university has to be clear to others who are welcomed as guests.

How would this metaphor of hospitality apply to questions of academic freedom? Well, one thing that happens as a result of table fellowship is conversation. The host and the guest tell their stories. This interchange is encouraged by the experience of hospitality. The atmosphere of invitation, welcome, and *communio* of persons is precisely what can give rise to sharing and story telling. It also gives rise to healthy debate and disputation. Since there is a level of trust between the host and guest, both are empowered to tell their story of how they understand the world and reveal their views on “the True, the Good and the Beautiful”. Table fellowship is the context where hostility can be transformed to hospitality and the stranger is welcomed as guest and eventually friend.

As host, the sponsoring religious community tells its story in a variety of ways across campus life. The mission statement, curriculum, student life policies, and faculty hiring procedures are but a few examples of how this story is told. This is the “narrative” of the host, if you will. And when the guests hear this story, they cannot then ask the host to change it. Likewise, the guests have a right to their stories, without the host asking them to change their

perceptions, convictions, and values. Academic freedom should flourish in this context, as long as it is understood what the hosts’ narrative is and how the whole life of the campus is then fundamentally oriented to this story, without apology.

The Narrative of the Host

As host, the sponsoring religious community at Ohio Dominican tells its story in a variety of ways across campus life. This narrative of the Host is told in your mission statement, curriculum, student life policies, and faculty hiring procedures are but a few examples of how this story is told. As you know, I teach at Providence College, another Dominican institution. Both of our institutions share some deep questions and issues concerning how we “set the table” as hosts in a Catholic, Dominican mission.

Let me share with you the “host’s narrative” at Providence College or put another way, “how we set the table” as the Catholic, Dominican host in a banquet of higher education:

How is the identity and narrative of the host visible, explicit, and focused at Providence College?

Administration

For nearly ninety years, Providence College has offered thousands of students a Catholic higher education within the Dominican tradition. Hundreds of Dominican Friars have taught in its classrooms, laboratories, and lecture halls. The legacy of the Dominican charism is not just a museum piece; it is a dynamic tradition that is lived day in and day out on our campus. For example, our by-laws state that the College President must be a Dominican Friar. In this way, we have a Dominican presence “from the top down” in our administration. We also have a Vice President for Mission and Ministry who sits on the Presidential Cabinet and is intimately involved with the daily life of the campus. Five years ago we established a Center for Catholic and Dominican Studies which offers intellectual and spiritual formation in hosting workshops, lectures, art exhibits, and roundtable discussions.

Website

The College website has our mission statement front and center and includes a few important links to information about what it means to be a Catholic, Dominican institution of higher learning. These links feature the inaugural address from our current

President, Fr. Brian Shanley, OP, where he offers his vision of a Dominican education, as well as short essays entitled: “What does it mean to be a Dominican?” and “What does it mean to be a Catholic and Dominican college?” This visible, explicit mission focus on our website promotes our Dominican identity and commitment.

Dominican Presence

Providence College is blessed with having a large Dominican community of upwards of forty men living in our on-campus Priory. Besides serving on the faculty and in administration, the most important dimension of this Dominican presence, in my opinion, is their witness of prayer and vowed living in community. This is a campus soaked in prayer – from the celebration of the Liturgy of the Hours each day in the Priory chapel, to the daily Masses offered in St. Dominic chapel, to the personal contemplation of each Friar. In my opinion, it is this prayerful presence that is the spiritual foundation of our campus community. And, like most Catholic colleges, our chaplain’s office offers a wide range of ministries, retreats, opportunities for Christian service, and spiritual direction, which spring from this foundation of prayer.

How does the Dominican intellectual tradition inform our curriculum, faculty orientation, campus ethos, recruitment, promotional material, student programs, etc.?

Curriculum

The Dominican charism is also expressed in a variety of other ways on our campus besides simply having a resident religious community. One obvious way is in the curriculum. The Theology and Philosophy courses that are part of the core requirements of every student help to articulate the Catholic, sacramental worldview. By taking a minimum of six credits in each discipline, each student is exposed to the unique relationship between faith and reason embedded in the Dominican intellectual tradition.

Faculty Involvement

The Dominican intellectual heritage is introduced to new faculty right away during their orientation. Usually the Vice President for Mission and Ministry gives a presentation which is followed by small group discussions facilitated by both faculty and

administrators. In this way, new members of the faculty are invited to the ongoing conversation about mission that is fostered by the Center for Catholic and Dominican Studies throughout the academic year.

The participation of lay faculty in the Dominican mission cannot be overestimated. In my view, there will be no strengthening of the Catholic, Dominican character of our college unless the faculty voluntarily develop a substantive interest in this project. Neither the rhetoric of our mission statement in the catalogue nor the artificial setting of percentages of faculty who are Catholic will get anywhere; it seems to me, without an indigenous intellectual community.

How can the faculty, the community of scholars which is at the heart of the college, also be at the heart of the religious vision of our educational endeavor? And, especially, how can faculty who do not share the same religious affiliation of the college be engaged by the Catholic, Dominican mission? These are critical questions since there is a distinctive way that faculty enhance and communicate the mission - which is different from how administrators or trustees promote the mission. For this reason, Providence College has included a “mission response” statement in the application process for all faculty positions. This written statement serves as the basis of a conversation with our President, specifically about mission, during the on-campus interview. And the above mentioned session in our new faculty orientation workshop each August is also a recent attempt to shape faculty to participate in the Catholic, Dominican mission of the College.

Genuine faculty ownership of the mission is, indeed, an ongoing challenge as we move forward and grow as an institution. How do we promote this? For example, our President hosts two open conversations with faculty each year entitled: “Teaching at a Catholic College” and “Being a non-Catholic faculty member at Providence College.” These non-threatening, open forums have been moderately successful in surfacing the tensions and fears of non-Catholic faculty. We have also tried to celebrate the various religious traditions of our non-Catholic students with specific academic programming to foster inter-religious dialogue. Rather than weakening our Catholic, Dominican identity, these efforts can actually strengthen it, in my opinion.

Dominican Aesthetic

Another way that the Dominican tradition is expressed at Providence College is through our physical environment. We have a physical and aesthetic environment that displays through architecture and symbol our Catholic, Dominican identity – inscriptions, sculptures, stained glass windows, artworks, crucifixes in classrooms, chapels, and a grotto of Our Lady. This campus ethos is a tangible reminder of our mission and embodies the Dominican sacramental principle that the material can communicate the divine. This campus aesthetic also appears on our logos and promotional materials that are used in recruitment, advertising, and fund raising.

Athletics

I might even go so far as to claim that our sports programs also express our Dominican intellectual tradition! Providence College is best known to most of the world not as a Dominican institution, but rather as a Division One basketball school with a storied athletic tradition. Indeed, we have even been called a “basketball factory”! But even here, it seems to me, our Dominican charism is at work –and not just because our teams are called “the Friars”! After all, St. Thomas Aquinas argued that play and sport are necessary for the good of the soul (*Summa Theologica*, 2ae2ae, 168, I). So, it could be argued that athletics should be included as one of the major ways that the Dominican charism is manifested, in addition to those mentioned above.

Conclusion

So, this is how we “set the table” at Providence College. As I understand it, your charge here at the Center is to help tell your own narrative at Ohio Dominican. And to that end, I’d like to leave you with some questions to ponder as you think about the Catholic, Dominican mission at Ohio Dominican.

- Is your Catholic, Dominican mission invisible, intuitive, and implicit or is it visible, focused, and explicit?
- How does the Dominican intellectual tradition inform your campus ethos, curriculum, recruitment, promotional material, faculty orientation, etc.?
- How can you be rooted in the Catholic, Dominican tradition, and yet be open to adaptation, innovation, and change?

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This presentation was delivered by Dr. Hagstrom at the Fall Advisory Board meeting of The Center for Dominican Studies on October 23, 2009.

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The Life of Study and the Common Good

Richard Schenk, OP, DrTheol

Introduction

The particular question that I wish to pursue in my own reflections here is this: what can the Dominican Order's ideal of study, past and present, contribute to the culture of a university that understands itself in the service of not only personal advancement but also the advancement of the common good?

In recent centuries, many religious orders have founded universities, and each could point to an aspect of its own unique charism as a fitting heritage or legacy for these institutions: say, the Benedictines with their transmission of cultural memory, the Jesuits with their mediation of social conflicts, the Salesians with their vocational training for the poor, or the Christian Brothers and Ursulines with their passion to be educators. I want to examine how the Dominican Order's ideal of study, past and present, is concentrated in the somewhat inaccessible word: "wisdom."

It wouldn't make a great t-shirt: "Wisdom: We do it at Ohio Dominican University." Wisdom is not as catchy as, say, the advertisement of one computer giant, whose ads show a young urban professional next to the motto: "I have theory. What I need is action". The recruitment office of the university is unlikely to modify this slogan to read: "I've had action, what I need is wisdom." True, "wisdom" is not as vague as that other watchword which many universities under pressure from the accreditation companies have put into their mission statement: "excellence." Even, or perhaps especially, the more mediocre institutions obediently claim as required that they are "dedicated to excellence", as if they had forgotten all those Platonic dialogues that once forced us to say excellence-in-what: not excellent con artists

nor excellent weapon-smiths, but then excellence in what? Ironically, such parroted claims to be "dedicated to excellence" often betray a thorough mediocrity. "Wisdom" is less formal; it is more concrete than "excellence."

It is also less formal and more concrete than "veritas", or truth, the cherished motto of the Dominican Order as a whole even prior to obtaining "official" status in the 19th century.¹ John Harvard must have seen this watchword in the emblems of the walls and windows of the former Dominican Blackfriars at Cambridge, which had been absorbed in 1583 into Emmanuel College, Cambridge.² *Veritas* soon became the watchword of John's academy for preachers, and it would remain just that even after this initial foundation grew into Harvard University. And yet, even if more concrete than excellence or truth, wisdom, too, can mean many things, and so the question remains: what kind of wisdom could the Dominican legacy of this university offer to enrich the academic culture?

Amidst all the emotional misgivings suggested by the insuitability of wisdom or "sapientia" as a popular codeword for the university t-shirt, we could articulate three central challenges:

1. Wisdom means too many things.
2. Even if you could narrow and define the meaning of wisdom, it could never be taught as are the arts and sciences; you cannot offer a major in wisdom.
3. Even for those who have gained some form of wisdom,



wisdom, there is nothing to be done with it once they have it; so it is a private matter, irrelevant to the common good.

We will need to address all three of these concerns, if the Dominican heritage of wisdom is ever to contribute to university culture. But let me begin these reflections with an initial section, looking at the genesis and shape of the sapiential ideal of study in early Dominican history, before taking up the three concerns mentioned and using them to test the current articulation of the Dominican ideal of study.

The Place and Character of Study in the Early Dominican Order

Academic studies occupied a central place in the Order of Preachers from its very beginning, several generations before a definite ideal of wisdom began to interpret and shape them. To tell that story we must first recall St. Dominic, about whom many of you might already know a great deal. I ask for your patience. Despite contradictory claims made in the fourteenth century that tell us more about the course of the Order's first completed century than about St. Dominic, Dominic was not a professor of theology at the papal curia or any other faculty.³ And yet he was venerated from early years of the Order on as a "doctor veritatis," who had "freely poured out waters of wisdom."⁴ Dominic was not someone for whom studies and books were a fetish. As a student, he had even sold his rare and expensive books to aid the victims of disease and drought.⁵ Dominic discourses with skeptics of the Christian faith, at public gatherings and public taverns, but not as a professor at the university. And yet he came to see academic study as a necessary means to address directly a different kind of disease and hunger: the plague of disbelief, the hunger for genuine faith, both acute forms of suffering in his own day. Chosen in 1203 and again in 1206 as a *socius* for embassies of Diego, bishop of Osma in Spain, to Northern Europe, Dominic experienced the widespread inability of the people especially of Southern France and Northern Italy to believe fully in the Christian faith. Against the "Albigensian" heresy with its claim that our earthly history is largely cut off from the realm of a benign and providential God, there were bald counter-assertions of the truth of Christian truth, and soon there would also be military battles around it (and around the question of French unification), but there was little preaching or argumentative discourse

by representatives of the Church willing to live a life as austere as the leaders of the heretical movements.

To characterize different kinds of saints, one could argue that there is one genus or family of those saints who seem to begin with the love of God or Christ and then move to the love of creatures; St. Francis is an example of this family of sanctity. And there is a second genus or family of saints, like Dominic, who move from the love of creatures to the love of God. Dominic was one of those many saints moved by the recognition of human misery to seek the mercy, the "misericordia," of God. That is something he shares with all the saints of this second family. What sets him apart within this genus, the specific difference from most other saints of this kind, is this: the specific "misery" towards which Dominic's own "misericordia" was directed was first and foremost the inability of so many in his age to believe aright. One remarkable sign of this is that nearly all of his prayers of which we have any report are prayers that seek God's mercy: either directly for those weak in faith; or indirectly for them, namely for God's grace on this new "Order of Preachers," who could enter into fruitful discourse about the faith.

Now this might sound far too specialized to be a model for the university. But the apostolic goal of proclamation and dialogue required study, the study of the faith and the study of cultures and philosophies. The new religious significance of study became clear only gradually as Dominic gathered an Order of Preachers and shaped the life, the apostolate, and the locations of his followers. Bishop Diego and his canon and *socius* Dominic had met the disheartened papal legates in southern France in 1206; just now, this spring, as we are commemorating the 800th anniversary of this meeting, there is a conference of historians in France trying to reconstruct the precise details and importance of these interchanges. What is clear is that, following his second trip as *socius* of Bishop Diego, Dominic stayed on in the Languedoc region between Toulouse and Montpellier even after the bishop had returned to Spain and died there at the end of 1207. Following the assassination in the first weeks of 1208 of one of the legates, Peter of Castelnau, open warfare broke out between the opposing parties. Prior to this, Diego and Dominic had been able to establish a monastery and safe-house for women who had converted from Albigensianism, and it was from here that Dominic was able to preach in the area as well as in the cities of Toulouse and Carcassone. Other Catholic

preachers began to join him here. After over eight years, during a lull in the hostilities in 1215, Dominic was finally able to move with his small band of preachers to Toulouse, where they founded a diocesan institute of religious life and preaching. Dominic joined with the others in his small foundation there in attending the academic lectures of Alexander Stavensby at the Cathedral Chapter school; it was an option for the academic model of the cathedral schools rather than for the more spiritual style of the monastery schools with their tradition of *lectio divina*.⁶ In January of 1217 Pope Honorius issued a letter which Dominic would be able to present to the faculty and students of the University Paris, inviting them to found a papally approved *studium* at Toulouse as the seed of a new university there. Dominic's initial idea for an answer to the contemporary crisis of faith was not only a new religious community, but a new university. Less than a month before, Honorius had given papal approval to what the pope himself now insisted be named "the Order of Preachers," moving it beyond its initial limits as a diocesan institute. Dominic seems never to have presented the papal letter of invitation to the University community at Paris to bring them to a new foundation at Toulouse. Instead, he decided, several months after requesting this authorization, to do just the reverse and send the brethren from Toulouse to established universities.⁷ In August of 1217, he decided against the advice of most of his advisors to disperse his young community, which had been eight years in the making and had now existed less than two years after the first formal house was founded in Toulouse. Dominic sent seven members to the university of Paris, four to Spain, others to the university of Bologna, and some of the younger and simpler brothers to the non-university town of Orléans (only in 1235 would the pope grant to Orléans the status of a university). Dominic left only a minor presence of his foundation in Toulouse. The gamble paid off, however, not only because the following month saw hostilities resume at Toulouse with the Albigensian reoccupation of the city and the renewed siege upon it by the Catholic forces, but also because of the growing association of the Order with the university communities and the university ethos.

Arguably, the strongest testimony for St. Dominic's sense of studies does not come from the universities, but from the interior life and the apostolic ministry of the priories themselves.⁸ In what is perhaps his most obvious shift from monastic life, Domi-

nic replaced the monastic emphasis on handwork with the multiple practices of academic study.⁹ The superiors were told that they could dispense from common prayer and other regular observances, if on any occasion study or preaching demanded it. Dominic's visitations would focus on study and preaching. Liberal provisions were made for the purchase and maintenance of books and libraries. No priory was to be founded that could not find along with a suitable prior also a "lector," or teacher. The lector of each convent was expected not only to direct *ad intra* the intellectual studies of the brethren, but to arrange for regular public disputations *ad extra*. The initial popularity of the young Order, the reason why cities were eager to make their foundation possible, was in good part that the priories provided something analogous to a community college for theology, to which also the non-Dominican clergy and the laity had access. Admitting that this ideal of each priory as a publicly accessible school of theology had not always been realized, the general chapter of Valenciennes in 1259 passed legislation that called for the gradual closure of houses without an active lector.¹⁰ For their part, the Dominican friars, including prior and lector, were obliged by this legislation to attend these very same disputations: no doubt, helping to insure a consistently higher level of quality.¹¹ As we now know much better after recent research by Michèle Mulchahey and others, an intricate network was created, linking priorial *studia* with provincial and general *studia*.¹² Numerous novel techniques were developed to encourage the brethren individually and communally to "*semper studere*"¹³: to study at all times, a task designed not just for the exceptional foundations but, in ways often forgotten today, for each priory and the common life of its members.

These structures of study had developed prior to any programmatic identification of wisdom as a goal expressive of their characteristically Dominican nature. The vocabulary of wisdom followed the practices of study. But especially after several sobering experiences of Dominicans' attempting merely charismatic preaching or direct political control, the alternative, "sapiential" ideal of Dominican life increasingly came to be recognized as normative for the entire Order. In the year after brother John of Vicenza had proclaimed 1233 as the "Year of the Great Alleluia" and allowed himself to be declared Duke of Verona, the General Chapter forbade the direct involvement of brothers in political offices and ordained that only

brethren with adequate academic preparation should be allowed to preach.¹⁴

While the provisions of the Constitutions for local and provincial study were meant in the first instance for the good of those localities, they also allowed the preparation of the best students to study in the general studia set up at the universities and often functioning as a part of them. The legislation from 1259 demanded

“...that provincials are to inquire diligently as to which of the young brethren are fit for study and capable of progressing in this quickly, and that they are to promote them in their studies; that such an inquiry is also to be carried out each year by the visitators of each priory, and that they are to pass on the results to the provincial chapter; that no brothers are to be sent away to the general houses of study in the Order unless they are especially willing and able to study (*bene morigerati et apti ad proficiendum*).”

It was only a matter of time until these structures produced university professors of theology. While it was not unheard of for non-Dominicans (e.g. the Franciscans Odo Rigaldi and Roger Bacon) to begin their commentaries on the *Sentences* with references to the wisdom sought in systematic theology, the Dominican professors of the period show a far more definite tendency in this direction. Wisdom as the *leitmotiv* of these works, similar to our doctoral dissertations, was not exclusively Dominican, but it was characteristically Dominican.¹⁵ It is represented by the works of Richard Fishacre, Albert the Great, Thomas Aquinas, Robert Kilwardby, Ulrich of Straßburg, Bombolognus de Bononia and Hannibaldus de Hannibaldis.¹⁶ The identification of wisdom as the goal of theology separates all these Dominican theologians from the merely charismatic and directly political model of the Dominican mission discredited by John of Vicenza; they shared many convictions about what wisdom is not, but they did not agree to the same degree about what wisdom is, beyond its being aided by academic study.

In his contribution to the Festschrift for Joseph Ratzinger's 60th birthday, two volumes which were dedicated to the theme of wordly vis-à-vis divine wisdom¹⁷, Richard Schaeffler was able to show that alternative understandings of wisdom can be distinguished

from one another according to how they relate wisdom to both the various academic disciplines or sciences and to piety. This parallels roughly the question as to the interrelatedness of the gifts of the Holy Spirit wisdom, knowledge and piety (*sapientia, scientia* and *pietas*).¹⁸ The form of wisdom characteristic of Franciscan theology at this time is marked by a close affinity between wisdom and piety, leading typically to the attempt to bind the various academic disciplines ever more closely to the faith, theology, or mystical union of the individual soul with God: *De reductione artium ad theologiam*. Bonaventure shows himself here to be a genuine disciple of St. Francis, who tied wisdom to pious simplicity: “*Ave, regina sapientia, Dominus te salvet cum tua sorore sancta pura simplicitate.*” For many Franciscan theologians, unlike Bonaventure, wisdom would be equated with and thus eclipsed by humility.

By contrast, the form of wisdom characteristic of Dominican theology during the same period tends to stress the abiding importance of the various disciplines for wisdom; and as such it becomes a hallmark of Dominican study. The stress dwells less upon the personal union with God implied by wisdom as upon its communicable implications. For the former tendency, the private metaphor of tasting (*sapere*) sweetness had been frequent; while, for this second conception, the social metaphors of shared water is common, as already in the antiphon for St. Dominic: “...*aquam sapientiae propinasti gratis.*” Ulrich of Straßburg returns to this metaphor to stress the continuous passing on of wisdom. His contemporary and fellow-student, Thomas Aquinas, uses this water imagery at the beginning of his teaching career to define programmatically the work of the theologian: “*Rigans montes de superioribus suis.*” These forms of wisdom are meant to have a wider impact on society.

After strong criticism both from inside the Dominican Order and outside it, the theology of Thomas Aquinas (†1274) slowly gained favor and even a favored status within the Order. And it was therefore Thomas' notion of wisdom through which later Dominicans tended to understand their mission, especially but not exclusively their academic mission. Thomas distinguished but also interrelated three notions of wisdom:

1. philosophical wisdom;
2. theological wisdom;
3. wisdom as a gift of the Holy Spirit.

Let us look briefly at these three levels of wisdom.

1. Thomas draws upon Aristotle's notion of wisdom for his notion of philosophical wisdom. In this view, wisdom is what makes an interdisciplinary synthesis possible. Even in the trades, the architect can be called wise as compared to the masons, the carpenters, the painters etc. Knowing better the purpose of the whole, the architect can imagine better what is needed where and judge whether the specialists' works fit into the whole; as the much cited phrase has it, "it is the office of the wise to order." And yet the architect cannot as architect do well the work of the mason, the carpenter, or the painters. There is need for a higher unitive perspective AND a need for specialization, a mix of a certain collaboration or solidarity among specialists AND a subsidiarity that respects the work of each specialist. Philosophy, too, is called wisdom inasmuch as it can bring the individual arts and sciences into conversation with one another and synthesize a new and much needed whole. It does this by reaching the higher ground or perspective, having a less restricted methodology; and for this reason there is no major in wisdom: it is what allows the specialized fields to enter conversation with one another. While respecting the work of the more specialized arts and sciences, philosophical wisdom can often judge whether or not the specialists' work fits into the whole. For example: if psychiatry were to limit itself to chemical therapies, if sociology were to limit itself to economic analysis, if anthropology were to limit itself to the analysis of power structures, philosophy might offer critical insights into the more properly personal dimensions of human life. To use Schaeffler's analysis, this Thomistic notion of wisdom is characterized by a high regard for the specialized arts and sciences.
2. At a second level, theological wisdom seeks to preserve this basis of philosophical wisdom and develop it, adding to its synthesis the voice and reflected experience of faith. Unlike philosophical wisdom, there is no form of genuinely theological wisdom which is purely theoretical. It is more comprehensive, and thus needs necessarily to be concerned about the private and the social implications of virtue and sin, of faith and disbelief, of church and society, and of the academic disciplines. It retains "a primacy of the speculative," avoiding

the revisionist models of history or theory often offered by purely pragmatic or functionalistic thinkers. It makes a place for theology amidst the other university disciplines and social voices, but at the same time it also overcomes the temptations to fideism and retains the respect for the pre-theological disciplines. Thomas Aquinas' sense of theological wisdom and its conversation partners comes close to John Henry Newman's 1854 essay on the *Idea of the University*, which demands both the specialization of the many academic disciplines and their conversation with one another, including their conversation with theology.

3. Wisdom as a gift of the Spirit is prepared in Thomas' view by the lower forms of wisdom, and it follows their pattern. While anyone so gifted is moved by the Holy Spirit beyond their own talents, these talents and virtues are typically drawn into the process. As flowing from charity, affectively and connaturally, "the spirit of wisdom" in this sense loves not only God but also loves what God loves, loves the benevolent plans of God for the created order and its history. Even less than theological wisdom could "the spirit of wisdom" be purely speculative or indifferent to the course of history, especially when that history is opposed to God's antecedent and unconditional will for the world. In other words, such a gift is more passionate, it suffers together with those who suffer, it opposes most what is most opposed to God's benevolent designs for the world: a principle of reaffirming God's desired order by exercising a preferential option for the suffering. In the spirit of subsidiarity, it respects the other disciplines mentioned. Wisdom of the Holy Spirit in this sense gives us a more acute sense of what is wrong and must be changed, it provides us with motivation to seek a better reality, but it does not of itself supply the answers. In the view of St. Thomas, wisdom of this kind can help us to identify false answers that would increase rather than alleviate suffering, but it cannot replace the need for conversation with the academic disciplines, technological know-how and political reason. It is not an excuse for the "fundamentalisms" of political self-righteousness on the right (the doctrinaire) or the left (the "Gutmensch"), which assumes in either variation that it can largely dispense with detailed expertise and experienced prudence; rather, this kind of wisdom seeks the support of subsidiary disciplines.

The Place and Character of Study in the Dominican Order of Today

These suggestions found in the example of St. Dominic and his early followers, including the reflections of Thomas Aquinas on the interrelated forms of wisdom and their ties to charity and mercy, have not gone unnoticed by the Dominican Order today. For the sake of brevity, I want to refer here only to the document on “the intellectual life” drafted by the General Chapter at Providence in 2001 and recalled by the Chapter of Krakow in 2005. It is the arguably the most official statement of the present Dominican self-understanding on the matter, and the text to a large degree speaks for itself; after the historical section above, we can now cite it here at length. The title of the document is programmatic: “Misericordia Veritatis,” something that the text also names “intellectual compassion.”

This text begins its reflections on “The Call to the Intellectual life of the Order Today” by recalling the example and foundational work of St. Dominic and the ideal of study in the early years of the Order of Preachers, including the reconfiguration of this central practice and work of the Order by St. Thomas’ reflections on wisdom and mercy. While stressing the apostolic and compassionate goal of study, the text also seeks to avoid a shortsighted pragmatism. Genuine knowledge of God and of humankind condition and fulfill each other.

(104) Thanks to St Dominic’s innovative spirit, study ordered to the salvation of souls was involved intimately in the purpose and regular life of the Order. St Dominic himself led the brethren to places of learning in the largest cities so that they might prepare for their mission. “Our study must aim principally, ardently, and with the greatest care at what can be useful for the souls of our neighbors” (*LCO* 77,1). From then on, study would be linked essentially to the apostolic mission of the Order and to preaching the Word of God.

(107) Our constitutions point out the contemplative dimension of study by calling it a meditation on the multiform wisdom of God. To dedicate oneself to study is to answer a call to “cultivate the human pursuit of truth” (*LCO* 77,2). One could say that our Order is born of this love for truth and of this conviction that men and women are capable of knowing the truth. From the start, the brethren were inspired by the innovative audacity of St. Dominic who encouraged them to be useful to souls

through intellectual compassion, by sharing with them the *misericordia veritatis*, the mercy of truth. Jordan of Saxony states that Dominic had the ability to pierce through to the hidden core of the many difficult questions of their day “thanks to a humble intelligence of the heart” (*humili cordis intelligentia*: *Libellus*, No. 7, *MOPH* XVI, Roma 1935, pg. 29).

(106) It is into a studious and concerned wisdom of this sort that Thomas Aquinas inscribes the Dominican vocation – *contemplari et contemplata aliis tradere* (cf. *STh* II-II 188, 6 as well as *STh* I 1, 4; II-II 45, 3 co). Wisdom of this kind tells us not only of what is eternal, but also of the “...*regulae contingentium, quae humanis actibus subsunt*” (*STh* II-II 45, 3ad 2; vgl. 19, 7). “It belongs to the gift of wisdom not only to meditate on God but also to direct human actions. Such direction is concerned first and foremost with the elimination of evils, which contradict wisdom. That is why fear is called the beginning of wisdom, because fear moves us to move away from evils. Ultimately, it has to do with the aim of how everything might be led back to the order justly due it: something which belongs to the idea of peace” (*STh* II-II 45, 6 ad 3). Sapiential study thus unfolds itself necessarily as intellectual compassion: a form of compassion which presupposes insight (*intellectus*) gained or developed by study; and a form of insight which leads to compassion. “For even as it is better to enlighten than merely to shine, so is it better to give to others the fruits of one’s contemplation than merely to contemplate” (*STh* II-II 188, 6 co.). Thus, even though God’s mercy and compassion are made available to the world in a multitude of ways, through the Dominican charism it is available through study and the consolation of truth.

(105) Within the Order, study should not be considered in a pragmatic way, as if it were only an apprenticeship for a trade. Rather, study belongs to the contemplative dimension of our Dominican life, a vital part of its cognitive aspect. And yet, while drawn first toward contemplating God and God’s works, theological wisdom comes to share with the Spirit’s gift of wisdom the love of God and of God’s works, a holy joy in the contemplation of their fullness as well as a holy sorrow at any wounding of their being.

(113) The manifold crisis about human dignity is also a crisis about God. It belongs to Dominican study to grasp the link between the two, tracing where our loss of God leads ultimately to our loss of human dignity and finding both with each other again. For

this reason it is as impossible for Dominican study to neglect the fundamental questions of God, salvific history or the ultimate truths of creation as it is to neglect the questions of the peace, justice, and stewardship to which the Gospel leads us.

(108) Study is thus linked with that *miseri-cordia* which moves us to proclaim the Gospel of God's love for the world and the dignity which results from such love. Our study helps us to perceive human crises, needs, longings, and sufferings as our own (cf. Thomas Aquinas, *STh*, II-II 30, 2 co: "...Quia autem tristitia seu dolor est de proprio malo, intantum aliquis de miseria aliena tristatur aut inquantum miseriam alienam apprehendit ut suam").

The document not only refers to the connection of wisdom and mercy in general and in the early days of the Order, it also describes something of the situation of today in which the search for sapiential study is especially urgent. The call of Vatican II for us to share in the joys and hopes, but also in the tears and fears of our day takes on a new significance in the postmodern age, where the anxiety is deep and widespread that we human beings have significant access neither to truth nor to freedom nor to hope. Even the modern convictions of universal human rights are placed in question by the postmodern fragmentation into cultural relativity.

(109) The intellectual mission of the Order calls us to share not just the "gaudium et spes", but also the "luctus et angor" of our time, its tears and fears: "The joys and the hopes, the griefs and the anxieties of the people of this age, especially those who are poor or in any way afflicted, these are the joys and hopes, the griefs and anxieties of the followers of Christ. Indeed, nothing genuinely human fails to raise an echo in their hearts. For theirs is a community composed of just such people..." (*Gaudium et spes* 1).

(110) The historical developments of recent times have been ambivalent. On the one hand, human rights have been declared more clearly than ever before, and technical and medical advances have done much to reduce useless toil and physical suffering. But by their many theoretical reductionisms and many of their political and social developments, especially those depriving whole categories of people of their human rights, the last two centuries have also intensified the self-doubt which was never far from human life, leaving a heritage which characterizes the beginning of our present century as well. No less urgently than St. Augustine, each person in our time can

say, "Quaestio mihi factus sum" (*Confessiones* X 33).

(111) This questioning of human value is an intrinsic part of today's most pressing *quaestiones disputatae*. The self-doubt about human dignity colors the three ancient questions which since Kant have been said to constitute together the encompassing question, What is a human being? These three questions, What can I know? What should I do? What may I hope for? raising interrelated doubts about the capacity of human beings for truth, for freedom, and for eternal life, call for the intellectual compassion acquired in good part by the labor of study. Assiduous study of today's *quaestiones disputatae* should lead us to understand the pressures to doubt, without submitting to the despair about human dignity: "Credidi, etiam cum locutus sum, ego humiliatus sum nimis; ego dixi in trepidatione mea: omnis homo mendax" (*Psalm 116/115*, 10-11).

(112) Feeling the trepidation of our times, especially about our capacity for truth, and seeing the manifold humiliation of human life as our own, and yet bringing to the world the confidence of the Gospel together with its concomitant demand for justice and peace, Dominican study is to be marked by both a habit of humility and a confidence in the "paracletic" mission of the church, defending the dignity proclaimed in creation and redemption and helping to make faith believable in our day. In this way Dominican study can and must serve the *miseri-cordia veritatis*.

The text of the Chapter recalls the need of this wisdom to listen to sources outside our own culture and times; it calls for dialogue and memory, for conversation with "the Other" than ourselves, others both contemporary and historical:

(114) Dominicans share with others the lot of our times. Consequently, Dominican study is marked by dialogue and cooperation in the pursuit of truth. In order to defend the dignity of creation in our own times and in our future, Dominican study seeks to "anamnetic" (recollective), recalling the sufferings and injustices of the past along with the riches and achievements of those who have gone before us.

(115) Our confidence to take part in the *quaestiones disputatae* of our day must derive from our confidence that we are the heirs to an intellectual tradition which is not to be preserved in some intellectual deep-freeze. It is alive and has an important contribution to make today. It rests upon fundamental philosophical

and theological intuitions: an understanding of morality in terms of the virtues and growth in the virtues; the goodness of all creation; a confidence in reason and the role of debate; happiness in the vision of God as our destiny; and a humility in the face of the mystery of God which draws us beyond ideology.

(116) This is a tradition of immense importance in a world that is often tempted by an intellectual pessimism, a lack of confidence that the truth can be attained, or by brutal fundamentalism. It is founded on the confidence that we have a *propensio ad veritatem* (LCO 77,2). It is of immense importance in the Church, which is often divided by ideological divisions with theologians sniping at one another from opposing trenches, and in which there is often a fear of real intellectual engagement with those who think differently.

(117) Like the *miser cordia* that it cultivates, Dominican study is a permanent way of life, nourished by contemplative and communal resources. Aiming at the perception and alleviation of human need, Dominican study must value especially the resources offered by philosophy together with its neighboring human, social, and natural sciences. The future of our philosophic tradition belongs to the most urgent questions facing the intellectual mission of the Order.

The Chapter sought to retrieve a key aspect of the Thomistic notion of wisdom: its relation to other disciplines which preserve their relative autonomy. Their principles and implications can be reviewed but not redesigned by wisdom, which therefore seeks to foster conversations among the various disciplines of philosophy, the arts and the sciences. Wisdom of this kind also seeks to foster the search for truth in processes of dialogue among cultures, epochs, and religions.

(118) Brothers in many parts of the world feel that, even though philosophy seems more important than it has been in the past, there are also growing doubts that we are providing the right kind of philosophical formation for our brothers. We have tended to see it as a rather tiresome passage toward theology, as a place to acquire a vocabulary we will later use in theology. By situating truth in the fact and possibility of human experience, philosophy helps to uncover the root of a truth and to let us know *how* what has been claimed is true (“rationibus...investigantibus veritatis radicem et facientibus scire quomodo sit verum quod dicitur”: Thomas Aquinas, *Quaestiones quodlibetales* IV, art. XVIII).

(119) Philosophy must be understood in the context of its neighboring social, natural, and human disciplines that give us insight into the human condition and our place in the cosmos. As Dominicans we have a special responsibility to the heritage of St. Thomas that we have received, but if we take seriously the radicality of the Gospel, our preaching must likewise be attentive to new knowledge and new ways of understanding the world around us. Because God reveals his plan to us in a multitude of ways, we must maintain the delicate unity-in-tension between faith and reason: “Deprived of what revelation offers, reason has taken side-tracks which expose it to the danger of losing sight of its final goal. Deprived of reason, faith has stressed feeling and experience, and so runs the risk of no longer being a universal proposition. It is an illusion to think that faith, tied to weak reasoning, might be more penetrating; on the contrary, faith then runs the risk of withering into myth or superstition. By the same token, reason which is unrelated to an adult faith is not prompted to turn its gaze to the newness and radicality of being” (*Fides et Ratio*, 48).

(120) This means that every province, vice-province and vicariate of the Order must evaluate its philosophical curriculum regularly to assure that the philosophical formation which our brothers receive prepares them for the challenges of their day.

(121) The goal of the Order is not to create intellectuals but to form preachers who can proclaim the Gospel on multiple frontiers of the modern world. These include the frontier of poverty resulting from economic globalization; the frontier of personhood and human dignity in the field of bioethics; the frontier of Christian experience faced with religious pluralism; and the frontier of religious experience faced with atheism, materialist indifference and new forms of idolatry.

(122) Since its earliest days, the Order has promoted fearlessly a spirituality of dialogue. In today’s pluralistic world, the challenges of dialogue have never been greater. Today our world calls us, first, to persevere in the conversion of churches toward the unity of the Church of Christ. This demands, first of all, the examination of conscience and the purification of memories. Second, it calls us to learn that a universal truth can enter into the particularity of culture and history. Third, it calls us to study and preach the *kenosis* of God, who came down into the flesh of the world and the limits of our language and culture.

(123) In this dialogue we must take care not to lose “passion for ultimate truth and our ardor for research.” This will require that we develop a new theology of mission and evangelization as we face a crisis of meaning, a plurality of theories with which we may not agree, and even indifference. True dialogue involves deepening our own identity and allowing ourselves to be truly vulnerable so that we can listen to others and hear their pain.

(124) What kind of men and women do we need for this new work? Today’s preacher-theologians will be reasonable and well informed about the various disciplines, without being specialists in all of them. They will need to be wise men and women who can orient others and themselves toward their final destiny. They will not be afraid of reaching the limits of reason and will be open to the “foolish wisdom” of the cross. “The wisdom of the Cross...breaks free of all cultural limitations which seek to contain it and insists upon an openness to the universality of the truth which it bears”(Fides et Ratio, 23). Precisely where modern science gives us cloudy complexity, Dominicans will be men and women not of easy answers but of difficult questions, inspired by the passion for truth.

Conclusion

So, what does all of this mean? Should ODU get the Wisdom t-shirt after all? Something like “Wisdom: our heritage and our service”. But then “Wisdom” on the front of the shirt would need an asterix referencing a long explanation on the back; and, while admittedly some of us might have more room on our t-shirts than others, there is probably just too much explaining to do in the space allowed. The central question identified at the beginning of these reflections was: what can the Dominican Order’s ideal of study, past and present, contribute to the culture of a university that understands itself in the service of not only personal advancement but also the advancement of the common good? The challenges to the suggestion that this contribution could be found in the Dominican ideal of wisdom have been met.

1. Wisdom can indeed mean many things, but the sapiential sense of study reached in the first fifty years after the beginning of the Order of Preachers displays a high level of specificity that characterizes the kind of study that should mark the work of

the university today.

2. That gift of the Holy Spirit which we call wisdom is the fulness and capstone of what we can aspire to by way of wisdom, and it is admittedly beyond the virtues that can be acquired by academic reason and discipline. As such, it cannot be never be taught or laid claim to as are the arts and sciences; and yet it flourishes especially well in their context, and it calls for them as what it needs to carry out its own purpose. Together with the interdisciplinary dynamic of philosophical and theological wisdom, this *spiritus sapientiae* fosters a flourishing academy: it furthers the disciplines, their conversation with one another, and their discursive dialogue with the non-academic and non-Christian worlds.
3. Wisdom of this kind also seeks an application of knowledge to praxis and to the common good. It narrows the gap between theory and praxis, it fosters critical and self-critical reflection upon the impact of arts and sciences upon the cultural and natural geographies affected by them.

In the context of the political action that is included in the ultimate goals of such wisdom, the conversation among theologians, philosophers and experts from, say, technological, medical, juridical, and economic fields is one that both demands (solidarity) and protects (subsidiarity) the competence of each. Involving the Order and the wider Church in shaping society, it is a conversation that will also demand and protect the involvement of laity and clergy. The university is meant as one of the preeminent places where those conversations should be prepared and cultivated. In this ideal of wisdom, the university has the task of cultivating a “Life of the Mind” that does not stay in the mind, much less in one mind, but involves the body, the society, societies and their many voices along with many more generations before and after the one presently living. In J.H. Newman’s view, this conversation among academic disciplines, including theology, if that conversation is sufficiently wide and deep and far-reaching, is what makes any university a university. This is the ideal of wisdom that can guide ODU in embracing its legacy, contributing to our world, and continuing to grow as a, well, yes, excellent university.

Richard Schenk, OP, DrTheol

Fr. Schenk delivered this lecture on March 28, 2006, as part of the Life of the Mind lecture series.

Fr. Richard Schenk is a priest of the Western (California) province of the Order of Preachers. He earned the doctorate of theology from the University of Munich, Germany, in 1986. After completing studies in California and Germany, Fr. Schenk taught dogmatics as visiting professor at the University of Fribourg, Switzerland, and edited unpublished Latin texts for the Bavarian Academy of Sciences. In 1991 he founded the department for the philosophical foundations of theology at the Hannover Institute of Philosophical Research, where he served as director of the Institute until the year 2000. Fr. Schenk served as a faculty member of the Dominican School of Philosophy and Theology and the Graduate Theological Union in Berkeley, California. He is the author of numerous publications on theological and philosophical anthropology, medieval theology, and ecumenical and inter-religious dialogue. In 2004, the Dominican Order designated Fr. Schenk a Master of Sacred Theology. He is a member of the European Academy of Sciences and Arts. Schenk has taught full-time at the GTU, with the exception of 2003-2005, when he was Director of the Intercultural Forum for Studies in Faith and Culture (ICF) in Washington, D.C. Richard is serving the Province for the second time as its Regent of Studies.

Fr. Schenk was recently elected President of the Catholic University of Eichstätt-Ingolstadt. The Katholische Universität Eichstätt-Ingolstadt is Germany's only Catholic university. It was first established in April of 1980, but it continues an almost 450-year tradition of higher education, dating back to the Collegium Willibaldinum, which was founded in 1564 as the first seminary for priests north of the Alps. His tenure at the university begins in October of 2011.

Notes

Guy Bedouelle, *Dominikus. Von der Kraft des Wortes* (Graz et al., 1984) 172.

² Cf. F.A. Reeve, *Cambridge* (London, Clowes 1964) 59. The author thanks Fr. Fabian Parmisano OP for the reference and its background

³ Cf. Bedouelle, op. cit. 171.

⁴ Antiphon „O lumen“.

⁵ Cf. Vladimir Koudelka, *Dominikus* (Olten et al., Walter 1983) Text 13 (pg. 80 sq.), citing Jordan of Saxony, *Libel-*

lus, 10.

⁶ Cf. Bedouelle, op. cit.

⁷ For a slightly later development cf. Marie-Humbert Vicairie, Roland de Crémone ou la position de la théologie a 8' université de Toulouse, in: id., *Dominiques et ses Pr[^]cheurs* (Paris et al., Cerf 1977) 75-100.

⁹ Although the oldest version of the „Ancient Constitutions“ dates from over 10 years after Dominic's death, it provides a good sense of the trajectory of the initial legislation.

¹⁰ Cf. Vladimir Koudelka, *Dominikus* (Olten et al., Walter 1983) 176 sqq.

¹¹ „If in any province it is not possible that there be lectors at each of the priories, it is at least to be provided for that the brethren, especially the young brethren, are not to be assigned to these priories but that they rather be sent to places which do have lectors; If not enough lectors can be found for lecturing publicly, at least some should be provided to lecture in private or at least to deal with history or pastoral cases or something of this kind, lest the brethren be idle; That the visitators are to inquire diligently each year concerning the lectors with regard to what they have lectured on during the year, which questions they have disputed and how they have solved them. They are to inquire among the priories they visitate which ones still lack lectors, and they should make a report to the provincial chapter about this. The provincial and the diffinitors are to make a report to the general chapter, especially about the more notable deficiencies which they have found in this regard.”

¹² Op. cit.: „That the brethren who skip classes be severely punished; That during the time assigned for the lectures the brethren not be occupied with celebrating masses or anything of this kind, nor are they to go into the city, except for in cases of great necessity;

That even priors are to go to classes just as the other brethren, whenever this is manageable;

That lectors between assignments also attend classes and especially the disputations.“

¹³ M. Michèle Mulchahey, „*First the Bow is Bent in Study*“. *Dominican Education before 1350*

(Toronto, PIMS 1998); for older literature cf. William A. Hinnebusch, *The History of the Dominican Order*, Vol. II: Intellectual and Cultural Life to 1500 (New York, Alba 1973).

¹⁴ Cf. Augustine Thompson: *Revival Preachers and Politics in Thirteenth-Century Italy* (Oxford 1992); und Thomas Kaeppli und Emilio Panella: *Scriptores Ordinis Praedicatorum Medii Aevi*, Vol. IV (Rom 1993) 159-161.

¹⁵ Cf. the helpful distinction drawn by Simon Tugwell, *The Way of the Preacher* (Springfield u. a. 1979) S. 3: „In the pages that follow, I shall not be particularly concerned to isolate anything as being distinctively or exclusively Dominican. What I am looking for is rather the *typically* Dominican. There is, after all, only a limited number of ingredients available for constructing a form of religious life,

and few of them will really be the exclusive property of anybody. But different orders, different traditions, even though they use the same material, can still use it in a way which is characteristically their own.“

¹⁶ Cf. Friedrich Stegmüller, *Repertorium Commentariorum in Sententias Petri Lombardi* (Würzburg 1947)

¹⁷ R. Schaeffler, *Spiritus sapientiae et intellectus - spiritus scientiae et pietatis*. Religionsphilosophische Überlegungen zum Verhältnis von Weisheit, Wissenschaft und Frömmigkeit und ihrer Zuordnung zum Geiste, in: Walter Baier u. a. (Hrsg.), *Weisheit Gottes - Weisheit der Welt* (Festschrift für Joseph Kardinal Ratzinger zum 60. Geburtstag) EOS, St. Ottilien 1987, 15-35.

¹⁸ „Spiritus sapientiae et intellectus - spiritus scientiae et pietatis. Religionsphilosophische Überlegungen zum Verhältnis von Weisheit, Wissenschaft und Frömmigkeit und ihrer Zuordnung zum Geiste“, in: Walter Baier u. a. (Hrsg.), *Weisheit Gottes - Weisheit der Welt*, a.a.O., S. 15-35. Zu Bonaventuras auf affektive Einigung mit Gott angelegter Vorstellung von Weisheit vgl. Marianne Schlosser: *Cognitio et amor. Zum kognitiven und voluntativen Grund der Gotteserfahrung nach Bonaventura* (Veröffentlichung des Grabmann-Institutes 35) Paderborn u. a. 1990; und Werner Hülsbusch: „'Christus - Gottes Weisheit' nach Bonaventura“ in: Walter Baier u. a. (Hrsg.), *Weisheit Gottes - Weisheit der Welt* (Festschrift für Joseph Kardinal Ratzinger zum 60. Geburtstag) EOS, St. Ottilien 1987, Bd. II, S. 739-752. Selbst wenn Dominikaner, wie etwa Robert Kilwardby, Bonaventura in der affektiven Lozierung der Weisheit folgen, tritt das Element mystischer Einigung hinter die Mittelbarkeit der Weisheit zurück. So definiert Kilwardby den Gegenstand der Weisheit präzise als die *incommutabilis iustitia*, der sich ein weiser *viator* insofern nähert, als er *ex testimonio suae conscientiae* eine Entsprechung seines Lebens oder seiner Gesellschaft dazu feststellen kann (*Quaestiones in librum tertium Sententiarum*, Teil 2: Tugendlehre, hrsg. von Gerhard Leibold, Veröffentlichungen der Kommission für die Herausgabe ungedruckter Texte aus der mittelalterlichen Geisteswelt, Band 12) S. 140 f.

¹⁹ For St. Bonaventure's view of wisdom as affective union with God cf. Marianne Schlosser: *Cognitio et amor. Zum kognitiven und voluntativen Grund der Gotteserfahrung nach Bonaventura* (Veröffentlichung des Grabmann-Institutes 35) Paderborn et al. 1990; and Werner Hülsbusch: „'Christus - Gottes Weisheit' nach Bonaventura“ in: Walter Baier et al. (ed.), *Weisheit Gottes - Weisheit der Welt*, op. cit., vol. II, 739-752. Even for those Dominicans like Robert Kilwardby who follow Bonaventure both generally and in the affective, God-centered definition of wisdom, the concern for mystical union is less prominent here than the concern for the communicability of wisdom. Kilwardby defines the object of wisdom as *incommutabilis iustitia*, with which the wiser among earthly pilgrims measures society, albeit *ex testimonio suae conscientiae*; cf.

Robert Kilwardby, *Quaestiones in librum tertium Sententiarum*, Teil 2: Tugendlehre, ed. Gerhard Leibold, Veröffentlichungen der Kommission für die Herausgabe ungedruckter Texte aus der mittelalterlichen Geisteswelt, vol. 12) 140 sq.

²⁰ „Salutatio virtutum“, in: *Kritische Edition der Opuscula*, pg. 427.

²¹ For contrasting emphases on humility resp. wisdom in the religious art of Franciscan and Dominican contemplative nuns in 13th century Regensburg cf. Hilarius Barth: „Liebe - verwundet durch Liebe. Das Kreuzigungsbild des Regensburger Lektionars als Zeugnis dominikanischer Passionsfrömmigkeit“, in: *Beiträge zur Geschichte des Bistums Regensburg* 17 (1983) 229-268.

²² *De summo bono* I 1, 1 (ed. Burkhard Mojsisch, Corpus Philosophorum Teutonicorum Medii Aevi I, 1, Meiner, Hamburg 1989, pg. 4, lin. 38-41).

²³ Cf. James A. Weisheipl: *Friar Thomas D'Aquino*, Doubleday, Garden City 1974, cap. 2, pg. 71 sq.

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Thinking, Judging, Acting: The Life of the Mind and the Catholic Intellectual Tradition

R. W. Carstens, PhD

The late Monika Hellwig defined the Catholic intellectual tradition in terms of its content and methodology: that tradition consists of classic Christian minds and the world's comment on them along with a way of teaching and learning that has evolved through the centuries. The 'what' has created the 'how'; Catholic education at its best involves knowing how to think and what to think about. The purpose of such an education is to enable persons to know themselves and their world so as to take responsibility for themselves, each other and this world: Simply put, a Catholic education involves thinking, judging, and acting. Within this tradition "the life of the mind" emerges as a central concern. What is it? How do we come to it? What are the consequences of either having or not having it?

Answers to these three questions inhere in both the ontological assumptions (the principles) with which the tradition beings and in the purposes proposed by an education within that tradition. This essay sketches, however inadequately, the outline ¹ of these questions within the context of Catholic educational assumptions and purposes.

The Assumptions of the Catholic Intellectual Tradition ²

Relying on the work of others ³ we might agree upon six basic assumption about the content and method of the Catholic form of intellectual life. These are not exclusive to the Catholic tradition—nothing ever is!—but wherever they are in evidence the Catholic mind is at home.

The compatibility of faith and reason

This element of the tradition stands in the face

of much modern and post-modern criticism, but it remains essential to the Catholic project. All belief and all knowing involve persons in some kind of relationship to the truth. The Catholic intellectual tradition merely takes this truism as its starting principle and, as such, this principle has imbued the tradition with a long life. What we *believe*, Catholics argue, cannot really contradict what we *know* to be true, and what we know to be true must be reconciled with belief. There can be no double truth theory for the Catholic mind. This is so because the whole project depends on the reality of truth itself. Truth is another name for God in this tradition. Thus, it has become a traditional task for Catholic thinkers to reconcile the work of science with the world of belief. One of the reasons this tradition has persisted for so long is this dynamic, and it is this dynamic between science (knowing broadly defined) and faith (properly construed) that has produced in Catholic institutions a strong dependence on philosophy in their curricula. Behind all theology, philosophy, science, art and literature, history and politics is the common search for the truth, always recognizing that in this world we are perceptually limited in how we are to hold to this search.



Respect for the whole of the wisdom of the past

Because faith and reason cannot validly be at odds, the Catholic intellectual tradition relies on all and every form of knowledge wherever it is found.

This means that no intellectual tradition is to be dismissed, either because it is non-Christian or because it may stem from non-Christian sources. All knowledge, every wisdom, is properly respected and investigated for its truth. For this reason the Catholic library has been the repository of many works which would otherwise have gone without homes. The study of the plurality and diversity found in the created order becomes the focus of intellectual life, even as that life is measured by such a focus. Monism becomes but one of several recognized attitudes toward reality; all should thrive in the Catholic tradition.

A non-elitist, perhaps, egalitarian, approach to life

Certainly in a Church founded upon hierarchy the claim to be non-elitist and egalitarian seems unusual if not out of place; moreover, the contemporary confusion of hierarchy with patriarchy is everywhere evident in the Catholic Church. It may be argued, however, that this confusion results from a failure to make an important distinction. Patriarchy and matriarchy involve gender as justification for authority; hierarchy, on the other hand, implies a proper order of authority.⁴ Hellwig's point about the non-elitist approach of the Catholic intellectual tradition is not that it is without hierarchy, but rather, that given hierarchy, the principle of universality must be respected. Since the Church is catholic, it belongs to all people in all places and is to be in its ministry servant to all. This means that in its role as teacher—part of which function is invested in the Catholic university—its teaching must be accessible to all. This presents a challenge to Catholic scholars inasmuch as they remain duty-bound to remain accessible to non-specialist.

Equality seems implicit in the Catholic intellectual tradition. It is implied by the claim that all women and men are children of one God, Who, in loving them redeemed them and will judge them. Moreover, the Church as the guardian of the transcendent dignity of each person is required to render, as well as teach, social justice, a body of principles that entails careful consideration of all claims to equality.⁵

The continuity of the person and the community

This continuity, wherein the person and community are considered essential components of each other and must be regulated by the principles of subsidiarity and solidarity, is perhaps the tradition's greatest contribution to political and social thought. The human person, gifted with a dignity that transcends human

invention, is always considered to be the most valuable part of an interconnecting set of relationships, which when not appropriate to that dignity must be changed. Thus the claims to social justice that the tradition makes are claims to personal well-being; and, thus, the idea of the common good serves as the arbiter of the claims of individuals and those of society. The virtue governing all these principles is love.

The integration of knowledge and action as the basis of wisdom

This is usually something heard in commencement addresses, often because by such times it has not taken place in any appreciable way and it is too late. Yet the Catholic intellectual tradition takes this integration very seriously because the whole purpose of a Catholic education is to create simultaneously persons who love God through loving others and citizens with coherent worldviews: in both capacities they must know how to use knowledge well and wisely. If there is a basic principle from which all others flow in the Catholic intellectual tradition, it is the principle that grace perfects nature. The Catholic imagination (Greeley and Bellah) derives from the view that nature is the envelope of grace and meaning. No thing is in its nature evil, so no thing is beyond God's life. Hence, the Catholic intellectual tradition trusts memory and imagination as its primary tools. Hellwig says that memory records and imagination arranges what we experience (9). The result is symbol, and the arrangements of symbols tell the stories we create and repeat. Thus, the tradition is one of contemplation as well as action in as much as it seeks to bring the sacred into reality (symbol) and to share sacred reality with the whole world. Students of this tradition are required to study art, literature, music—all the liberal arts—not because they provide a patina of culture or a costume for expertise, but because these intellectual endeavors reveal the truth in ways that are essential to human meaning and purpose. As such, the tradition and the schools which help embody it, are or ought to be countercultural. And their greatest countercultural stance remains the possibility of grace, i. e., the possibility that God's life may be ordinarily and extraordinarily found throughout and through the stuff of creation.

The end of Catholic the intellectual tradition truth, wisdom, love

If, in the tradition outlined above, Truth is another name for God, wisdom—the right use of knowledge—

in the human order presages and grounds our pursuit and understanding of the Truth. Becoming wise, like pursuing truth, involves the person in holy activity. This is why in Catholic institutions the chapel is the core place of the institution and the library an extension of that core. Show me the chapel and the library of any Catholic college or university and I can assess the relative health of the life of the mind on that campus. This is so because the assumptions of the Catholic intellectual tradition lead to a definition of the human person as a unity of heart and mind—body and soul—a substance equipped with reason and gifted with faith. The integrity of the tradition depends upon the integrity of the life of the mind. This is why truly Catholic institutions commit (or ought to) sizable amounts of their resources to campus ministry, liturgy, and the library.

The end or purpose of Catholic intellectual life, then, ought to involve informing the life of the mind of each member of those communities that purport to engage that tradition. Usually such communities take the form of schools or universities. In them, campus life, admissions policies, codes of discipline, resident life, sports, and student programs all engage in the same goal, the education of the whole persons. This education comes to fruition in the classroom—that often maligned place—where faculty and students engage in the holy act of study. Truly Catholic classrooms are the primary residence of the Holy Spirit and, rather than being maligned as dispirited places of esoteric nonsense, they should be guarded as some of the last sacred spaces on this earth.⁶ For it is in the classroom that the four essentials of the life of the mind come together: prayer, study, community, Truth. This does not mean that all these activities take place in the classroom; rather, the classroom becomes an effective place of the Spirit when these four activities are nurtured and held as standards of intellectual life. One might argue that these four activities constitute the core of the life of the mind. How so? In prayer we learn to turn ourselves toward that which is greater than we are; in study we master a body of material or an intellectual problem, prove a hypothesis, or advance a question; we do these things in communion with others, thus establishing a community in which friendship (love) becomes the controlling virtue; always upholding what we see as the truth clearly before us. The life of the mind becomes a mode of thinking, judging, and acting by which we come to understand ourselves, our world, and the plurality of ways of be-

ing in that world.

Thinking, Judging, Acting

So far the argument has been that the life of the mind is a mode of being and a disposition to the world, and that it is usually developed through Catholic education. Remaining is our answer to the question of its relevance; what are we going to do with it when we have it? This entails an extension of its definition, an extension that reveals the reason for the Catholic intellectual tradition. It involves an argument about the kind of person the Catholic tradition affirms. As such the argument leads to a moral stance and a set of ethical claims, both of which distinguish and mark those who opt for them. This moral stance insists that thinking, judging, and acting be ways of participating in God's salvation of the world. It is this participation that is most wanting in the world today.

Embedded in the assumptions of the Catholic intellectual tradition, we might argue, are several claims that help us understand why the life of the mind is so essential in our world. First is the claim that *truth is possible*; that no matter how tentatively we might hold to our discoveries and experiences of truth, there is behind all of them the possibility that Truth be real. This claim, rather than supporting authoritarian and absolutist forms of thinking—what social philosophers understand as ideologies—implies the validity of the experiences of diversity. Diversity as universal (catholic) helps rather than hinders, our journey to the truth and represents the justification for freedom in inquiry.⁷ It is also the reason the Catholic tradition is *non-elitist and egalitarian in its approach to learning*. Behind experiences of diversity is *the virtue of respect for plurality, difference, and complexity*. Wisdom, which is *the integration of knowledge and action*, only results when this virtue is held as a standard of judgment. This standard of respect, then, becomes the basis for understanding both persons and community; *love—willing the good for the other—becomes its binding virtue*. It is love that also serves as the most adequate metaphor for God's life, or grace. And it is *grace that governs all*.

Truth, respect, equality, wisdom, love, grace contradict the relativism, domination, slavery, violence, indifference, and banality, the latter of which mark contemporary existence in so many ways. Truth, respect, equality, wisdom, love, grace offer some hope that the world can be saved through the life of the mind. How that might be so is indicated in true Catholic fashion by bring to the question the insight of

one of the most original thinkers of the twentieth century, Hannah Arendt. Her insights and the arguments behind them support a view of the human person very close to that of the Catholic tradition. No Catholic herself, Arendt, in her last and most difficult work, models the life of the mind as it should be practiced in colleges and universities.⁸ Beyond her considerable contributions to political theory, her importance for us is her understanding of the person as one capable of thinking, willing, and judging. This understanding serves as the basis for my notion of the person as thinking, judging, and acting in this world such that he or she can make a difference by participating in the work of God's grace.

Arendt rejected the "reckless" optimism and despair (Young-Bruehl 159) resulting from victory in World War II. Her monumental *Origins of Totalitarianism* attempts to explain a new form of government conceived by Hitler and Stalin, and continued by the violence that gripped the world during the Cold War. Her *Eichmann in Jerusalem*, which she thought of as continuing her search for an understanding of the anti-political forces that might destroy this world, ignited a firestorm of controversy and revealed the very conditions of intellectual dishonesty she hoped to discern as part of her understanding of how unprecedented evil came to have social existence during the twentieth century. Her analysis of Eichmann as an unthinking technocrat and banal individual who participated willingly and knowingly in the extermination of six million human beings raises the philosophical issue about the nature of evil. Is it an extraordinary force or is it the absence of the good? Arendt supported this latter Augustinian view. The evils of totalitarianism (racism, imperialism, militarism, genocide, and the denial of freedom) are by no means banal but, she discovered, they more often than not result from banal thinking. Thus, her "banality of evil" revealed to those who read her, the very ordinariness of those who participate in extraordinary forms of murder. Her notion that we ought to "think what we are doing" (Arendt in Young-Bruehl 159) took her eventually to a consideration of what it means to think, to will, and—though unfinished upon her death—to judge.

For Arendt "the most pernicious perversion of thinking and judging was ideological reasoning...."⁴ That is to say, accepting without critical analysis the logic of an idea, no matter how rational it might appear, entails the end of moral life. We are moral to the

extent that in thinking about the world and ourselves in the world we constitute a dialogue (at least within our own minds) that enables us to hear ourselves as others might. This dialogue involves the attempt to understand the reality of what we are doing. Like Socrates, for example, we confront the possibility of what it might mean to murder, i.e., to live forever with a murder. Only in real thought, composed of criticism and questioning that reflects the world, do we come to the beginning of a moral life.

Yet thinking is never enough; we must also make judgments, (not deductions from first principles) about what we think. In doing so we become rooted in what is common to us all. Young-Bruehl writes,

[...] Arendt said that judgment more than any of the other mental abilities, is exercised in relationship with others. It involves visiting others—physically or in your mind—and consulting them, seeing things from their point of view, exchanging opinions with them, persuading them, wooing their consent (in Kant's lovely phrase). A judgment appears in the world as an opinion, where it joins, as it also reflects, the plurality of opinions that are in the world. Having this kind of communicative experience, this "enlarged mentality" (as Kant called it) mentally or in the world or both, allows a person to transcend the subjectivity and privacy of perceptions and come to what is known as common sense. (165-66)

Judging involves seeing things from another's point of view. By doing so we identify ourselves with others, not because we agree or disagree with them, but because we recognize that they, no matter how different, are like us—persons with opinions and thoughts of our own. We discover our plurality and thus our equality. Only then are we able to overcome the deadening solipsism each of us is prone to. "Egoism can be opposed only by plurality, which is a frame of mind in which the self, instead of being enwrapped in itself as if it were the whole world, regards itself as a citizen of the world" (in Young-Bruehl 167). Judgment involves others. Arendt argued,

[...] the ability to make the enlarged mentality of judgment a feature of life by forming a circle of friends made up

of contemporaries and people from the historical or literary past is the mark of a persons' ability to live well. The circle of friends should themselves be good or powerful reflective judges; they should be exemplary judges—and the person choosing them should be able to judge them as such. *Judgment is the loom of friendship.*" (171 emphasis added)

Only then are we prepared to act. Only then do we reflect truth, respect, equality, wisdom, love, and grace.

The Life of the Mind and Its Consequences

Wherever there is evidence of the Catholic intellectual tradition there will be a life of the mind. In academic settings the life of the mind is to be found in the specificity of disciplines, in the standards—both moral and academic—of faculty and students, and in the programming designed to unify the curricula. Usually these come as part of the personalities of those who hold authority in such institutions: faculty, staff, students. For this reason the virtue of the persons involved in transmitting the tradition to new generations' matters.⁹ Arendt's work is important to the Catholic intellectual tradition precisely because it recognizes the problematic relationship of culture (the images most people receive and uncritically accept) to the world of action, i.e., the practical order as distinct from the contemplative realm of theoretical truths. No matter how good Socrates might have been and no matter how theoretically sound his ethical principles, he still failed to convince his jury that he had neither corrupted the youth of Athens nor denied the validity of her most cherished beliefs. This failure, in Arendt's mind, led to the separation of the contemplative and the practical orders, a separation she saw as the major divide in the modern mind¹⁰ as well as the main justification for amoral and immoral politics.

Catholic education intends to overcome this separation by uniting the thinking-judging capacities of persons and communities (for example, what is putatively learned through the liberal arts curricula) to the activities of persons and communities in this world (the responsibilities members of an intellectual tradition are supposed to have). Catholic education should educate persons to become a certain kind of moral character (i. e., persons who seek the truth in all things; respect the plurality of this world, especially in terms of equality and freedom; who are wise, loving,

and open to grace) rather than train them to perform some function (no matter how important, good, or rewarding) demanded by the world. In acting we prove our mettle as human beings and through our actions we form, for good and for ill, the character of our world. In this sense our 'life of the mind' and our life in the world ought to represent a unification of faith and knowledge, of belief and action, of being and having.

The Sequence for the Feast of Pentecost begins with an invocation of the Divine Spirit—certainly something expected on such an occasion. Yet almost immediately after this invocation the tone abruptly changes; images of frost, cold, wet and dry seem to interrupt the prayer's intercession of supernatural assistance. Why, we might ask, the interjection of mere natural images? The explanation, of course, is found in the incarnational understanding of grace and nature. We might say this Sequence, like almost all orthodox liturgy, indicates an understanding that Catholics know as the 'life of the mind': there is no supernatural without the natural, no grace without things, nothing divine without matter. We are incarnate beings, instances of Being itself; but limited in remarkable ways that enable us to transcend our finite, final reality. This is why human beings, along with all created things, can be said to hope.

Ronald W. Carstens, PhD

Professor R.W. Carstens attended St. Ambrose College, receiving his BA in 1969 cum laude with majors in political science and philosophy and a minor in history. Dr. Carstens studied at Miami University, Oxford, Ohio, receiving his MA and PhD in political science and political philosophy. His dissertation was entitled "The Notion of Obligation in the Political Philosophy of Thomas Aquinas." In 1974 he was appointed assistant professor at Ohio Dominican where he began his teaching career and was awarded full professor with tenure in 1985. Dr. Carstens directed the ODC Humanities program from 1976-1988 and from 1995 to 2005, chaired the department of history/political science/criminal justice from 1990-1993, and was named outstanding teacher in 1990 and Dominican Master Faculty in 1994. The students of Ohio Dominican voted him the Conley Award for Outstanding Teaching in 2001.

The author of several books and many articles, Dr. Carstens has successfully directed thirty honors theses. He is the father of two sons, Finnian and Liam, and lives with his wife of 42 years in Gahanna, Ohio. He has served as docent to the Columbus Museum of Art and is the past President of the Board of Trustees of St. Joseph Montessori School. From 1980 to 1986 he served as representative to The National Advisory Council of the Administrative Board of the National Conference of Catholic Bishops and its chair from 1984-86. In 2002, he became founding Dean of Ohio Dominican's School of Graduate Studies; from 2003-2004 he served as Special Assistant for Curriculum to the Executive Vice President.

Notes

¹ Note immediately that the questions will not be answered but outlined. Why? Before any definition the context of that which is defined must be understood. This is why a solid Catholic education always ends in more questions than answers. In this sense such an education begins us on the road to mystery even as we define, demonstrate, and arrange the intellectual stuff of the universe. We come to understand that we know, if at all, only slightly the Real behind reality.

² The following discussion comes from a longer work, *Falling into Grace: The Fiction of Andrew Greeley*, (2008).

³ See Hellwig, Tilley, Greeley.

⁴ My purpose here is not to debate, or defend, the real issue of gender inequality in Catholic life and thought. The purpose is to make explicit an intellectual tradition, which might itself be the instrument by which gender equality can become real in the Church.

⁵ See, for example John Paul II, *Centesimus Annus, Sollicitudo Rei Socialis*, and *Laborem Exercens*.

⁶ It seems to me that the movement in higher education to make of educational institutions corporate service institutions is wholly misdirected, as are attempts to measure quantitatively educational outcomes. The over emphasis on quantitative models of assessment leads to the erosion of qualitative measures and to the standardization of administration. There comes to be no difference between the administration of a college or a fertilizer plant. In the long history of the Catholic intellectual tradition the institutional church has often failed in this regard. Such failures call for honest recognition of their historical reality as well as heartfelt contrition. See, for example, Luigi Accattoli. *When a Pope Asks Forgiveness*. Translated Jordan Annamm OP. New York: Alba House, 1998.

⁷ In the long history of the Catholic intellectual tradition the institutional church has often failed in this regard.

⁸ See *The Life of the Mind*. San Diego, New York, London: Harcourt, Inc. 1978. The best and most concise discussion of this very difficult text appears in "Part Three Thinking

about *The Life of the Mind*" in Elisabeth Young-Bruehl, *Why Arendt Matters*. New Haven and London: Yale University Press. 2006, to which the following is indebted.

⁹ This argument and others like it involve Catholic institutions in guarding the critical mass of faculty and administrators who uphold their intellectual traditions. As such the arguments themselves raise the issue of equality and academic freedom.

¹⁰ Arendt's *Human Condition* may be read as her intellectual attempt to overcome this divided understanding in western political thought.

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How Can the Dominican Tradition Respond to the Needs of Our Contemporary World?

Dave Caron, OP, DMin

In some circles of higher education, there is an ignorance or even blatant denial of the value of a transformative education that only a faith based institution can provide—where the intellectual, emotional, social, moral, religious and spiritual aspects of student character can be formed integrally not only for the student’s benefit but for the common good as well. Catholic higher education forms women and men of faith and service. This university does so which makes all the difference for your students, the Church and society as a whole.

I offer a perspective on how your heritage as a Catholic and Dominican institution can prepare your students to engage our contemporary world by reading the signs of the times. To do so I will suggest a retrieval and a reappropriation of an educative and formative process from our Dominican heritage so as to address positively the issues of our contemporary world as Christian disciples. To focus my presentation I will offer for consideration how this process can respond to a single but significant “sign of the times” as a possible model for other contemporary issues. Lastly, I will suggest that through the implementation of this retrieved and reappropriated process, Catholic Universities in the Dominican tradition such as Ohio Dominican can benefit other institutions of higher learning as they grapple with contemporary issues from a perspective of hope.

A Sign of our Times

After surveying the cultural and social landscape, let me first begin by offering for reflection just one “sign of the time” before moving into the rich storehouse of our own Dominican tradition for a possible response. As we look at our contemporary

world, one of the most disturbing cultural and social phenomena has been a marked decrease of public civility. Who can deny the lack of civility and respect in both political and cultural arenas? Not long ago, in the presence of the entire Congress and on national television, Representative Joe Wilson shouted at President Obama, “You lie!” In the semi-finals of the U.S. Open, both Serena Williams and Roger Federer had discourteous meltdowns. The growing lack of civility in the public arena is a sign of the times we cannot afford to neglect or deny for it reveals a more alarming and deep-seated crisis of meaning.

In addressing the question of civility and respect, we would do our best to start with a description of the larger social and global context in which we find ourselves in discerning possible causes of the underlying tension and hostility that is expressed in such behavior. If we are truly “reading the signs of the times” the reasons appear to be obvious. Terrorism has entered our lives in the US starting with 9/11 and has led to the deaths of thousands of people engaging many of the world’s nations in a war that appears difficult to win.

Some in the West aren’t really sure whether Muslims here or abroad are open to religious and civil tolerance or to mutual respect and esteem of others. Presently the media is telling us that we are slowly emerging from the recession, but many of us still know of people losing jobs while the global financial crisis is still affecting so many, especially the poor.



Perhaps the most irritating reality is that the majority of those who caused the world's financial problems has shown little or no remorse for their own participation in this failure and are even benefitting from the various national efforts at recovery. These are just a few of the issues; the list goes on and on. So, let's admit it; it is no surprise that people are on edge; in fact our present age has been described by many social commentators as the age of rage.

Thanks to those who have been most influential in our lives and in our religious traditions, we know that there are better ways of responding to the challenges that life throws our way by choosing to be civil, courteous and polite to all we encounter even when we disagree with those "others." The civil behavior which we afford one another springs from and is grounded in scripture and in Catholic social teaching, both of which calls us to reverence one another as those made in the image and likeness of God—sisters and brothers who are indeed one to another, "bone of my bone and flesh or my flesh" (Gen. 1:26-27). This civility calls for a growing trust in the other, an appreciation of his or her point of view even though we may see it as erroneous, misguided or far from the truth. The reverence we have for one another expressed in both personal relationships and in civil discourse can only be created and maintained by boundaries such as the appropriate use of language if fruitful dialogue around contemporary issues is to be achieved.

The polarization found around social issues has even affected the Church. This polarization must stop; otherwise our identity as a faith community will be torn asunder and Catholicism will cease to be an elevating force for change. How can we decrease the polarization found among those who label themselves or others as "conservatives" or "liberals" or "moderates"? A vital first step is to, seek out our common ground in the major areas where most Catholics agree: religious liberty; the sacredness of all human life; the goal of reducing and eventually eliminating abortion; support for social programs that provide a safety net for the poor; the elimination of segregation, racism and discrimination; and respect for differing religious and social traditions and diverse cultures. Few are the Catholics who do not share these principles, which provide an established ground.

We also need to find a way to foster respectful civil debate and dialogue on how to incorporate and share our values in a pluralistic society. Recognizing

the distinction between moral principles and their application, we can disagree in good conscience on the way such principles are prudentially applied in the public sphere. Even when disagreeing over the concrete applications of moral principles, we also must respect the good will of those with whom we disagree. Tolerance, charity and respect are not "weasel words," nor are they excuses to cover over or mask legitimate differences between Catholics and the larger society as a whole. Rather, they are essential elements by which the Church can work together with others of good will toward common goals, by supposing, as St. Ignatius once said, that all people strive to act for the greater good.

If our witness is to be a model for others, our bishops must take the lead in hosting conversations based on mutual respect and civil discourse within the wider Catholic community. As the Second Vatican Council noted "Bishops should make it their special care to approach men (people) and initiate and promote dialogue with them. These faith based discussions should be marked by charity of expression as well as by humility and courtesy, so that truth may be combined with charity, and understanding with love."

Retrieving and Reappropriating from our Dominican Heritage

As a possible response to a social phenomenon which exposes a much deeper and perennial crisis and challenge to both the dignity of the human person and the common good of our race, we look to our ancestors in the faith. Who of us even remotely related the Order of Preachers has not heard the story of our own founder, St. Dominic de Guzman and his conversation with the innkeeper? This is one of the early stories of St. Dominic and of his all night discussion with an innkeeper in Toulouse, France. The innkeeper was very sympathetic to the Albigensian movement which had sunk deep roots in southern France at that time. As they spoke, Dominic's own "civility" was apparent in his treatment of this "heretic," as Dominic was grounded in his own belief in the incarnation and therefore in the inherent goodness of creation, particularly of this brother of his who sat across the table from him.

Before this man was a "heretic" he was a child of God who shared the same dignity and common humanity of Dominic himself. The "civil" way in which St. Dominic listened and reverently acknowledged the image of God before him was an affirmation of the

presence of God in his dialogue partner. It was in his deep respectful listening and grace filled words that the Spirit of God was revealed to the innkeeper who ultimately returned to the faith.

This kind of conversation grounded in respectful listening by both parties and “graced filled words of truth” as the condition for dialogue is what is called “*disputatio*”. We could even venture to say that in this conversation Dominic came to a deeper or more nuanced insight into the truth which he himself was preaching? *Disputatio* historically was part of the system of education in Dominic’s time; disputations offered a formalized method of debate designed to uncover and establish truths in Theology and in the related sciences. Fixed rules or “boundaries” governed the process: they demanded dependence on traditional written authorities and a thorough understanding of all sides of each argument.

Dominic used this educative/formative process to build bridges with those like the innkeeper with whom he disagreed theologically. His aim was truth and not the diminishment of his neighbor. I am suggesting that a retrieval and reappropriation of this tradition is necessary today to address the lack of civility so prevalent in our society today. By retrieval I simply mean searching and rediscovered this buried treasure from the storehouse of our Dominican tradition—what we have done in the past which proved so significant in our preaching of the Good News. By reappropriating *disputatio*, I mean recognizing we must do so in a new cultural, social, and religious milieu in which our preaching and our living is to be incarnated and so we must adapt this process accordingly.

A reappropriated understanding of *disputatio* is to be a special kind of search for truth (*Veritas*) which first and foremost recognizes the dignity of our conversation partner(s). This does not mean we do so naively – but with both eyes open are we to see them and love them as God does—a very high calling indeed! *Disputatio* requires a respectful listening in dialogue that is open to truth as it is perceived and put forth by the other. It is a method of give and take, a refinement of ideas and possible solutions to the great challenges and crises of our day. Today, as we sit here, we are certainly mindful of the tragedy facing the people of Haiti and perhaps a number of us present now are actively discerning and dialoging on how best Ohio Dominican can respond—there are no doubt many opinions, many truths, some at odds.

Disputatio, as Dominicans have come to un-

derstand it, encourages participants to discover through the civil and respectful interaction of two valid, and perhaps opposing points of view, that a third idea might spring forth. This might even serve as a conversion moment for one or both in the dialogue. This new insight, birthed from the Holy Spirit’s promptings, can cause a refocusing or a “reframing” that ultimately invites participants in the dialogue to move forward to a new place, a new understanding, a better perspective from which to recognize and embrace the truth both of their shared dignity and common humanity as well as gaining new insight and even knowledge in the service of the progress of peoples.

Disputatio, founded on the profound trust in God’s work in the dialogue can yield a new life giving direction. In other words, *disputatio* is not a negative, competitive, combative approach to a discussion about “establishing hard data” and “sound interpretation” whether in the theological realm or scientific. For Dominicans, *disputatio* is a way of analyzing differences, gaining knowledge, listening to and respecting others with the objective of finding new ways to think about the world.

In other words, in this kind of dialogue, the means is the same as the ends—if I do not recognize the dignity and act civilly towards my conversation partner who sits before me I have to really question my motives in wanting truly to address real issues of great social and global importance. It is not about setting up ideological camps where some emerge winners and others losers. It is not about “blue states vs. red states.” It is not about CNN vs. Fox News. It is not about creating insiders vs. outsiders or demonizing the “other” because he or she does not agree with me. A reappropriated understanding of *disputatio* challenges the attitude so prevalent in our culture which says: If you are not with us you are against us—and if you are against us, then you are the enemy, and if you are the enemy then I can easily deny our common dignity and shared humanity.

Sad to say, our culture favors conflict and antagonism over dialogue and respectful listening. These adversarial forms of discourse too often are employed gratuitously without consideration of the good of the parties involved, i.e., flamboyant litigation techniques and rhetoric in the courtroom, attacking politicians with half-truths or lies whether in the capital or in town hall meetings making TV’s talking heads more entertaining by misrepresenting facts or focusing on the most salacious details of celebrities’ personal

lives. Such “public speak” hinders rather than helps public discourse by affecting or infecting how we proceed to address gridlock issues that threaten to paralyze our society. We need a large dose of respectful dialogue to highlight our common ground rather than our differences, to help us reserve judgment until we have considered a variety of ways to approach controversial issues, and to motivate us to concede the merits of the other side even when it pains us to do so. We need this special kind of dialogue to bring hidden assumptions to the surface where they can be examined and questioned in the light of both Gospel values and our changing world.

Respectful dialogue done as a *disputatio* forces participants to reconcile their views with their most basic values, it obliges them to confront their own wishful but misguided or prejudicial thinking, and it exposes them to a variety of ways of seeing and framing issues based on diverse social contexts—such a retrieved treasure from our own Dominican storehouse can be indispensable way to escape polarization and gridlock. On the issues that most polarize us, maybe we can learn to examine critically and present objectively our own cherished ideas first before entering the fray of dialogue; doing so will help guarantee the dignity of all involved, respectfully listen to the other as an icon of God.

Our Dominican brother and former Master of the Order, Timothy Radcliffe, says that as he reads the signs of the times and he sees the need to reappropriate *disputatio*, “Today we have been seduced by a competitive form of debate, which is as blind and as violent as the struggle of species to survive in the Darwinian jungle, or as senseless as the struggle for mastery between Coca-Cola and Pepsi-cola. But we are called to be a place of counter-culture, of a different way of relating, through which one believes that one may learn something from those with whom one disagrees. This requires of us compassion and vulnerability.”¹

Catholic Universities in the Dominican Tradition Today²

And so, what about our own Ohio Dominican University? Is this a place hospitable to *disputatio*; can it be effectively modeled so that all might respond courageously and compassionately to the signs of our times? Your Mission Statement states that “Truth can be found in all cultures and traditions, in the whole

range of the arts and sciences, and, in a special way, in religious faith and theological reflection on faith.”³ In another place it says, “Since the quest for truth is a lifelong activity, Ohio Dominican is committed to lifelong learning.”⁴ Before we respond with a responding “Yes” that Ohio Dominican is such a welcoming home, we dig just a little deeper to acknowledge our graced foundation as a specifically Catholic institution of higher learning. As such it is precisely our Catholicity as well as our Dominican heritage which makes *disputatio* such a viable response in addressing cultural, social and global issues and concerns.

In her essay entitled “What Can the Roman Catholic Tradition Contribute to Christian Higher Education?” theologian Monika Hellwig identifies five elements of what she called “A Catholic Way of Being Christian.”⁵ Fundamental to the identity and mission of any Christian community, including that of a university, is to acknowledge our radical dependence on God who is both creator and redeemer, to profess our faith in Jesus Christ and his ministry of preaching, teaching, healing and reconciling by doing the same, and to welcome and invite the power and presence of the Holy Spirit in human lives and labor.⁶ Rooted in this fundamental identity, Catholic Christianity is also marked by the following five characteristics while also embracing unique expressions of doctrine, ritual and ethical codes.

The five characteristics of what she calls the Catholic religious imagination are: (1) an emphasis on the dynamic of faith and reason, (2) a respect for the tradition's cumulative wisdom, (3) a inclusivity in membership and values, (4) the communal nature of redemption, and (5) an appreciation of the sacramental principle.⁷ In light of my stated thesis, i.e. that the Dominican tradition of *disputatio* can serve as a unique healing and reconciling agent in the face of current cultural, social and global issues and crises, I will examine just two of Hellwig's characteristics, which supports my suggested retrieval and reappropriation of *disputatio*. Any authentic dialogue is never done in a vacuum and this is especially true of *disputatio*, there is always an inherited content which we can call the Church's cumulative wisdom and there is also a received or given context which is in our own day increasingly inclusive of different ideas, cultures and religious expressions. To aid us I will make reference *Ex Corde Ecclesiae*, the Apostolic Constitution on Catholic Universities, and some salient portions of the Ohio Dominican University Mission Statement.

Respect for the Tradition's Cumulative Wisdom

The cumulative wisdom which is one of the strengths and glories of Catholicism is found in a number of different but mutually enriching streams. Hellwig cites not only 2,000 years of doctrinal and theological tradition of the Church but also its canonized and un-canonized heroes, i.e., martyrs, artists, scientists, social reformers and philosophers. Our wisdom base also includes a rich and varied spirituality and devotional life which continues to bear fruit in our preaching and teaching. *Ex Corde Ecclesiae* celebrates this deposit of wisdom of which the Catholic university is a privileged recipient, guardian and proponent when it seeks truth wherever it is to be found. The Church's cumulative wisdom can never be seen as so inimical or divorced from true advances in scientific, artistic, economic and political progress. As *Ex Corde* states so well:

A Catholic University, as any University, is immersed in human society; as an extension of its service to the Church... it is called on to become an ever more effective instrument of cultural progress for individuals as well as for society. Included among its research activities, therefore, will be a study of serious contemporary problems in areas such as the dignity of human life, the promotion of justice for all, the quality of personal and family life, the protection of nature, the search for peace and political stability, a more just sharing in the world's resources, and a new economic and political order that will better serve the human community at a national and international level. University research will seek to discover the roots and causes of the serious problems of our time, paying special attention to their ethical and religious dimensions. (ECE, § 32)

Since you are open to such a rich diversity in your student body and community, Ohio Dominican University has the privilege of embracing and not excluding the inherit wisdom found in the increasingly multicultural milieu of the university. These differences are experienced as "gift" while all are encouraged to engage and affirm the gift of your Catholic heritage. As your mission statement attests, Catholic

intellectual and religious traditions guide us in the fulfillment of the mission. As we recognize the cultural milieu of Ohio, we must also recognize our identities as Americans and as members of global community. We do so explicitly from a faith base and so invite ecumenical and interfaith dialog where all are "in a climate of respect and freedom."⁸ The context of *disputatio* is this received wisdom.

Inclusivity in Membership and Values

As faithful disciples of our Lord and brother Jesus Christ, who himself was radically inclusive in his public ministry, particularly in his table fellowship, we see that Hellwig emphasizes an inclusivity that both acknowledges the richness of diversity as it recognizes our common humanity and inherent dignity. As a Catholic university we share our cumulative wisdom in a mutual enriching dialog with the world, which is found even here on this campus in the diversity of your student body. *Ex Corde Ecclesiae* values this inclusive vision when it claims that the Catholic university "enables the Church to institute an incomparably fertile dialogue with people of every culture" (ECE, § 6). To be faithful to its identity:

A Catholic University pursues its objectives through its formation of an authentic human community animated by the spirit of Christ. The source of its unity springs from a common dedication to the truth, a common vision of the dignity of the human person and, ultimately, the person and message of Christ which gives the Institution its distinctive character. As a result of this inspiration, the community is animated by a spirit of freedom and charity; it is characterized by mutual respect, sincere dialogue, and protection of the rights of individuals. It assists each of its members to achieve wholeness as human persons; in turn, everyone in the community helps in promoting unity. (ECE, §21)

It is most evident that Ohio Dominican University, like all Catholic institutions of higher education, has the opportunity to recognize this matchless opportunity for affecting the inclusivity so characteristic of the Catholic imagination through the variety of programming set forth by the Center for Dominican Stud-

ies and other university departments and venues and is exemplary in doing so. Your Mission Statement is clear as to why you do this, "Immersed in the technological progress, new human insights, and searching questions of the twenty-first century, Ohio Dominican University looks forward to helping individuals and society continue the search for truth in the expanding horizons of an unknown future."⁹ And this is not only theory; practicality speaking, "in the pursuit of truth, the University advances development of solutions that promote the common good and a more humane and just society."¹⁰ In this task, individuals do not venture alone, but collaboratively and mutually as all are encouraged to engage with diverse communities to pursue systemic, self-sustaining solutions to human, social, economic and environmental problems for all.¹¹

Conclusion

I began by describing the lack of civility and respect that permeates our culture and I suggested that the Dominican tradition, through our institutions of Catholic higher education, have the ability to retrieve and reappropriate *disputatio* as a means of dialogue and as a way of mutual and respectful exchange about the Holy even with people we do not agree with. I conclude by saying that by engaging in the hard work of *disputatio* we keep the memory of St. Dominic and our Dominican forbears who valiantly served the mission of the church and her intellectual life alive. To live out of this mission in pursuit of Veritas on our Catholic/ Dominican campuses is to be impelled to embrace and extend the gift of the mission towards our world. *Disputatio* once learned and implemented in the classroom can create environments where competing ideas, opposing ideologies, moral dilemmas of all descriptions, and cultural differences are appreciated, given a fair hearing, studied, discussed, and debated rationally and civilly—such fruitful dialogue is built on both Catholicism's accumulative wisdom as well as its value of inclusivity of members and values so imperative when reading the signs of the times. To this end, one of our educational and formational goals as Catholic Universities in the Dominican tradition should be to provide both in the classroom and in other environments, opportunities in which students may participate in and to practice "civil" discourse. In offering them these opportunities where differences can be acknowledged and disagreements can be worked through, we can help our students avoid rigidity of thought and demonization of our conversation partners that too often accompanies polarization both

within the Church and outside. Stated a bit differently, Ohio Dominican University's mission is to provide a spiritual, intellectual, and social environment designed to attract, retain, and graduate students who pursue ethical professional careers and personal lives based on values undergirded by both faith and reason and a commitment to peace and justice.

As a University established in both the Catholic and Dominican traditions, there should be high expectations for both faculty and student behavior, both in and out of the classroom. Just as assignments for a course are expected to be completed, campus requirements to act civilly and respect property and persons should also be expected to be met. I'm assuming that Ohio Dominican has performance standards for civility and respect for others just as important as standards for academic achievement. Why should we hesitate in creating communities of civility today, beginning on our campuses, reflecting the Truth of which St. Dominic preached so powerfully and eloquently, first in his reverence towards others and then by his words?

Our preaching of God's Truth can never be powerful or eloquent if its preachers are smug, know-it-alls or mealy-mouthed, weak-kneed relativists. Rather, our *disputatio*, culminating in civility and respect in the academic arena should be consistent with Gospel values. You as a Catholic University must both model transformation and provide opportunities for all to participate in transformative actions on behalf of your neighbor, whoever that neighbor may be. But here's the most important point, and don't miss it: you will be effective---we will be effective not as steamrollers, but as those transformed first by the Spirit of God, who in both gratitude and humility act reverently and civilly to all not just to those you consider deserving but the undeserving alike. Others will respect us, invite us to participate, and consider our ideas important if we demonstrate the fruits of the Spirit formed through *disputatio*.

Then, and only then, will we have an opportunity to be a community that transforms culture. And in the process, your life will be shaped by the gifts promised in St. Paul's letter to the Galatians: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control (Gal. 5:22). And what a

difference that will make.

David G. Caron, OP, DMin

Fr. David Caron delivered this Aquinas Convocation lecture on January 28, 2010.

Fr. David Caron, a Dominican Friar of the Southern Province of St. Martin de Porres. Father Caron holds a Doctor of Ministry degree in Liturgy from Catholic Theological Union in Chicago. A Master of Divinity degree from St. John's Seminary in Boston, and a Bachelor of Arts degree from Springfield College in Massachusetts. He served as a faculty member at Aquinas Institute, the Dominican Graduate School of Theology and St. Louis University's Theology Department. At Barry University in Florida, he served as the Director of the Center for Dominican Studies where he was adjunct professor for the Department of Philosophy and Theology. Fr. Caron produced a spirituality television program on WXEL, a south Florida PBS station, called "Pathways of Possibilities." He has served as a liturgical consultant resource for parishes and dioceses, has taught classes and conducted workshops throughout the country on various topics related to the liturgical renewal. His special areas of expertise include Adult Faith Formation, Catholic Mission Integration for schools, colleges and universities, Preaching and Liturgical Formation and Spirituality. Fr. Caron currently serves as assistant to the Prior Provincial of the Southern Province.

Notes

¹ Timothy Radcliffe OP, *Sing A New Song: The Christian Vocation* (Springfield, IL: Templegate Publishers, 1999) 246

² This section takes as its inspiration Barry University's Mission Statement and Core Commitments: *A Commentary* ed. Gloria Schaab (Miami, 2009) self published.

³ Dominican University "Mission Statement;" available from http://www.ohiodominican.edu/Mission_and_Identity/Mission/Mission_Statement.aspx

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Hellwig, "What Can the Roman Catholic Tradition Contribute to Christian Higher Education," 14.

⁶ Ibid., 13

⁷ See James Provost and Knut Walf, eds. *Catholic Identity* (Maryknoll: Orbis, 1994) especially the essays of

⁸ Ohio Dominican University Mission Statement

⁹ Ohio Dominican University Mission Statement

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ Ibid.

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Wisdom and Light: Contributions from Aquinas to Contemporary Bioethics

Ruth Caspar, OP, PhD

As far back as the Erskine Lecture series in the 40s, many distinguished speakers have spoken from this stage, but perhaps none more entertaining than the poet who was with us here in October (2003), Billy Collins. I would like to begin with an image from one of his poems. In the brief poem, "Horizon," Collins describes the effect of taking a blank page of paper, and drawing a line "a third / the way up from the bottom of the page." You may do this, he says, with "the brush of a Japanese monk/ or a pencil stub from a race track." However you do it, "the effect is the same: the world suddenly / divided into its elemental realms." (*The Art of Drowning*: 41). I wish to propose that the Wisdom and Light that constitute for us the legacy of our Dominican brother, Thomas Aquinas, are simply the clarity of this vision: the world divided into its elemental realms, transparent to the light of reason, embracing the horizon of faith. And it is to that horizon, where we humans engage what transcends us that we shall look for insight into our ethical questions, whether these arise from the realities of our daily lives, the concerns we bring from our workplaces, or the increasingly ominous problems posed by the field of bioethics.

Some months ago, when I first began to assemble the material I thought I would need for this lecture, I consulted the oracle, "Google." Having ascended the mountain of the Internet, and placed my query before the cyber-wizard, I was informed that there were, on that day, 335,000 sites with wisdom from Thomas Aquinas; if my search were limited to Thomas Aquinas and Bioethics, the number narrowed to 3,750; and if I further narrowed it to Thomas Aquinas, Bioethics, and U.S., I would have only 2,710 to explore. I chose to draw, instead, from my own ex-

perience: a lifetime of study, and the involvement of more than 20 years in the field of bioethics.

Let me proceed, then, by exploring with you this intersection of two of my cherished research topics: the perennial wisdom of St. Thomas Aquinas, and the emergence in the late 20th century of a new field of inquiry, the interdisciplinary arena of bioethics. I work best when I have a clear outline, and so, for purposes of clarity, let me say that I shall develop, first, the topic of bioethics; then I shall present what I have found to be the most authentic contributions of Aquinas to moral theory and practice; and finally, I shall show how Thomistic principles may be applied to two specific types of bioethical problems: stem cell research (a bioethical problem from the beginning of life); and the removal of medical nutrition from patients in persistent vegetative state (an end-of-life bioethical problem). Both are matters of urgent concern at this moment in history; and for both we may indeed discover wisdom and light in the moral teachings of St. Thomas Aquinas.



Bioethics

The media, never at a loss to sensationalize the private lives of ordinary people, have found in the intersection of medicine and morality an endless source of situations to expose for public entertainment. Whether it is conjoined twins, post-menopausal pregnancies, or the removal of feeding tubes from comatose patients, talk show hosts and sitcoms like ER have popularized one image of the resolution of a bioethical dilemma. But as any intelligent viewer must

know, the media image does not represent the reality of this discipline, nor is it the perspective I hope to offer to you today. Instead, I hope to honor the truly professional work that occupies the members of hospital ethics committees as well as the advisory panels that are convened by church and government as progress in medical research makes new options available. Even for non-professionals, these questions are matters of concern. Any one of us may be called to help with these hard decisions for family members; and as informed citizens we should be aware of the implications of the questions that may some day become matters of public policy.

Technology, as we know, has its own imperative: “what can be done, will be done.” But the moral questions remain. Someone must pause to offer the sacred time and space for reflection, to determine whether it should be done. And if so, under what circumstances, to whom, for whom, at what cost. The questions are endless, and they are significant. The determination will not be made in the final five minutes of a program, and the implications will be long lasting and far-reaching.

The history of the emerging field of bioethics has been traced in books by Tris Engelhardt (*Foundations of Bioethics*, 1986), Al Jonsen (*Birth of Bioethics*, 1998), and Tina Stevens (*Bioethics in America: Origins and Cultural Politics*, 2000), as well as in numerous journal articles. In the 60s new technologies, like the filters that are used in kidney dialysis, and other life-saving therapies, became available but in limited supply. Not everyone who needed them could get them. This led to a situation in which someone had to determine, literally, who should live and who should die. When no single member of the health care team, nor any hospital administrator, wanted to shoulder that burden alone, committees were convened. These tended to be cross-disciplinary among healthcare professionals, and they often included lay members. Soon it was clear that the committee members needed expert advice. Physicians, nurses, hospital attorneys and risk managers, social workers, chaplains were called upon to assist, but it was clear that another perspective was needed: that of the expert in moral decision-making, an “ethicist” as these advisors came to be called.

In succeeding years the scope of these committees expanded beyond the critical life and death scenarios, to embrace a constellation of problems that overlap the fields of medicine, law, biological research

and public policy most of which became increasingly problematic with the rapid development of new technologies. Most commonly cited are those related to the beginning and ending of life. Other problems at the intersection of “bio” or life, and ethics, soon claimed the attention of bioethics: research on human subjects emerged in the 70s, after the exposure of Tuskegee and other grossly unethical experiments; new methods of human reproduction in the 80s (in vitro fertilization, surrogate parentage, cloning); in the 90s, genetic manipulation, stem cell research, and, with increasing urgency, and allocation of health care resources to name only a few. In the new millennium ethicists are called upon to monitor the pursuit of bodily perfection beyond treatment of disease and disability, as drugs and gene transfer are developed to “enhance” athletic performance.

In the settings in which I have worked Catholic healthcare for the most part it seems that the careful resolution of a bioethical problem requires the negotiation of several converging avenues of concern. One of my favorite models to illustrate this converging traffic is to describe the intersection of these avenues as the “Dupont Circle of Catholic healthcare”—a reference to one of the most heavily traveled traffic circles in our nation’s capital (Caspar 1988). Here the concerns driving ethics, technology, medicine, law, economics, and Church teaching must enter, converge, and exit each with its own preoccupation and destination. Meanwhile, in the center lies, not a decorative monument, but the patient.

Since the field is by definition and practice interdisciplinary, its leaders were soon involved in the development of Centers that brought together scholars, researchers, and practitioners who could coordinate their efforts on a common project. (This model was later adopted by the federal government in the creation of national advisory commissions for the study of such issues as end of life care, organ transplantation and other timely topics.) Best known among these Centers are The Hastings Center (founded in 1969 as The Institute of Society, Ethics and the Life Sciences) and the Kennedy Institute, founded at Georgetown University in 1971. Two of the leading publications of the fields are the products of these Centers: *The Hastings Center Report* and the *Kennedy Institute of Ethics Journal*. Catholics were, of course, prominent among the founders, participants, and contributors to these Centers, but the ethical orientation of both the Hast-

ings Center and the Kennedy Institute has been more humanistic and ecumenical than sectarian.

There were, however, other research centers, more clearly dedicated to promoting the teachings of the Catholic Church on these matters, and among the founders of these centers are two friars of the Central Province of Dominicans, Benedict Ashley, O.P. and Kevin O'Rourke, O.P. From the beginning these two Dominican bioethicists have seen their mission in terms of bringing to the study of bioethical questions the moral teaching of the Roman Catholic Church, teachings richly informed by the wisdom of Thomas Aquinas, but also enlightened by contemporary psychology as well as the latest findings of medical research and science (Caspar 2004). They have, therefore, chosen to be identified with Centers for whom that mission was primary.¹

For Father Ashley, this has been a long-standing affiliation with the Pope John XXIII Medical-Moral Research and Education Center, founded in St. Louis in 1972. Relocated to the Boston area in 1985, it was subsequently renamed the National Catholic Bioethics Center. Since 1976 this Center has published a monthly newsletter and commentary on medical-moral issues, *Ethics and Medics*; since 1980 it has held annual medical-moral workshops for North American bishops; and in 2001 it launched an academic journal, the *National Catholic Bioethics Quarterly*. Ashley has been a regular contributor to both publications, and has served as presenter, consultant and advisor at most of the summer institutes for bishops.

Since the early 70s, Kevin O'Rourke's contribution have been channeled through the Catholic Health Association (formerly Catholic Hospital Association) and the Center for Health Care Ethics at St. Louis University Medical School, which he founded in 1979. Publications include the journal, *Health Care Ethics USA*, as well as four book-length collections of brief essays written for its monthly newsletter in response to timely topics. O'Rourke himself has served on the staff of the summer institutes; his incisive and timely essays can be found in the various publications issuing from the Center.

Together Fathers Ashley and O'Rourke have collaborated on four editions of *Health Care Ethics: A Theological Analysis* (1978, 1982, 1989, and 1997), a book-length resource written for Catholic health care professionals in medical schools and hospitals; and three editions of textbook versions of this material

prepared for use by students in colleges and universities, *Ethics of Health Care* (1986, 1994 and 2002). We shall return later in this paper to the work of Benedict Ashley on questions relating to the early embryo, and to Kevin O'Rourke for his contributions to end-of-life treatment decisions.

But these Dominicans are only two among the many moralists engaged in this new discipline whose wisdom has come from the long-standing tradition that we honor today. As John Hass writes in a recent issue of *National Catholic Bioethics Quarterly*, "There are few other religious communities that have reflected so long and so systematically on the ethical issues touching on health care and medicine as has the Catholic" (Hass 2001:15). It is the wisdom of this tradition, inspired pre-eminently by Thomas Aquinas that countless moral theologians and ethicists have brought to the critical problems facing healthcare in the United States during the final quarter of the twentieth century and into the new millennium.

And it is to St. Thomas that we turn now, for "wisdom and light" as I hope to illustrate the foundational truths one may find in his view of reality, a view that presents us, truly, with a "world divided into its elemental realms".

Elemental Realms: A World-view for St. Thomas Aquinas

The Dominican, whom we honor today, as you know, was born into a world far different from our own. His life of 49 years spanned the middle decades of the 13th century, from 1225 to 1274. In his early 20s he chose to join the preaching friars, a religious Order whose members he had met while a student at the University of Naples. This was a choice resisted by his parents and brothers who had other plans for the young and talented student. But in spite of their best efforts (including, we are told, a period of temporary confinement in one of the family castles), Thomas persisted in his determination, and set out on the road to Paris. There, at the *studium* of his Order, adjacent to the University of Paris, he began a life that would be devoted to prayer, study, teaching, and writing. The sequence I have enumerated is significant. **Prayer:** first, and always, since his was a religious vocation and his life was totally dedicated to God. **Study:** steeped in the contemplation of that prayer, he searched the wisdom of every available source he could find, ranging from the ancient Greeks, the books of the Hebrew and Christian Scriptures (the Bible), the

early Church Fathers, and his own contemporaries whose thought he engaged at the universities and houses of study for the Order in which he taught.

Teaching: this was his daily occupation as Master of Theology in various universities and as lector in the *studia* of the religious houses of his Order: Paris, Naples, Bologna, Cologne, and Rome. And, finally, **Writing:** here we truly find the fruits of his contemplation, for what he wrote reflected every other aspect of his intellectual and spiritual life: his prayer, his study, and his teaching. And it is in his writings that we shall find the wisdom and light that we seek.

Our focus today is on ethics, bioethics being simply a branch of that field of moral philosophy known as ethics. For St. Thomas, this moral universe was an integral part of a much more comprehensive system of knowledge, and it is within that world-view that we shall discover the core truths, principles and values that he articulated so many years ago. Their significance is perennial, although for Thomas they were very much influenced by his own culture, history and education.

In search of the guidance that we can find in his system of ethics for the problems encountered in our own day, these early years of the 21st century, I wish to take the broadest possible view. I will not be searching in his monumental, encyclopedic treatises for finely-tuned conclusions to meticulously structured arguments. I will resist the temptation to come to the throne of his wisdom with specific cases, and ask for authoritative resolutions. I would prefer to stand, first, in a posture of reverence before the schema that is his world-view, and in which we will find his moral universe. Once we have truly learned to see the world as he saw it, this “world divided into its elemental realms,” we shall be enabled by the Master to do our own work, to seek our own truth.

For Thomas, it is really quite simple. The horizon mentioned in the poem divides the universe into God, and everything that God has made: the Creator and the created universe. We humans, of course, inhabit that created universe; the most profound truth of our existence is that we are God’s creation. We stand on the horizon, inhabiting both realms. We are not God only God is God but we are created in the image of God (S.T. I, 93). Each substance in the universe of God’s creation has a place and a purpose, and ours is unique. We become who we are meant to be by actualizing our full potential as humans, and this process will bring us to integrity as we find our way back to

the Source from Whom we have come.

This requires us to develop two uniquely human faculties: our God-given potential of reason, as we explore the universe in search of truth; and the orientation given to us as creatures with desires and yearnings, so that we choose what is right and good.

To speak of a philosopher’s world-view, is simply to acknowledge that the person embraces a metaphysics a way of seeing reality. In contrast to many great thinkers both before and after him, Thomas was pre-eminently a realist. He believed that there is a structure to reality outside our mind, independent of our thinking; and that this reality can be known. His was, then a realistic and practical world-view. Josef Pieper opens his remarkable little book about Thomas’s ethics with these words: “All obligations are based upon being. Reality is the foundation of ethics. The good is that which is in accord with reality” (*Reality and the Good* 5). He continues: “Reality is the basis of the good. This means... that to be good is to do justice to objective being” (7). As a realist, Thomas believed that the truth is objective, and it is available to our searching intellect. It is not a matter of our construction, or our preference; nor is it beyond our capacity to know. But the task of determining what is, and what is good, requires the careful use of our noblest capacity: the function of reason. This thesis, absolutely fundamental for Thomistic philosophy, will have significance for virtually every problem in bioethics. Determining what is the right thing to do, will require that we first of all have adequate knowledge of the facts of the situation; and these facts must be presented as objectively and as completely as possible. As Beverly Whelton writes in a recent article, “the very humanity of the patient and practitioner is not subject to social construction” (273).

For Thomas, the study of morality cannot be divorced from the rest of his system of philosophy and theology. Moral science is not an autonomous intellectual pursuit, but takes its principles from those already established in his comprehensive world-view. Students of St. Thomas know that in the construction of his *Summa Theologiae* a pattern of emanation and return can be found in the development of its contents. The questions discussed in Part I treat of God and Creation; in Part II the human person, is examined, in terms of the various ways we realize our humanity through freedom and intelligence; and in Part III Thomas presents the role of Jesus, whose Incarnation

made our fulfillment possible, and the church and sacraments which are his gift to us on our journey. As Father Chenu writes, “the goal of moral science is to see and to situate all beings in proper relation to God from whom they all emerge within a well-defined participation which leads them back to God” (97).² It is in Part II of the *Summa Theologiae* that the moral teaching of Thomas is most fully developed.

When Thomas was commissioned to set up for his Order a *studium* at Santa Sabina in Rome, he did what we all do: surveyed the available textbooks for the course he would be teaching. He knew from his own experience that the manuals available in the 13th century for the education of priests had isolated moral science and presented it primarily as guidance for hearing confessions. For Thomas, it was critical that this moral teaching be situated within the broader context of systematic theology.

This question of context and composition was best elucidated by the late Leonard Boyle, O.P. in his seminal publication, *The Setting of the Summa Theologiae of Saint Thomas* (1982, 2002).³ Boyle’s thesis is best stated in his own words:

Christian morality, once for all, was shown to be something more than a question of straight ethical teaching of vices and virtues in isolation. Inasmuch as the person was an intelligent being who was master of himself and possessed of freedom of choice, he was in the image of God. To study human action is therefore to study the image of God and to operate on a theological plane. To study human action on a theological plane is to study it in relation to its beginning and end, God, and to the bridge between, Christ and his sacraments. (Boyle, 2002: 7)

We shall see that this question of “setting” or context will be significant, even for more secular and humanistic approaches to bioethics. For whether or not all parties to the discussion acknowledge God as Transcendent Source of Truth, all must look beyond the limited situation in which their problem presents itself, to an objective order of value and truth. A case-by-case approach to problem-solving, referred to as “casuistry,” cannot provide the level of principle and value needed for the full and adequate resolution of these problems.

There is more than one approach to moral science in the works of Thomas Aquinas. In contemporary terms, we might say that he provides us with both an ethics of “doing” and an ethics of “being.” This distinction refers to two distinct approaches, both of which are well developed in the *Summa Theologiae*. In the first approach, that of an ethics of “doing,” specific acts are analyzed with reference to relevant rules, leading to judgments regarding the right way to act. In the second approach, that of an ethics of “being,” one studies instead the kind of person one must be, in terms of character development. Out of this state of being (called virtue in the tradition), one will be disposed to do the right thing.

Nearly everyone who studies St. Thomas knows that he is the author of a famous “Treatise on Law” in which a theory of Natural Law is developed. What is less known is the virtue ethics that Aquinas presents in his S.T. and elsewhere. Indeed, this aspect of his moral science is what grounds his ethics as person-centered, and provides the interiority needed to avoid turning ethical problem-solving into casuistry. Stephen Pope, editor of a recent anthology, *The Ethics of Aquinas*, includes an extensive collection of essays on Thomas’s treatment of the virtues. In his own essay in that collection, (“Overview of the Ethics of Thomas Aquinas”) he notes that the *Summa* of St. Thomas “assigns primacy of place to the virtues and to personal character formation, and a subordinate role to law.” He continues:

One cannot expect to consult a fixed and comprehensive catalogue of moral rules that eliminates the need for moral deliberation. The moral law expresses the basic regulations of human action, to be sure, but, since the core of the good life consists in exercising the virtues, practical moral decisions are arrived at through the reflective power of the virtue of prudence rather than simply by means of any formal procedure or calculation of the consequences of various courses of action. (49)

In a similar vein, Servais Pinckaers, O.P., emeritus Professor of Moral Theology at Fribourg University begins a recent article in *Thomist* with the cryptic statement: “Virtue is back” (361). Pinckaers traces the recovery of virtue theory to the dissatisfaction found among moralists with the two competing

and contradictory theories now in vogue for ethical study: theories of obligation on a Kantian model and consequentialist theories rooted in utilitarian morality. The recovery of virtue theory, signaled by the works of Alisdair McIntyre (1981, 1988, 1990), has given the followers of St. Thomas the impetus needed to re-discover his own extensively developed approach to virtue theory.

Many of the virtues treated by St. Thomas in S.T. II-II are relevant for contemporary bioethics: among the more obvious ones are justice, prudence (practical wisdom), charity, and (yes!) humility. Among bioethicists formed in the tradition of St. Thomas, some of the most practical wisdom available for those involved in the profession of health care can be found in the discussions of virtues written by clinicians and ethicists. As only one among many fine examples, I would cite the book *The Christian Virtues in Medical Practice*, by Edmund D. Pellegrino and David C. Thomasma (1996).

Perhaps the most frustrating experience for anyone who endeavors to serve as an ethical consultant for biomedical ethics is the naïve expectation held by some parties involved in the dialogue. With their ever-ready pagers and databases, they presume that there is some formula by which ethicists can process the details of a medical-moral situation, and determine an exact resolution. But this is simply not the mode of ethical reflection, nor is it fair to give the impression that such solutions are so easily evident and accessible. One of the texts from Thomas Aquinas that I have most often quoted to illustrate his own awareness of the complexity of moral reasoning, is his observation that in matters of practical reasoning, the discerning mind is, “busied with contingent matters, about which human actions are concerned: and consequently, although there is necessity in the general principles, the more we descend to matters of detail, the more frequently we encounter defects” (S.T. I-II, Q. 94, art. 4).

The humility with which St. Thomas approaches this question of certitude in practical morality seems to have been overlooked in the centuries that followed his expression of this important caveat. The morality developed in his name, over later centuries, tended to propound moral absolutes with abandon. When Lisa Cahill and others sought to articulate a feminist ethic in the late 20th century, they called for a restoration of the historical sensitivity that he exhibited in his approach. Cahill observes:

It is important to realize that while Aquinas himself took an inductive and flexible approach to natural law, exhibiting caution about the absoluteness of specific conclusions from general principles, some of his neoscholastic heirs turned the morality of nature into a rigid, an historical system, which functioned to control and sanction experience rather than to reflect it... The natural law approach is of lasting value for today in that it grounds an experiential morality while holding to an ideal of shared human truth, and manifests a confidence that God’s will for persons is revealed in creation as an ongoing process of discovering God in human life. (1993: 215)

Let me summarize the “wisdom and light” I find in the moral science of St. Thomas. The moral universe is, for Aquinas, part of an integrated view of all reality: the world divided into its elemental parts. In that world-view, the structure of reality is simply God, and everything that God has made. This includes humans, uniquely created in God’s image; and the whole created universe. Gifted with incredible resources in terms of intelligence and freedom, humans embark upon the journey that will define their lives in pursuit of an ultimate goodness and truth. These are simply two names for God: Ultimate Goodness, Ultimate Truth. Thomas articulates a moral wisdom that is informed by his realistic world-view; it is practical, and it exhibits extraordinary confidence in our capacity to know the truth, and to discover what we ought to do. In his development of Natural Law he gives us some basic principles that guide us in moral action, but warns us that the specific conclusion to be derived from these more universal principles will be less clear, more time and culture-bound. In his virtue theory he helps us appreciate the kinds of persons we may become as we cultivate habits of being that reflect basic human goodness.

With these resources, we may turn our attention to two of the current controversies in biomedical ethics.

Contemporary Applications

Stem Cell Research

In its simplest ethical form, stem cell research raises a question of limits. The goals of research medicine are praiseworthy. Who would not want to eliminate the suffering caused by such diseases as Parkinson's, multiple sclerosis, Alzheimer's, and spinal cord injuries? But to what lengths may we go as we strive to attain these goals? To use the language of a later ethical system, that of utilitarian morality, do "the ends justify the means"? And what are the means that are used to attain these ends? Human stem cells have been found to offer possible benefit. Is there any reason why they should not be developed for this purpose?

At this point, any sound ethical analysis must resolve the questions of fact. For Thomas, as we have seen, truth can only be attained when our minds are attuned to reality. Among the many facts that are significant for the resolution of this question, one seems to be largely ignored by the media that has made such a case for the relief of Christopher Reeves' condition. There are multiple sources of these potentially beneficial human stem cells. They may be obtained from the embryo, but to do so requires the destruction of the life of that embryo. But there are other alternatives, sometimes referred to as "adult" stem cells, which offer great hope for medical research and therapy. In his July 2003 testimony before the President's Council on Bioethics, David Prentice reported on the impressive, but rarely reported progress on these other sources, which include bone marrow, umbilical cord and placenta tissue. A more accurate designation for these sources, he suggests, would be tissue, somatic, or post-natal stem cells.⁴ Clearly the use of these alternative sources for stem cells does not raise the same ethical questions as does the human embryo.

Although Aquinas did not foresee this type of medical research, there is no doubt that his approach to the question would not allow the end to justify the means. If one applies the principles from his more act-centered approach to morality, one must consider all of the components of the human act: its end, the means, the circumstances, and the consequences (S.T. I-II, Q. 18). All must be rightly ordered for the act to be morally good. So if the good consequences (relief of suffering for others) could be attained only by the destruction of an innocent human life, such an act could not be morally justified. Fortunately, as evi-

denced by the experiments with alternate sources for stem cells, the desirable results progress toward overcoming these diseases can be achieved without the destruction of the human embryo.

But is it an innocent human life that is destroyed, when the cells from an early embryo are manipulated for purposes of this type of research? Those who find the resistance of the Catholic Church on this question to be a barrier to progress, are quick to note that Aquinas himself, influenced by the embryology of Aristotle, held a theory of "delayed hominization" speculating that the soul could be infused into the body only at some later stage when the matter was sufficiently organized to receive the form. Whether based on this archaic science, or more contemporary genetic theory, significant questions have been raised in bioethical quarters, among Catholics as well as others, regarding the status of what has been called "the pre-implantation embryo" those earliest stages of embryonic development prior to implantation on the uterine wall (Panicola 2002). In addition to stem cell research, other interventions such as cloning, in vitro fertilization, and the use of the morning-after pill are directed at this stage of developing human life.

As early as 1976, Father Benedict Ashley had challenged this theory of "delayed hominization," To establish the continuity of human life from the moment of fertilization to birth; Ashley draws empirical evidence from genetics and psychology, as well as principles from Thomas himself, disputing in the process the use to which his theory has been manipulated. Together with his colleague Albert Moraczewski, Ashley has continued to develop his defense of the early embryo, most notably in two recent publications: "Is the Biological Subject of Human Rights Present from Conception" (Ashley and Moraczewski, 1994); and "Cloning, Aquinas, and the Embryonic Person" (Ashley and Moraczewski, 2001). The conclusion reached by Ashley and Maraczewski in their 1994 article best represents their findings on the question.

If we seek an objective biological criterion to settle this question of the origin of the human person, we need to ask simply when does an organism which is a member of the human species begin to be. That question will be answered by asking when is the [organ of central control: the genome or whatever this structure may be] which controls

the life and development of this unique human being, first constituted? The response: at conception, defined as the completion of fertilization of the ovum by the sperm, and the formation of a unified nucleus of the zygote as its [organ of central control]. All that happens afterwards is simply the effective self-construction of the living human person already in existence, unified and organized by the human spiritual soul. (Ashley and Moraczewski 1994: 52)

In the spirit of Aquinas, the ontological status of the early embryo is a matter of fact, and not one of human construction; and philosophy must turn to science for the relevant facts. A recent issue of *NCBQ* carries the text of Richard Doerflinger's testimony on behalf of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops before the President's Council on Bioethics on the subject of embryo research. His testimony begins with the thesis: "Ethical norms should not be traded for medical benefits," and concludes with an appendix reporting the latest finding in embryology. "A decade ago, many biologists (and philosophers and theologians who relied on their theories) believed there was a qualitative difference between the embryo less than fourteen days old and all subsequent stages of development. Today, however, this approach is largely abandoned" (2003:783). This claim is supported by his review of recent textbooks in reproductive biology.

There is another agenda at work on this question, noted by both Doerflinger and Lisa Cahill: it is the commercial interests fueling the drive for this research. Cahill writes:

Commercial interest in the embryo and its cells tends to vitiate the integrity of the arguments of those who want to use it. Private companies supplying stem cells must be remunerated for their services. There are also tremendous financial incentives for researchers to investigate medical uses of stem cells so as to sell their knowledge to for-profit pharmaceutical companies or to work directly for those companies. (2001:17)⁵

For Cahill, the broader context for this ethical question is one of social justice. It may well be in the virtue

approach of Aquinas that we shall find the most light on this question. Given the needs of the uninsured and others who are marginalized in our healthcare system, is it likely that a Thomist would see the public financing of embryonic stem-cell research as contributing to the common good?

Termination of Life Support

We turn now to one of the more publicized cases from the end of life, that of Terri Schiavo, the woman suspended between life and death for the past 14 years in a condition most neurologists describe as a persistent vegetative state. Since her collapse in 1990 at the age of 26, she has been kept alive through the use of medically assisted nutrition. Now 40 years old, she is the center of an on-going legal dispute that has involved her husband, her parents, the courts, and even the intervention of the governor of the state of Florida, where she resides (Magill 2003). The social context of her case is tragically similar to several previous cases, each of which has set ethical and legal precedents with respect to the removal of life-support from patients for whom cognitive recovery is judged by the professional clinicians to be virtually impossible. These include Karen Ann Quinlan (1976) and Nancy Cruzan (1990). More recently, in 1998, the case that made the talk-shows and sound bites was that of Hugh Finn. As with the Schiavo case, Finn's condition led to a similar dispute among family members, church authorities, political intervention (in this case, the governor of Virginia), and recourse to the courts.

Catholics seeking guidance in these cases have found disagreement among church leaders as to whether the removal of life-support in these cases constitutes a legitimate application of a long-standing principle, or the moral equivalent of euthanasia (Joseph Boyle, 1991). In their 1994 revision of the *Ethical and Religious Directives for Catholic Health Care Services*, the authors note in the Introduction to the pertinent set of directives that this is a question not yet resolved by the highest church authorities, and requiring "further reflection." Directive 58 speaks of a "presumption" in favor of providing nutrition and hydration to all patients, even when this requires "medically assisted nutrition and hydration [tube feeding] as long as this is of sufficient benefit to outweigh the burdens involved to the patient."

In order to review principles that would be consistent with the thought of Thomas Aquinas on this question, we shall turn to the work of Father Kevin

O'Rourke, OP, who has written extensively on the subject from the 70s to the present, and has been engaged by the courts as an expert witness on behalf of the families who were seeking court authorization for the removal of medically assisted nutrition. The most comprehensive review of O'Rourke's position can be found in two articles appearing in 2001. "Care of PVS Patients: Catholic Opinion in the United States," was co-authored by Kevin O'Rourke and Patrick Norris, and appeared in *Linacre Quarterly* in August 2001 (O'Rourke and Norris, 2001).⁶ Michael Panicola's article, "Catholic Teaching on Prolonging Life: Setting the Record Straight," appearing the same year in the November-December issue of *Hastings Center Report* (Panicola, 2001), provides an extensive review of O'Rourke's position along with the opposing views of other Catholic writers.

O'Rourke and Norris open their discussion by alluding to this case of Hugh Finn; at the time of their writing of the article this was the case sensationalized by the media. They ask the obvious question. Why was there such disagreement, even among religious leaders, on the questions raised by the case? Their response is that while principles are clear, there is no authoritative position on specific interventions. What has emerged, they indicate, are three approaches to the moral resolution of the question. All are held by Catholic moralists in the U.S., and all who argue for them cite teachings of the Church and the tradition of Catholic moral thought in support.

The first opinion views AHN [artificial hydration and nutrition] as ordinary care and morally obligatory. The second viewpoint contends that AHN is a medical treatment that should be offered unless it is physiologically futile or excessively burdensome. The third opinion states that AHN may be discontinued in the case of the patient in PVS primarily because it offers no benefit to the patient and secondarily because it may at times impose a grave burden. (O'Rourke and Norris 2001: 202)

The authors themselves defend the third position; they are joined by a number of Catholic ethicists "who work in clinical settings and by many medical societies who have studied the issue" (209). For these clinicians and ethicists, as well as for some (but not all)

of the bishops who have been asked to offer public opinions, "once a firm prognosis of permanent unconsciousness has been made, AHN may be removed" (209).

The primary rationale for the third position is the application of a principle from the 1980 *Vatican Declaration on Euthanasia*: the assessment of proportionate benefits weighed against the burdens, as these can be determined when life is sustained at the vegetative level. Although some who advocate the other alternatives would argue that life itself, regardless of the level of functioning, is an intrinsic good, O'Rourke and his companions ask the obvious questions: What is the purpose of human life? What is the purpose of health care? From the perspective of the Christian religious tradition and Thomistic philosophy, the purpose of human life, as human, is the pursuit of spiritual goals: ultimately friendship and intimacy with God. "If a person does not have the potential for cognitive-affective function, it does not mean that God does not love him or her or that the person is no longer a friend of God. But it does mean that the person cannot pursue the friendship of God, the purpose of life, through his or her free actions" (209). They invoke a critical distinction made by St. Thomas in his anthropology: between human acts (*actus humanus*) and acts of man (*actus hominis*). "Our ultimate goal, the purpose of life, is acquired only through human acts, not through acts of the body which are independent of the intellect and will" (210). Removal of artificial nutrition is not only tolerated, morally, it is a good moral act. It discontinues a costly procedure that offers no proportionate benefit, and it enables the transition from biological life to eternal life.

Michael Panicola's article in *Hastings Center Report* covers much of the same ground, and reaches the same conclusion as does O'Rourke, whom he cites extensively throughout the article. What is unique in this article is a careful review of the tradition of Catholic moral teaching regarding end of life care, going back to 16th century Dominicans (DeVitoria and Banez) who first introduced the distinction between "ordinary" and "extraordinary care," and who even applied these distinctions to the question of food. Panicola's concluding section "Toward Consensus" reiterates the position taken by O'Rourke and others regarding the type of "good" that Catholic teaching recognizes regarding human life: "The good of life is a limited good precisely because it is the basis for pursuing the higher, more important spiritual goods of

The Terri Schiavo case only highlights what we have seen are the fundamental requirements of moral reflection in the spirit of St. Thomas. There are questions of fact in this case, as in every bioethical situation, which must be clarified; and there are significant questions of value. Truth can be obtained only when we have assembled all of the relevant facts. Among the disputed facts in this case are her diagnosis, her prognosis, and her own wishes regarding her care? But whether or not hers is truly a condition of PVS, after 14 years there is virtually no hope of cognitive recovery. In terms of value, what is the better good for this woman? Whatever his motivation, it seems her husband is acting in her best interests when he requests the termination of this treatment. It would seem that her biological confinement by tube-feeding is preventing the completion of her life's journey, and her release into eternal life.

As with the case of stem-cell research, there remain other questions. When principles of justice are applied in bioethical discussion, they must embrace the social context, and the allocation of costly resources. Most long-term PVS patients are eventually moved from acute care hospitals to nursing homes where the medical care required is typically covered by the government sponsored Medicaid program. Studies indicate that in the 90s, in the U.S. there were more than 10,000 adults, and more than 5,000 children in PVS; they were maintained in long term care health care facilities at costs ranging between \$350-500 per day, or \$126,000-180,000 per year. (*Multi-Society Task Force on PVS*, 1994: 1576.)

Conclusion

The controversies raised by these two cases certainly illustrate well the wisdom of Aquinas in his discussion of the application of principles to concrete situations: Principles may be clear and convincing, but when we do the work required of us in these deliberations, our mind will be "busied with contingent matters . . . and consequently, although there is necessity in the general principles, the more we descend to matters of detail, the more frequently we encounter defect" (S.T. I-II, 94, 4). To say that we may "encounter defects" is to admit that we may be wrong. It is in such a state of humility that we can be most open to truth.

As we turn to Aquinas for wisdom and light on these matters, as on any other aspect of our moral lives, we may accept his challenge to cultivate the vir-

tues that will dispose us, as persons, to be wise and good. For those engaged in ethical concerns, there may be no more important virtue than prudence. Both an intellectual and a moral virtue, prudence is simply right reason applied to action. And what could be more helpful in bioethical decision-making? For Aquinas, prudence is wisdom's faithful servant, "for it leads to wisdom, preparing the way for her, as the doorkeeper for the king" (S. T. I-II 66, 5, ad1). Let this, then, be our day-star as we search the horizon that defines our moral universe. By that light we shall behold our world, "divided into its elemental realms."

Ruth Caspar, OP, PhD

This lecture was delivered Ruth Caspar, OP, PhD at the Aquinas Convocation, Ohio Dominican University on January 28, 2004

Sister Ruth Caspar, OP, PhD is a member of the Dominican Sisters of Peace, having entered one of the founding congregations, the Dominican Sisters of St. Mary of the Springs, in 1955 with profession of vows in 1957. She earned a BA from the College of St. Mary of the Springs in 1956; with subsequent graduate studies in Philosophy at the University of Notre Dame: MA (1967) and PhD (1968). From 1968 to 2003 she served as full-time faculty member at Ohio Dominican College (now known as Ohio Dominican University), teaching courses in Philosophy and Humanities. From 1983-1996 she offered concurrent programs in Biomedical Ethics at Mount Carmel Health, Columbus, Ohio. During sabbaticals and summer study she pursued research and publication interests in Philosophy and Bioethics. Her articles and essays have appeared in anthologies and professional journals. After retirement from college teaching, she completed and edited the history of her congregation that had been left unfinished at the time of the death of the author, Sister Camilla Mullay, OP, PhD. She continues to serve on Boards, Advisory Committees, and Ethics Committees, and has been appointed Congregational Historian.

Notes

¹In his book, *The Birth of Bioethics* (1998), Al Jonsen describes the proceedings of a conference held to mark the 30 year anniversary of a discipline that emerged in the U.S. in the early 60s. Invited to the conference were representatives of the disciplines that combined to form the burgeoning new field--and honored as "pioneers" were those whose publications were listed in the first edition of *The Bibliography of Bioethics* (Walters 1975). Kevin O'Rourke, O.P. was among these early contributors to the new discipline, the only priest listed among the 48 participants who gathered at the University of Washington in Seattle in September 1992. (Jonsen 1993: S16).

²Chenu's 1959 study, *St. Thomas d'Aquin et la théologie* has only recently been translated into English by Paul Philibert (2002).

³An Irish Dominican, a medievalist and scholar, Father Boyle was in his later years Prefect of the Vatican Library and President of the Leonine Commission, a collaboration of scholars seeking to bring out the critical edition of the works of St. Thomas. Father Boyle he revised his essay shortly before his death, for the anthology edited by Stephen Pope, *The Ethics of Aquinas* (2002).

⁴Prentice's report, as well as the documentation for this research can be found on a web site, Do No Harm, which is the work of a Coalition of Americans for Research Ethics. Two fine Thomists are among the founding directors of this coalition: Edmund Pellegrino and Kevin Fitzgerald, S.J.

⁵"A bill authorizing research using stem cells from human embryos, signed into law on Sunday by Gov. James E. McGreevey, will help make New Jersey a center for scientists and bio-technology companies in the rapidly developing field . . ." (Laura Mansnerus, "In Stem-Cell Law, Supporters See Opportunity for New Jersey," *New York Times* (Tuesday, January 6, 2004: A24).

⁶*Linacre Quarterly* is the publication of the Catholic Medical Association.

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In Memoriam





Dominican Values

Dominican Values: Alive to the Real and the Possible

Chrys McVey OP

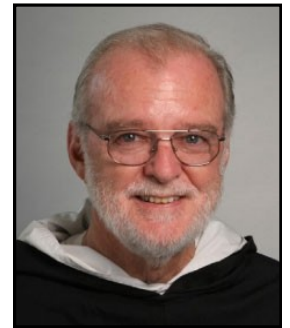
When asked to speak about Dominican values and themes in education, it would be normal to think first of St Thomas Aquinas. He had, in fact, quite a lot to say about teaching and the teacher, and any discussion has to centre on what Aquinas said and on how he himself taught. My first impulse, however, was to look at St Dominic. If the same approach, insights and emphases of the 13th century Dominic still find resonance in the government and mission of the Order he founded, then these can surely be found in the thought of the first-generation Dominican, Thomas Aquinas. This was confirmed for me on discovering that Liam Walsh, the Regent of Studies for the Province of Ireland, had done the same thing in an unpublished talk some years ago.¹

In Dominic's Own Heart

M H Vicaire, the great Dominican historian, believed the Dominican Order was 'the first strictly missionary Order in the Church,' and the founding of the Order was conditioned by circumstances, but especially by one person's response to these circumstances. 'It is,' Vicaire writes, 'in St Dominic's own heart that we have to look for the first stage towards the founding of the Friars Preacher.'² Timothy Radcliffe, the former Master of the Order, has described Dominic's whole life as 'molded by response to situations he never anticipated. This merciful man was at the mercy of others, vulnerable to their needs.'³

According to Vicaire, Dominic's most striking gift was this very compassion: his vulnerability to the suffering of others. It is this vulnerability and sensitivity to the needs of others that determined the very structure of the Order he founded: Dominic wept, and

the Order was born. One non-Dominican writer has stated that it was not just the presence of universities that sent early friars into the cities, but also a desire to be, in fact, 'brothers' to the dislocated poor. Jordan of Saxony, Dominic's successor, called Dominic, 'a Gospel man,' and Vicaire develops this image by distinguishing two initial apostolic moments: one 'mission,' the other, 'communion,' and identifies both in Dominic's structuring of the Order.



As a gifted organizer, Dominic had a sense of the Church, an awareness of its structures, its needs, its unity, but especially, its possibilities. It is this awareness of possibilities that led him, in a combination of daring and cunning, to stretch the canonical categories by founding a community, not of monks or canons, bound to one place, but 'friars,' whose 'cloister,' as one contemporary critic complained, 'was the world.' His Order was to be a group of preachers with a universal mission, not delegated by a bishop or subordinate to him within his diocese, but preachers by profession in the Order of Preachers, thus becoming, as the Fundamental Constitution (n III) states, 'consecrated totally to God, and in particular... dedicated in a new way to the universal Church, being appointed entirely for the complete evangelization of the Word of God.' The application, so far, to Dominican education is obvious: it begins with a perception of real need, and the response is a merciful compassion.

Wholeheartedness

There is a demanding wholeheartedness in this

description that still challenges us today. We, as Dominicans, responding wholeheartedly by our profession in the Order of Preachers, have no other choice than to be wholehearted.

It is interesting to see just how this ‘wholeheartedness’ worked in Dominic’s life. His daring led him to bring into the Church a new form of religious life; his cunning led him to secure papal bulls at every step of the way to protect this new venture. Dominic’s spirituality was, in the words of one of the recent General Chapters, ‘open-eyed.’ Felicísimo Martínez Díez, characterizes this ‘wholeheartedness’ as a

‘spirituality of incarnation. This spirituality is not the result of a *fuga mundi*, but one of incarnation and insertion in the world. Dominic entered and progressed in this spirituality in the measure in which he entered into and progressed in the contact, in the knowledge of, and in compassion with suffering humanity.’⁴

This concern for others as a motivating force for what Dominicans do is preserved in the Book of Constitutions of the Order. Thus, Fundamental Constitution (no I) quotes Pope Honorius’s letter to Dominic, ‘You have given yourselves to the proclamation of the Word of God, preaching the name of Jesus throughout the world.’ It is for this reason that the Order ‘is known from the beginning to have been instituted especially for preaching and the salvation of souls.’ The purpose of our study ‘should aim principally and ardently at this, that we might be *useful* to the souls of our neighbors.’⁵

We also know something of Dominic’s personality from the canonization process of 1234 and from the witness of those who knew him and lived with him. The witnesses speak of him as ‘gentle, patient, kind,’ and ‘a loyal comforter of other people,’ giving instances of each. He was one who ‘wept’ and prayed over ‘what would become of sinners’ (the others), and he structured his Order guided by this concern for others. His trust in God was unshakable: when several bishops and Count Simon de Montfort protested against his sending brothers to Paris, thus reducing their numbers in Toulouse, Dominic replied, ‘Do not contradict me; I know quite well what I am doing.’ But if he trusted in God, he also trusted his brothers. This can be seen in the Order’s democratic form of government. (I remember one old Dominican being

asked what Dominican spirituality was. He immediately replied, ‘It is how we govern ourselves.’) Dominic was also quite clear about where the priority lay. This can be seen by his willingness to grant dispensations from monastic observances for the sake of study geared to mission. Everything, all the elements of common life, prayer, study, monastic observance everything is there for the sake of others, from whom Dominicans, brothers and preachers, take their identity. The General Chapter of Kraków in 2004 testified to this: ‘To enter this other world is to discover ourselves as one small part of a world where the liberating word comes from elsewhere. It comes from those on the margins of society. It comes from those in our world whose concerns are bigger than themselves. To enter this world is to yield the illusion of power in order to be possessed by others. To do so is to learn humility, to be docile before the wisdom and language of others’ experience, where we preachers receive much more than we give.’⁷ Just as a preacher must first be a listener, so a teacher must first be a learner.

Liam Walsh’s paper describes Dominic as ‘something of a fundamentalist’ but he explains this in a rather unique way. He speaks of ‘a hermeneutical option in the life of Dominic, coming from his way of encountering the Gospel,’ and he argues that this offers Dominicans today an orientation for dealing with contemporary questions. He believes it is an orientation ‘that has become part of our Dominican spirituality, our Dominican approach to education, and has marked the work of great teachers among us like Thomas... Dominic was a fundamentalist about something that was not of himself nor for himself, but for others.’⁸

Talking About It Together

Walsh also has some interesting comments on the ‘why’ of Dominic’s preaching against the Albigensian heresy, especially in his description of what heresy is all about. ‘Heresy happens when people stop talking to one another. It does not happen when they simply disagree, even about the things of God. It is when an individual or group breaks off communion and communication with the community of believers, it is when a group believes that it alone is right and the rest of the Church is wrong about a matter of faith that there is formal heresy. In Dominic’s day, the Albigensians and the Catholics had stopped talking to one another. If Dominic stayed up all night talking to an Albigensian innkeeper and his biographer thought it

worth recording the event it must have been because he made it clear that the preaching of the Gospel required him to start talking to the heretics, and to keep talking, all night if necessary. Now you do not keep talking to someone all night if the only thing you have to say to [them] is, “You are wrong.” “If the Gospel is salvation event, and that salvation is for all, it is something that people can talk about together.”⁹

‘Talking about it together,’ is, I would think, a better motto for the Dominican Order than the traditional ‘to contemplate and give to others the fruits of our contemplation.’ Even though this includes the all important ‘to others,’ it overlooks the fact that we also ‘contemplate’ with others – and that, without them there is something missing in our contemplation. The General Chapter of Oakland (1989) witnessed to this:

‘We do not first contemplate and then go out to others. We, called to preach, are first of all called to contemplate with others, to listen, to take our place on the side of those who hear the Word of God. We preachers are not on the side of the mystery, which was never ours to claim. For both of us, preacher and people, the mystery is revealed in new, surprising and unpredictable ways.’¹⁰

We talk together teacher and student, preacher and hearers and something mysterious happens that both can claim as their own. This is something that St Thomas, in his methodology and perhaps even more importantly, in his spirituality implements to perfection.

The Truth of Things

Dominicans have long claimed as their motto, *Veritas*. For St Thomas, according to Josef Pieper, in his classic book on Thomas,¹¹ grasping the ‘truth’ of real things was his true passion. His adoption of the pagan Aristotle against the traditional trends happened because Thomas’s ‘intrepid approach to truth recognized the voice of reality in Aristotle’s work.’ Pieper adds, ‘This same intrepidity made him ask, in his *Commentary on the Book of Job*, whether Job’s bold conversation with the Lord did not violate reverence – to which he gave the almost outrageous answer: truth does not change according to the standing of the person to whom it is addressed; he who speaks truthfully is invulnerable, no matter who may be his adversary.’¹²

This passion for the truth of the real, of things

created, and for the truth about the Creator, is marked by an intriguing tentativeness about the whole project. What is most attractive in St Thomas is his recognition of mystery, both in creation and in God. ‘For us modern Christians,’ writes Pieper, ‘who seldom hear about the incomprehensibility of God, it comes as a cause of alarm when we find our ignorance so boldly and clearly pointed out in the *Summa Theologiae*. For in this “summary” of his teaching on God, Thomas begins by saying: “Because we are not capable of knowing what God is but only what he is not, we cannot contemplate how God is but only how God is not.” Evidently,’ he goes on, ‘Thomas did not wish to withhold this basic thought of “negative” theology even from the beginner. And in the *Quaestiones Disputatae* [it] is even said: *Hoc est ultimum cognitionis humanae de Deo; quod sciat se Deum nescire*, “this is the ultimate in human knowledge of God: to know that we do not know God.”’¹³

The poet, Emily Dickenson, who rarely left her home, yet ‘roamed this world as if it were interstellar space,’ marveled: ‘It is true that the unknown is the largest need of the intellect, although for this no one thinks to thank God.’¹⁴ A later echo is found in Wittgenstein who wondered, ‘It is not how things are in the world that is mystical, but that it exists.’

Timothy Radcliffe, some years ago, on his being awarded an honorary doctorate, spoke about ‘the crisis of truthfulness in our society,’ about what a Christian response might be, and about the role of a Dominican university. He addresses the tentativeness of such a search for truth:

‘How can we ever think about anything if we cannot try out crazy ideas, float hypotheses, and make mistakes? Meister Eckhart, a 14th century Dominican, wrote that no one may attain the truth without a hundred errors along the way. We need the freedom for words for which we are not going to be held eternally responsible. Seeking the truth requires times of protected irresponsibility, for tentative exploration.’¹⁵

The writer, James Baldwin, many years ago, in a radio interview with Studs Terkel, felt that American youth is badly educated, inconceivably badly educated,

‘because education demands a certain daring, a certain independence of mind.

You have to teach young people to think, and in order to teach young people to think, you have to teach them about everything. There mustn't be something they cannot think about. If there's one thing they can't think about, then very shortly they can't think about anything...'¹⁶

The General Chapter of Kraków defends this 'freedom for words':

'As preachers we are committed to the liberation of language for its true role of serving the truth and exploring the frontiers. As preachers we are committed to an asceticism of care in the way we use language. As preachers we are committed to endless vigilance in defense of language.'¹⁷

Seeing Things as They Are

The search for truth is founded in Thomas's belief that everything now receives its existence from God.

'This is why,' says Radcliffe, 'we are able to understand creation and grasp the truth. The one who made the world made our minds too. It is God's world and we are at home in it as God's creatures, made for the truth. As fish were made to swim in water, human beings were made to thrive in the truth. It is our home.'¹⁸

It is worthwhile staying with this talk a bit longer for several important resonances.

'Seeing things as they are is more than just a matter of opening one's eyes and observing. It requires of us a way of life, which one might call contemplative. We need to be able to open ourselves to what is before us. It is a calm presence to what is other than ourselves, resisting the temptation to take it over, use it or absorb [it]. It means letting the other person be.'

In a previous address at Yale University, some years earlier, Timothy Radcliffe described a university as a place where we learn how to talk to strangers! To let the person be, 'we must,' he says, 'let our minds and hearts be stretched open, enlarged by what we see. Aquinas loved the phrase of Aristotle, that "the soul in

some way is all things." Understanding what is other than ourselves expands our very being. Contemplation is being nakedly and humbly present to the other.'¹⁹

What is required, Timothy writes, is a 'quietness of mind and time. When Wittgenstein was asked how philosophers should greet each other, he replied, "Take your time." [Unlike the reply given by lyricist Allan Jay Lerner to composer Andrew Lloyd Webber who asked him: 'Why do people take an instant dislike to me?' Lerner replied, 'It saves time.'] '...a spirituality of truth,' writes Timothy, 'would invite us to slow down, be quiet, and let our hearts and minds be stretched open.' He then quotes an obvious favorite of his, Simone Weil, who wrote,

'We do not obtain the most precious gifts by going in search of them but by waiting for them... This way of looking is, in the first place, attentive. The soul empties itself of all its own contents in order to receive the human being it is looking at, just as [the person] is, in all [its] truth.'

This quiet, calm and leisurely presence is the foundation of any friendship, which is central to the Dominican understanding of our relationship with God and each other.' And friendship, he believes is 'the starting point for learning.'²⁰

How Do We Learn?

Thomas's reverence for the truth can be seen, first of all, in the reason why he wrote his great work, and in the gentle way he treats objections to a thesis he is propounding often stating the arguments against his own position more moderately and more logically than the original. He believed that any truth, no matter by whom it was said, is from the Holy Spirit, and that everyone involved was participant in a common search. This search begins in the created reality. James V Schall SJ, in an article on

'Aquinas and the Life of the Mind,' quotes the wonderful book of Chesterton on Aquinas. 'Chesterton begins by pointing out the fact that things in reality are "strange," as he calls them. He calls this "strangeness" the "light of all poetry." What does he mean? He means that the reality, the being of what is not ourselves is simply there to be discovered. Our minds are capable of receiving *what is*, into ourselves,

into our minds. By simply being ourselves, we are in our proper knowing, what is not ourselves. We are concerned with the “otherness” of things, with the fact that they are simply out there and we can know them.’²¹

How does St Thomas go about knowing the things that are out there?

‘Each of Aquinas’s works begins with a consideration of the methodology to be pursued, and his pedagogical interest is clear in all cases. He is not just teaching a subject, he is teaching people, and these are always kept in mind.’²²

From the standpoint of Thomas’s affirmation of the wholeness of creation,²³ and his concern for his students, it is easy to understand the ease with which he famously recommends bathing and sleeping as remedies against ‘melancholy of the soul.’²⁴

Vivian Boland, in an extremely enlightening article, asks,

‘How do [human minds] know what is true and is it possible for them to communicate that knowledge to other human minds with a view to goodness? What happens when human minds meet, specifically in the activity that we call teaching?’²⁵

Human beings never meet as ‘minds’ but as embodied minds. We meet each other as human beings.

‘Human minds cannot meet without the involvement of bodies, without feelings, emotions, imagination, memory... With us it is not a matter of pure thought but always an embodied encounter. As such, it always involves signs of some kind, in particular those highly sophisticated systems of signs that we call language. In discussing the human mind, Thomas speaks of it firstly as an image of the Trinity. Following the pattern already established, he speaks not only of the human mind’s capacity for knowledge and truth, but also its capacity for communicating truth with a view to goodness. This is where he talks about what a teacher is (*On Truth*, 11, ‘de magistro’).’²⁶

For Thomas, truth is not just an ‘adequation to reality,’ but is also in relation to goodness.

How does Thomas go about teaching beginners? Teaching, writes Pieper, demands above all else the capacity of survey and simplification, and the ability and effort to think from the premise of a beginner.

‘This capacity of true simplification St Thomas possessed to a high degree, and he bent every effort to take his student’s point of view as a premise. The best energies and the best part of his life he devoted not to a work of “research” but to a textbook for beginners, which is nonetheless the result of the deepest immersion into the truth. The *Summa Theologiae* is expressly written for the instruction of beginners, as is plainly stated several times in the preface. In this preface Thomas mentions the boredom produced by the over-familiar, and the confusion experienced by beginners through the excesses of misplaced scholarship.’²⁷

Contemporaries report that the teaching method of Thomas fascinated his students through its freshness and originality, and through his gift for probing, grasping, and illuminating reality to its depth. ‘Like a true master, [Thomas] teaches his disciples to think and live on their own.’²⁸

How Do We Teach?

Vivian Boland’s article, ‘What Happens When Minds Meet,’ is very rich, and to anyone interested in what it means for a Dominican to teach, is essential reading. I cannot do justice paraphrasing him but believe it worth trying to share some of his insights on Thomas and teaching. Thomas’s analogy of teaching and learning is taken from the example of the medical doctor, who, while he may be said to restore the patient to health, it is really nature that does the healing with the help of the doctor. So, moving from ignorance to knowledge, from confusion to understanding, the teacher may be said to have brought this about, but it is the person’s own natural capacities for knowledge and understanding that are at work, assisted by the teacher. The teacher assists and encourages, especially by engaging the imagination of the student.

Aquinas believed that each person has not only intelligence or the ability to see connections and make the links that new knowledge requires, but also that a

person is born with an almost innate understanding of universal principles that are not known without experience but are immediately known as soon as experience begins.²⁹ It is not just that a teacher, like Aquinas, respects people's capacity to think for themselves, but the teacher, from his or her own experience and knowledge assists the thinking process

A teacher has not only to see things well, to see things as they are, but also to see things as they may become. Timothy Radcliffe, in his talk, quotes Fergus Kerr on the gift of seeing things *potentially*:

[Thomas] does not look at the world and see it as simply all that is the case, in itself; rather he sees the world, and things in it, as destined to a certain fulfillment, with appointed ends, modes and opportunities. It is perhaps not too much to say that Thomas sees the way that things are in terms of the way that they ought to be.³⁰

Seeing things in their potentiality is certainly one of the foundations for inter-religious dialogue and this is why so much in Thomas's approach seems prescient and contemporary. His concern was searching for a common ground of Christian faith, but he also declared that there must also be another level of theological discourse carried on between believers and those who see a different face of God or who do not accept any truth beyond what human intelligence can discover.³¹

This hopeful approach was expressed in the General Chapter of Providence (2001) in this way:

'Our Constitutions point out the contemplative dimension of study by calling it a meditation on the multiform wisdom of God. To dedicate oneself to study is to answer a call to "cultivate the human pursuit of truth" (*LCO* 77, 2)... [Our] Order is born of this love for truth and of the conviction that men and women are capable of knowing the truth. From the start the brethren were inspired by the innovative audacity of St Dominic who encouraged them to be useful to souls through intellectual compassion, by sharing with them the *miser cordia veritatis*, the mercy of truth. Jordan of Saxony states that Dominic had the ability to pierce through to the hidden core of the many

difficult questions of their day, "thanks to a humble intelligence of the heart" (*Libellus*, no 7, MOPH XVI, Roma 1935, p 29).³²

The Prologue to this section speaks of the 'mercy of truth' and how Dominican study can and must serve this. It is both meditation and challenge – as are two other passages that are pertinent. The first declares that

'Dominicans share with others the lot of our times. Consequently, Dominican study is marked by dialogue and cooperation in the pursuit of truth. In order to defend the dignity of creation in our own times and in our future, Dominican study seeks to be anamnestic (recollective), recalling the sufferings and injustices of the past along with the riches and achievements of those who have gone before us.'³³

The second addresses the need for 'confidence.'

'Our confidence to take part in the *quaestiones disputatae* of our day must derive from our confidence that we are heirs to an intellectual tradition which is not to be preserved in some intellectual deep-freeze. It is alive and has an important contribution to make today. It rests upon fundamental philosophical and theological intuition: an understanding of morality in terms of the virtues and growth in the virtues; happiness in the vision of God as our destiny; and a humility in the face of the mystery of God which draws us beyond ideology.'³⁴

Is There Really a Dominican Approach to Education?

What then is a Dominican approach to education? There is a Central Asian story about Mullah Nasiruddin, whom a friend comes upon one moonlit night. Mullah is on his hands and knees sifting through the dust in the middle of the street. 'What are you looking for, Mullah?' asked the friend. 'My key,' said Nasiruddin. His friend offered to help him find his key, so he too got down on hands and knees, but after some time, he said, 'Mullah, where did you lose it?' Nasiruddin replied, 'Over there by the door.' The

friend said, 'Then why don't you look over there?' 'Don't be stupid,' said Mullah, 'there's more light here.' A Dominican approach I would characterize as paying attention to what is real, to what is present, right in front of us, all the great 'disputed questions' of the day. I believe that Dominican preaching and teaching is never 'doctrinal,' in the sense of 'telling people the truths.' It is rather listening to them, sharing their questions, as in the delightful and playful dialogue between Jesus and the Samaritan women in John 4. She runs to the village, tells them of her experience, and asks, 'Can he be the Messiah?' Jean-Pierre Torrell OP quotes Nietzsche; 'He who wishes one day to preach should ruminate a long time in silence. He who wishes to bear lightning should remain a long time as a cloud.' This, instead of 'annoying people by having answers to every question,' as was said of the French presidential candidate, Sarkozy.

This implies that we are all involved in a common search, not just for 'my' own good, but the good of all. This compassionate other-centeredness is a kind of friendship, the starting point for learning and, in a way, also its term if being-in-relationship is what the kingdom is all about. This kingdom begins with that typical Dominican attitude of reverencing the individuality of each person and for being able to see the potential of each one.

And that is why it is so important in today's world, where so many people are defined by exclusion, to join with others, especially the excluded, in a common dialogue to discover just what God's purposes are. At least to the extent that is possible. It is terribly important, in this age of demonization, not to yield to the delusion of absolutes, but cling to the truth that is always relative, always relational, always tentative, ever mysterious and beyond our grasp.

'Religions,' said Cardinal Poupard, the president of the Pontifical Councils for Culture and Inter-religious Dialogue, in Moscow in July 2006,

'are open houses that can teach and practice dialogue, respect for the whole person, the love of the truth, awareness of belonging to the one great family of peoples wanted by God and called to live under his watch in shared love.'

The Order was founded to be 'useful' to others, and took the name 'preachers.' It is clear from Dominican history through the ages, that we have taken our identity from those others, for whom we exist, with whom we search, whose questions we share,

and without whom we would not be who we are.

The last teaching of St Thomas, as he lay dying, was given to the Cistercian monks of Fossanova, in an explanation of the Canticle of Canticles, 'that mystical book of nuptial love for God, of which the Fathers of the Church say: the meaning of its figurative speech is that God exceeds all our capabilities of possessing him, that all our knowledge can only be the cause of new questions, and every finding only the start of a new search.'

**Thomas Chrysostom McVey, OP
1933-2009
IN MEMORIAM**

Fr. Chrys McVey, OP, passed away suddenly on Monday, June 29, 2009, while returning from a visit to his brother in the Washington, DC area. In January of 2009, Fr. Chrys McVey delivered this lecture at Ohio Dominican's Aquinas Convocation. It was one of his last public lectures. May he rest in peace.

Chrys McVey was a Dominican friar of the Province of St. Joseph. He was born in New Jersey, in sight of the Atlantic Ocean. However, he spent half his life in the deserts of Pakistan, "where," he says, "his education really began." He served there in various capacities--as pastor, novice- and student-master, seminary professor, director of a pastoral institute, executive secretary for the Conference of Religious, and as the first provincial of the newly independent Dominican vice-province of Pakistan.

After 40 years in Pakistan, Fr. Chrys was appointed Socius to the Master of the Order, with responsibility for Mission, and served six years on the General Council of the Order in Rome. He remains a member of the Dialogue Commission of the Order and the Order's Commission for the Promotion of Study. He has contributed chapters to many books and has written for international journals on Pakistan, Dominican Spirituality, and Contextual Theology, as well as on the theological implications of the dialogue with Islam for Christian faith and practice. Fr. Chrys recorded several podcasts for the Word, a service of the Order

of Preachers that offers audible daily reflections on the Christian scriptures. You can listen to Fr. Chrys McVey's recordings for the Word online here. In the aftermath of the events of September 11, 2001, Fr. Chrys wrote an essay titled "A Christian among Muslims". One concept in this essay was that of going "outside the camp", which he later expounded in an essay titled "Meeting God outside the Camp", given at the Institute for the Study of Religious and Culture in 2003.

Notes

'Between Pluralism and Fundamentalism: Dominican Education for the Third Millennium,' A Symposium for Dominican Educators in Higher Education, River Forest, IL, 9-11 April 1999.

² Cf *The Genius of St Dominic*, ed by Peter B Lobo OP, Nagpur, Dominican Publications, nd, passim.

³ 'Letter to Our Brothers and Sisters in Initial Formation,' *To Praise, to Bless, to Preach*, Dublin, Dominican Publications, 2004, p 481.

⁴ *Espiritualidad Dominicana, Ensayos sobre el charisma y la misión de la Orden de Predicadores*, Madrid, Edibesa, 1995, pp 20 ff.

⁵ *LCO*, 77, I.

⁶ In Simon Tugwell OP, ed, 'The Canonisation Process of St Dominic, 1233,' *Early Dominicans, Selected Writings*, NY, Ramsey, Toronto, Paulist Press, 1982, pp 66-85, passim.

⁷ *Acta*, 47.

⁸ Walsh, op cit.

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ *Acta*, 43, III.

¹¹ *The Silence of St Thomas*, trans John Murray SJ and Daniel O'Connor, South Bend IN, St Augustine's Press, 1999.

¹² Ibid, pp 20-21.

¹³ Ibid, p 37.

¹⁴ Letter 471, August 1876, quoted by Paul Berman in 'The Searchers,' *New York Times*, 12 October 1997.

¹⁵ 'Crisis of truth in our society,' an unpublished address, the Angelicum, Rome, 15 November 2004, p 2.

¹⁶ Studs Terkel, *P.S., Further Thoughts from a Lifetime of Listening*, New York, London, The New Press, 2008, p 47.

¹⁷ *Acta*, II, 53. Ibid, p 4.

¹⁸ Ibid., p 4.

¹⁹ Ibid., pp 4.

²⁰ Ibid., pp 4-5.

²¹ *New Blackfriars*, vol 87, no 1010, July 2006, p 401.

²² Vivian Boland OP, 'What Happens When Minds Meet? Thomas Aquinas on the Mystery of Teaching and Learning,' *Doctrine and Life*, vol 56, no 6, July-August 2006, p 7.

²³ Thomas's early opponents accused him of 'pagan worldliness,' to whom he replied: 'The opinion of those who say with regard to the truth of faith that it is a matter of complete indifference what one thinks about creation, provided one has a true interpretation of God... is notoriously false. For an error about creation is reflected in a false opinion about God.' Pieper, loc cit, p 36, quoting *Summa Contra Gentiles*, II, 3.

²⁴ *Summa Theologiae*, I, II, 38, 5.

²⁵ Boland, op cit, p 10.

²⁶ Ibid., p 11.

²⁷ Pieper, op cit, p 14.

²⁸ Jean-Pierre Torrell OP, *Saint Thomas Aquinas*, Volume 2, Spiritual Master, trans by Robert Royal, Washington DC, CUA Press, 2003, p 121.

²⁹ Cf Boland, op cit., pp14-15

³⁰ Op cit, p 9.

³¹ Cf Walsh, op cit, passim.

³² 'Misericordia Veritatis,' III, 107, *Acta*.

³³ Ibid. III, 114.

³⁴ Ibid, III, 115.

³⁵ *St Thomas Aquinas*, vol 1, Washington DC, CUA Press, 1996, p 31.

³⁶ www.evangelizatio.org/portale/adgentes/pepe_en040706,

³⁷ Pieper, op cit, p 4

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Contemplative Wisdom

Contemplative Wisdom: The Goal of a Dominican Education

Kurt Pritzl, OP, PhD

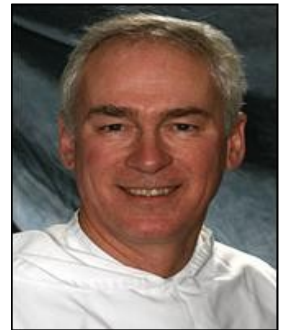
Saint Thomas Aquinas argues in the *Summa Theologiae* 2-2.188.6 that a life combining contemplation with action is superior to a life of contemplation alone. By action here he does not mean any activity based on rational forethought but activities such as teaching and preaching (*sicut doctrina et praedicatio*), which are based on what he calls “the fullness of contemplation” (*ex plenitudine contemplationis*).¹ The argument that he offers is this: “for just as it is better to illumine than merely to shine, so it is better to give to others the things contemplated than simply to contemplate” (*Sicut enim majus est illuminare quam lucere solum, ita majus est contemplata aliis tradere quam solum contemplari.*). This passage is a source for a motto of the Dominican Order “to contemplate and to share with others what is contemplated” (*contemplare et contemplata aliis tradere*) a motto that animates Ohio Dominican University and other genuinely Dominican schools.

Thomas’s position about the superiority of the mix of contemplation and action over contemplation alone entails the following points. [1] Contemplation alone is not action or doing something by effort of will. In itself it is an event or occurrence of rest or repose, of being and having rather than doing, acting, or making. [2] Since contemplation and action are better than contemplation alone, action must add something that contemplation lacks and that fulfills or completes it. In this life, at least, the two together are better than rest alone. [3] Whatever action brings to the mix, however, Thomas holds that contemplation has primacy and priority with respect to action, and therefore, rest has primacy and priority over action. This is because the action in question is sharing what is contemplated. Thomas can hold that the mix of

contemplation and action is better than contemplation alone because the mix of contemplation and action is saturated with contemplation the *contemplated* is what is to be shared. There must be shining, shining that is beheld, in order for there to be illumining.

Contemplation, teaching, and preaching are achievements of the human intellect. The primacy and priority of rest to action with respect to contemplation, teaching, and preaching that Thomas sees is connected to deeper and more basic positions about the primacy and priority of rest with respect to action within human intellection itself. In this lecture I want to talk about these deeper and more basic positions about the human intellect that give primacy to rest over action in the life of human thinking and knowing. Our interest in contemplation in this lecture, then, is quite focused and specific. It is to look at Thomas’s basic account of thinking itself to see how rest has primacy with respect to motion for every human intellect. This is to lay bare the contemplative dimension inherent in our capacity for thinking and in the actual thinking of every human person. Therefore this lecture considers contemplation precisely with respect to what gives the human intellect every human intellect, yours and mine the ability to contemplate and it reflects on the fact that all our thinking includes within it bits of contemplation, which we develop, ignore, or counteract in the course of our intellectual activity and cognitive life. Ohio Dominican University, by the way, as it lives out its Dominican outlook, stands for the first option.

For Thomas Aquinas, I am claiming, rest has



primacy over action or motion. The philosophical alternative the opposite position is to give primacy to action or motion over rest. Friedrich Nietzsche is a good example of a philosopher who does this, and in a complete way. Nietzsche considers the human intellect to lack rest of any kind in its cognitive life. It is completely a tool for doing and making in service to the human will and its creative drives as humans cope with reality in constant flux.

It is useful to keep this difference between Aquinas and Nietzsche in mind. The fundamental issue is whether the human intellect is capable of rest and possesses acts of rest within the course of its actual life and career or whether the human intellect is completely and thoroughly in motion and always actively doing and making in every aspect of its ongoing life. The former is Aquinas; the latter is Nietzsche.

This lecture, as the title says, is not only about contemplation. It is also about wisdom. In fact it joins them. The lecture title speaks of “contemplative wisdom.” I hope to present a connection or link between contemplation and wisdom, and it will be much like the connection between rest and contemplation mentioned already. If all of us have intellects that function by rest at least as much as by action, then all of us are contemplators. If all of us are contemplators, then all of us even you and me can be wise. And if we have the ability to be wise, we have the responsibility to do so, a responsibility to ourselves, that is, to our own fulfillment and happiness, and a responsibility to others.

My position denies, then, any claim of wisdom based on the Nietzschean alternative, namely, that wisdom can be found in the human power of will and mastery over nature that Nietzsche takes to be the glory of human life. My position denigrates the complete primacy of action, doing, making, and creativity that Nietzsche accords to us humans and that makes our intellectual lives incapable of contemplation in Thomas’s sense.

To assert one position over another is not to argue or establish the position. Philosophy in its essence includes arguing for positions as well as presenting the alternatives. This address aims at philosophy, but our limited time precludes a reasonably full argument for the position on contemplation and wisdom that philosophers like Thomas and Aristotle advocate, since that position is so fundamental and deals with some of the most complex and deep matters of the nature of the human person and the world in which

humans find themselves. There is an argumentative structure to the lecture, however, with two parts worth mentioning at the outset.

[1] Much of the lecture presents Thomas’s position in contrast to Nietzsche’s. This contrasting is itself an important task of philosophy, namely, to make and explore distinctions and alternatives. Rest and motion, contemplation and action, intellect and will—to develop both sides of these distinctions, to consider whether they are genuine distinctions or not (is there, after all, as some philosophers have argued, only rest, only motion, only contemplation, only action, only intellect, or only will?), to see which side of the distinction has primacy over the other or how they interrelate constitutes an essential part of doing philosophy. When it is done well, it not only displays the logical alternatives, but it points out paths of truth, since it allows reality to display itself.

[2] To present alternatives, to draw implications from them, and then to consider the implications of the implications, so to speak, is a worthwhile form of argumentation. If it turns out the Aquinas’s position makes contemplation and wisdom humanly possible whereas Nietzsche’s opposite position does not, that may be a warrant for one position over another.

Let me add one other note about the nature of this lecture. We used to have a cook at the Dominican House of Studies in Washington where I live who would answer the question “what are we having for dinner tonight?” with one word, “food.” Philosophical analysis works requires generalization. Moving to a highly general level can seem un-informative and boring, but it is one of the most important and exciting parts of philosophy, when it is done well. Philosophers like Thomas, Aristotle, and Nietzsche are intellectual geniuses for their daring analyses, which claim to see the most basic patterns and structures within the vast complexity of some reality or other. In the case of this lecture, we will be much considering Thomas’s and Aristotle’s analysis of human thinking. It is an analysis which makes highly general claims that constantly must be considered in terms of actual human thinking in all its complexity, variety, and richness. We do not have time to do this latter work, but you can carry it on in your heads as we proceed.

What follows consists of two parts. The first part discusses thinking as both rest and motion and the interrelation between the two types of thinking. The second part connects contemplation with being wise. This look at contemplation and wisdom is based on a

philosophical account of the human intellect drawn from Aristotle and Aquinas. It is an account shared by them in its basics, but when I resort to details, they are mostly from Aristotle, since my own studies concentrate in his thought.

1 Thinking as Both Rest and Motion

Aristotle and Aquinas argue that there is a basic distinction in human intellection. Once the point is made that intellection or thinking is universal awareness, in contradistinction to sense perception, which is particular awareness, this distinction is probably *the* most basic distinction to be made regarding human intellection. This is the distinction between *nous* or *intellectus*, on the one hand, and *dianoia* or *ratio*, on the other, as two irreducible ways of thinking. It is not that we have two human intellects within us, but that we have intellects capable of two fundamentally different acts (see *ST* 1.79.8). The one act is an occurrence of rest, repose, sheer possession, or having. The other act is an occurrence of motion, movement, activity, doing, or making.

1a. Thinking as *Nous* or *Intellectus*

Nous or *intellectus* is thinking that is a sheer resting with or apprehending of an object of thought, an object of thought that acts on or is given to the intellect. The intellect does not do anything in some sense of exerting itself in order for this awareness or cognition to occur.² It is sufficient to be alive and awake for a human to have this kind of thinking, which Aristotle and Thomas consider to be our foundational intellectual experience of reality.

To understand this better, it helps to recount some basics about being and knowing for Aristotle and Aquinas. They hold that the individual things in the physical world, which are first given to us in sense experience and the primary things that we think about, are single wholes composed of the two intrinsic principles called form and matter. Form is the principle in the thing that makes it to be what it actually is. Form, in other words, accounts for the fact that a thing exists, is one, and has definite, distinguishing, knowable contours and is *this* rather than *that*. Matter is the principle in a thing as the stuff actualized and shaped due to form. Matter, in other words, is reality insofar as it is capable of being given existence, oneness, and intelligible contours, so that it is *this* rather than *that*. According to Aristotle and Aquinas, events of cognition or knowing, whether acts of sense experience,

which is particular awareness, or acts of thinking, which is universal awareness, take place first and foremost when the things in the world in virtue of their forms act on and actualize the living and wakeful perceptual faculties or the intellect of the human person. The forms of things can effect cognition in humans because [1] they are principles of act, of structuring rather than being structured they have the energy, actualization, or drive to affect or act on human faculties of knowledge and [2] they are principles of structure, content, intelligibility in their activity and motion they deliver the very structure, content, intelligibility for awareness that they cause physically in the things themselves. Aristotle famously presents this position about both perception and thinking as the first claim he makes about thinking in his account of the intellect in *De Anima* 3.4:

If thinking is like perceiving, it must be either a process in which the soul is acted upon by what is capable of being thought, or a process different from but analogous to that. The thinking part of the soul must therefore be, while impassible, capable of receiving the form of an object: that is, must be potentially identical in character with its object without being the object. Thought must be related to what is thinkable, as sense is to what is sensible.³

It is not difficult to see that this position supports and explains direct realism, which holds that human cognition directly and without representations grasps the actual features and natures of things.⁴ Direct realism is possible because things due to their forms act on perceptual faculties and the intellect. Perceptual faculties and the intellect do not act on things or on the forms received, but the reverse: they receive them. And things due to their forms act on perceptual faculties and the intellect in a way that conveys or delivers those things' actual cognitive structures, that is, what there is about and in them to perceive, think, and know. Nietzsche offers a telling contrast to this position. He too holds that things in the world act on our perceptual faculties causing awarenesses or images in us, but these images are not cognitions, strictly speaking, that is, they do not present features or dimensions of the things themselves conveyed through the thing's action on the human person.⁵ What passes for intellectual cognition in Nietzsche is completely caused by the action of the intellect in rela-

tion to the impact of things on our bodies.

Since all the action or doing in this foundational account of thinking as *nous* or *intellectus* is on the side of the thing, not the intellect, the event or act of such thinking in the human person is an event or act of rest or repose. Aristotle says that the intellect is a place where forms are received (places do not do anything to or affect that which is placed in them; *De An.* 1.4.429a27-28) and says that thinking resembles “a sort of rest or coming to a halt, and not motion” (*De An.* 1.3.407a32-33).⁶ Yves Simon ends his account of the Aristotelian and Thomistic position that sensation is not motion but rest in a profound way when he writes: “Unlike movement, sensation is an activity by way of rest. It is the first image of heaven.”⁷ When people die, we pray for their “eternal rest.” Heaven is rest as the vision of God face to face, total, utter, all-absorbing contemplation as the “beatific vision,” with no more struggles, no more action and movement to fulfill longings, to overcome frustrations, and to realize dreams. As Simon notes, sense perception, which is necessary for action in the world but often delightful in itself apart from doing anything, is a first form of rest as an intimation of heavenly rest. The thinking called *nous* or *intellectus*, which is also rest, is another, stronger intimation of heavenly rest.

1b. Thinking as *Dianoia* or *Ratio*

The other type of thinking recognized by Aristotle and Thomas is *dianoia* or *ratio*. This is the type of thinking, discursive and dynamic in character, that we probably would say that we possess if asked about the matter. *Dianoia* or *ratio* is the human intellect active, in motion, and at work, not at rest. It is the intellect at work with what has been given to it ultimately in original acts of *nous* or *intellectus*, in order to attain further objects for *nous* or *intellectus*. It is the intellect at work with all the moves and creativity at its command.

Within all the variety of human intellectual activity Aristotle and Aquinas hold that the intellect is active in two basic ways. One way is judging, where the intellect joins or separates two things discerned already. The linguistic form of the result of judging is either “x is y” (joining) or “x is not y” (separating). The other way is reasoning, where the intellect joins judgments together so that one judgment is affirmed on the basis of the others. Reasoning takes forms like “a is b; b is c; (thus) a is c” or “if a then b; b; (therefore) a.” Thinking or intellection of this discursive

sort is action by the mind, not rest, but it is interesting to note that when we attempt to represent the action and movement of the intellect by depicting judgments or pieces of reasoning, we cannot help but do so as completed actions, that is, as new moments of rest.

1c. The Relation Between *Nous* or *Intellectus* and *Dianoia* or *Ratio*

What is the relation between these two irreducible types of thinking? My late colleague at Catholic university, Thomas Pruffer, considering the relation between intellectual rest and motion, between *nous* or *intellectus* and *dianoia* or *ratio*, puts the issue this way: “Does rest (*nous*, *intellectus*, *intuitus*) include a potentiality for being complemented by motion (*logos*, *ratio*, *discursus*)?”⁸ If rest does not include a potentiality for being complemented by motion, then the two types of thinking are disconnected and disjoint. If this is the case, we may as well say that we have within us two intellects responsible for these two distinct and disconnected modes of thinking.

Thomas explicitly argues that there is only one intellect in humans responsible for these two types of thinking and he describes how the intellect moves in thought in order to be at rest. His argument is worth quoting at length (*ST* 1.79.8):

Reason (*ratio*) and understanding (*intellectus*) cannot be distinct powers in man. This becomes clear if you consider the acts of both. To understand (*intelligere*) is to apprehend quite simply an intelligible truth. To reason (*ratiocinari*) is to move from one thing understood (*de uno intellecto*) to another, so as to know an intelligible truth. And so the angels who, in keeping with their nature, have perfect possession of truth in its intelligibility, have no need to move from one thing to another, but simply, without intellectual process, grasp the truth of things, as Dionysius says [*De div. nom.* 7, PG 3, 868].

But men come to grasp intelligible truth by moving from point to point, as the same passage notes, and are therefore described as reasoning (*rationales*). Clearly, then, the relation of reasoning (*ratiocinari*) to understanding (*intelligere*) is that of motion to rest, or of acquiring to having: the first is of the incomplete, the second of the complete.

Thomas in this passage argues that humans need to move in thought in order to grow and develop in their possession and understanding of the truth of things. Unlike angels, we do not obtain the explicit and full truth of things all at once, but need to move from truths possessed to more truth, whether expansion of the truths already possessed, though possessed in a vague or partial way, or extension from the truths already possessed to other truths connected to them. What is clear in this account is that rest, resting with some intelligible truth, *nous* or *intellectus*, is superior to motion, whose aim is to move from some truth possessed to more truth. Rest is complete, Thomas says, because it has a present wholeness to it, whereas motion is incomplete, since by its very nature it is on the way to something it lacks.

For humans, however, unlike angels, there is always the need and the dynamic to move from possessed truth, which is rest, not motion, to fuller truth, which becomes, when attained, a new instance of rest. This need and this dynamic will never cease for us non-angelic intellects this side of heaven. It does not seem possible that we will reach complete intellectual rest as the full possession of the truth about all things in an integral and full way. We will, in this life, always have somewhere to go in our thinking. Our thinking and knowing will always be the mix of rest and motion that Thomas describes in the passage quoted above.

If this is the case, why is rest superior to motion as the complete is to the incomplete? Why is it not the case that our intellect's capacity for motion is what really matters and is what constitutes the glory of our intellectual life? I have been told by philosophy teachers that philosophy's value consists in processes of critical thinking, that is, specific types of motion in thought that philosophy teaches. Its value is not what it teaches or any truths that it purports to come to. Another question to ask is where does the impetus to motion come from? Does it come from the human intellect insofar as it is the ability for the thinking that is rest (*nous* or *intellectus*)? If so, there might be a paradox to ponder, namely, how does rest engender motion? Or does the impetus for motion come from the ability the human intellect has for thinking as motion (*dianoia* or *ratio*)?

Aristotle and Aquinas give primacy to intellection as rest—to *nous* and *intellectus*—because the intellect's ability to think in this way constitutes its openness to the things of the world, its ability to re-

ceive and absorb the things of the world. When this type of thinking occurs, there is genuine cognition. The thing is known as it actually exists, not according to some construct or construal that the intellect in its activity might place on it. This is why thinking as rest has primacy over motion. And this type of thinking happens all the time, according to Aristotle and Aquinas. It is an ingredient in all our thinking, at least in its most rudimentary forms. The intellectual discernments we make whenever we are awake and thinking, discernments and registrations about what kinds of things there are and that this is not that, occur all the time. We move from these discernments and registrations by means of activities of judgment and reasoning to more complex recognitions of what the world is like, which are new places of rest.

I presented above some examples of motion in thought, including this example of reasoning: "if a then b; b; (therefore) a." This is often a bad form of reasoning; it certainly is from a deductive standpoint. We can know that if the battery is dead, then the car will not start, and we can know that the car does not start. It may not at all be right to conclude that the battery is dead. The point is that motion and activity in thought can be faulty as well as correct. Motion from one point of rest to another can be good or bad. It can lead to more truth or to falsity. The issue then is where to find the norm to discriminate good from bad intellectual motion? Logic, the study of how to move well in thought, is an essential to good thinking. The ultimate answer about how to find and how to confirm that we have found truth is in our experiences of things themselves, insofar as they give themselves to us independent of our motion or activity, that is, insofar as they give themselves to us in their particularity through sense perception and their universality through *nous* and *intellectus*. This is another reason why rest has primacy over motion.

Another reason why thinking as rest has primacy over thinking as motion concerns where the impetus for intellectual motion comes from. Reasons for intellectual inquiry can and do come from our needs and our wants. We want to cure cancer or build up a business, and so we start thinking about things. Our particular and personal reasons and purposes for thinking are relatively extrinsic to the thinking process itself. For the intrinsic dynamic towards movement in thinking, we need to look at the thinking that is purely receptive on the part of the human intellect. This thinking of things wherein things give their meaning

and truth to us who receive it gives us the truth of those things in vague, general, and partial ways.

They begin by telling us that they are of a kind, so that we want to know more fully what it means to be of that kind, and so on. The content and meaning that things convey to the human intellect in basic and primordial acts of *nous* or *intellectus*, in the first thinking that we do of the world, through which we recognize and register intellectually the differences of things in the world, needs to be spelled out and articulated, and the relationships of the things we come to know, especially their causal relationships one to another, need to be explored and worked out. This is what motion in thought seeks to do. It is the aim of *dianoia* and *ratio*, as Thomas makes plain in the quotation above. The impetus for this motion, however, as Pruffer intimates in the way he puts his question does rest include a *potentiality* for being complemented by motion? is in the experience of rest itself, the experience of the thing as it gives itself to us in thinking that is *nous* and *intellectus*. The point of intellectual motion is to articulate and expand on the intelligible truth given in the thinking that is intellectual rest until this process is fully and comprehensively complete, which would mean full rest. It would be intellectual heaven.

Thus contemplation is thinking that is rest and communion with what there is in reality to be known. The thinking of all humans includes thinking that is rest as well as thinking that is motion. Thus all humans contemplate in this basic and primordial sense, whether they realize it or not. The issue for us, then, is whether we will become proficient and self-conscious contemplators, whether we accord to intellectual rest its primacy over the intellectual motion that we initiate. If we do, then we will move intellectually throughout our lives from the moments of rest that are given to us, however, limited and apparently minor in character and meaning, to deeper, more profound, and more satisfying moments of intellectual rest, and then have achievements of contemplation increasingly worth sharing with others.

2 Contemplation and Wisdom

Let us speak of wisdom. In *Metaphysics* 1.1-2 Aristotle speaks of wisdom in two intersecting ways. One way is giving a single definitive statement of what wisdom is. Wisdom is knowledge of the ultimate principles and causes of all that is (*Metaph.* 1.1.982a1-3). Wisdom in this sense is the knowledge

of everything altogether with full understanding of why things are as they are just as God has. Its possession by humans would make them godlike (*Metaph.* 982b28-983a11). We find it difficult to believe that anyone could attain wisdom in this straightforward and full sense, but we honor Saint Thomas Aquinas because he is one of the few humans ever who is even a contender for its realization.

The other way the Aristotle speaks of wisdom is to present an analysis of the full range of human knowing, that ascends from sense perception through memories and experience to the arts and sciences, where the highest and best science is wisdom itself as defined above. In this approach Aristotle does not consider that wisdom is one thing, but he talks about wisdom as present in degrees at each stage of knowing, from sense knowledge, which we share with other animals to full wisdom strictly speaking, which, if possessed, we share with God. We can see wisdom in sense knowledge as it gives us the present, in memory as it gives us the past, otherwise gone forever, in experience, as we see how wise an experienced ball-player, carpenter, or surgeon is over an inexperienced one, and in the various arts and in the sciences, so many of which are studied here at the university. There is a measure of wisdom in all these forms of knowing, but more and more wisdom at each higher stage.

Aristotle talks about many reasons why we say wisdom is present and why one type of knowing might be wiser than another, but a principal criterion is how much contact is there with things themselves and how penetrating and articulate is that contact. This is to say, how much genuine rest is there in thinking after how much motion.

The black Muslim activist Malcolm X describes in his famous *Autobiography* how in prison he taught himself to read by copying out the dictionary in notebooks, starting with the letter "A." He became a voracious reader, noting: "No university would ask any student to devour literature as I did when this new world opened to me, of being able to read and *understand*."⁹ Note that what Malcolm X is trying to describe he calls "understanding," which is exactly how Thomas's word for the act of *intellectus*, namely, *intelligere*, gets translated. Malcolm X goes on to describe how he would stay up all night in his cell crouching near the door to get some light to read. He adds "months passed without my even thinking about being imprisoned. In fact, up to then, I never had been

so truly free in my life.”¹⁰ The more Malcolm X let things in their reality, more and more things from A to Z, sink into and penetrate his being this is the rest of contemplation the more he was wise and the more he was free, as he himself says, even though he was in a prison cell.

The alternative to thinking as rest, to contemplation, is thinking as motion. If thinking as motion does not serve contemplation, to carry us from instances of rest to other instances where the nature of reality is more fully and articulately discerned, then the chances of wisdom are diminished or lost entirely.

For one thing, when thinking in motion is not in the service of rest, it is in the service of our own preoccupations, needs, aims, purposes, and desires. When this happens, things cannot speak for themselves, for we then end up seeing them construed and slanted according to our own preoccupations, needs, aims, purposes, and desires. This is at least seeing them in some way, and there can be some measure of wisdom in such thinking. What is worse is what Nietzsche argues for all thinking is action, no thinking is rest. For without the possibility of rest, without the possibility of the realities around and outside of us sinking into our awareness and registering in our souls unless we rest with things and stay quiet a bit and let them tell us what they are like we are thrown too much entirely back upon ourselves in our knowing and even when we make decisions and take action in the world. The Czech literary critic Erich Heller says of Nietzsche and of the poet Rilke, who agrees with Nietzsche, that they do not “praise the praiseworthy. They praise. They do not believe the believable. They believe. And it is their praising and believing itself that become praiseworthy and believable.”¹¹ This, in the end, is a sad, isolating, and frustrating way to live—loving our loving, rather than some other person for herself or himself; believing in believing, rather than trying to get the believing right; glorifying our choosing, rather than the worthiness and goodness of what is chosen.

In the thinking that we do, however mundane or unremarkable, is rest, which, however humble, is contemplation. In the thinking that we do is also motion. A prospect of wisdom opens up for each of us, growing throughout our lives, to the extent that we see what Thomas Aquinas sees (this would be a profound instance of rest) and place our activities of thought in the service of rest in the pursuit of more and more truthful intellectual rest. Dominicans claim as their

own the motto “to contemplate and to share what is contemplated” with the hope that they can do both well and knowing that the sharing part, the illuminating as well as the shining, is possible only because the motto fits everyone. I hope that you leave Ohio Dominican University appreciating just how much it fits you.

Kurt J. Pritzl, OP, PhD
1952 – 2011
IN MEMORIAM

Kurt J. Pritzl, OP, PhD delivered this Aquinas Convocation lecture on January 25, 2007, at Ohio Dominican University.

Father Kurt Pritzl, was a friar of the Eastern Province of the Order of Preachers. Fr. Pritzl served as Dean and Associate Professor of Philosophy at The Catholic University of America in Washington, D.C., until his death in February of 2011. A native of Milwaukee, Wisconsin, Father Pritzl earned a bachelor of arts degree summa cum laude in philosophy and mathematics from Marquette University, where he was inducted into Phi Beta Kappa as a junior. He studied for the Master of Arts degree and the PhD degree in philosophy at the University of Toronto. His training at the University of Toronto included certification in the philosophy and Greek program conducted by the Philosophy and Classics departments. While at the University of Toronto, he was a fellow of Massey College. In addition to his studies in philosophy Father Pritzl was graduated with the master of divinity degree in theology from the Pontifical Faculty of the Immaculate Conception at the Dominican House of Studies in Washington, D. C.

Fr. Pritzl began his teaching career at the University of Toronto. He was appointed to the faculty of the School of Philosophy in 1980 and rose through the ranks to his present position. A specialist in ancient Greek philosophy, Father Pritzl worked primarily in early Greek philosophy and the thought of Aristotle. He concentrated on ancient theories of knowledge and accounts of soul. His research focused on a comprehensive study of the explicit and implicit theories of truth in Aristotle’s writings. Father Pritzl published articles in Greek philosophy in leading journals in the field and has been selected as a visiting scholar for the Boston Area Colloquium in Ancient Philosophy.

Fr. Pritzl served as associate editor of *The Review of Metaphysics* and as reader in *Greek philosophy* for a number of scholarly journals. He was a member of the Executive Council of the American Catholic Philosophical Association. Father Pritzl was a member of the Corporation and Board of Trustees of Providence College. He has served on the Provincial Council of the Province of Saint Joseph, as Regent of Studies for his Dominican province, and as a member of the Vocation Council of the province. In addition to his academic duties at the University Father Pritzl preached regularly at parishes and retreat centers in the Washington area, served as a chaplain in the Teams of Our Lady movement, and was invited to serve as spiritual director at annual conferences of diocesan pro-life and natural family planning directors by the Secretariat for Pro-Life Activities of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops.

Notes

¹ Thomas Aquinas, *Summa theologiae*, volume 47, *The Pastoral and Religious Lives (2a2ae. 183-9)*, ed., trans., and notes by Jordan Aumann (London and New York, 1973), pp. 204-5.

² This precise point is important. The intellect at rest is not the intellect asleep or inattentive, but rather the intellect alive, awake, aware, but not because of action or motion caused by or due to it.

³ *De Anima* 3.4.429a13-18. All translations of the texts of Aristotle are from *The Complete Works of Aristotle: The Revised Oxford Translation*, ed. Jonathan Barnes, 2 vols. (Princeton, 1984), unless otherwise noted.

⁴ A recent defense of Aristotle's direct realism is found in Hilary Putnam, "Aristotle's Mind and the Contemporary Mind," pp. 7-28 in *Aristotle and Contemporary Science*, vol. 1, ed. Demetra Sfondoni_Mentzou (New York and other places, 2000); cf. Fred Sommers, "Putnam's Born-Again Realism," *Journal of Philosophy* 94 (1997): 453-71.

⁵ In fact, they are at two removes from things, which cause nerves to be stimulated, which in turn causes images. Friedrich Nietzsche, "On Truth and Lies in a Nonmoral Sense," pp. 82-3, in Friedrich Nietzsche, *Philosophy and Truth: Selections from Nietzsche's Notebooks of the Early 1870's*, ed. and trans. D. Breazeale (Amherst, N. Y., 1999).

⁶ Translation from Aristotle, *De Anima*, trans., intro., and notes by R. D. Hicks (Cambridge, 1907).

⁷ Y. R. Simon, "An Essay on Sensation," pp. 61-64, in *Philosophy of Knowledge: Selected Readings*, ed. Roland Houde and Joseph Mullally (Chicago, Philadelphia, and New York: J. B. Lippencott Company, 1960).

⁸ Thomas Prufer, *Recapitulations: Essays in Philosophy* (Washington, D. C., 1993), p. 103, n. 1.

⁹ Malcolm X, *The Autobiography of Malcolm X*, with the assistance of Alex Haley (New York, 1966), p. 173.

¹⁰ *Autobiography*, p. 173.

¹¹ Quoted by Lucy Beckett in her review of Roger Scruton, *Sex and the Sacred in Wagner's Tristan and Isolde*, in *Times Literary Supplement*, April 9, 2004, p. 24.

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THE CENTER FOR DOMINICAN STUDIES

The Center for Dominican Studies at Ohio Dominican University was created in 2003 through the generosity of the Dominican Sisters of St. Mary of the Springs. The Center began its first programs in Summer, 2004 under the leadership of its founding director, Sr. Catherine Colby, OP, EdD. The Center for Dominican Studies was created to provide additional resources that focus on the Catholic intellectual life, the Dominican commitment to contemplate the truth. Through lectures, symposia, colloquia, research and publications, the Center engages the Ohio Dominican campus community and the community beyond our campus in reflection, debate and dialogue about significant theological and social issues from a Dominican and Catholic perspective.

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Guiding Principles of The Center for Dominican Studies:

- Commitment to the Catholic and Dominican identity of the university through word, study and example of life
- Commitment to scholarship and reflection
- Commitment to the arts and aesthetic dimension of human life
- Commitment to peace and justice for all humankind
- Commitment to collaboration among the members of the Dominican family and various cultures within the global community

The Center for Dominican Studies Staff



Sr. Catherine Colby, OP, EdD
Vice President for Mission and Identity and Director of the

Sr. Catherine, a Dominican Sister of Peace, has a long and distinguished career as an educator and administrator. Sr. Catherine has served previously as the Chair of the Education Division at Ohio Dominican University, as a faculty member, a school principal and a teacher. In her community, she has held a positions on many councils and committees. She has also served as the Director of Candidates and as the Vocation Director of the Congregation. She has taught courses for both the Education Division and for the Division of Theology, Arts and Ideas at ODU. She is the founding Director of The Center for Dominican Studies. As Vice President for Mission and Identity she is a member of the President’s Administrative Council

Fr. Scott is a friar of the Central Province of the Order of Preachers. A Fulbright Scholar, Fr. Steinkerchner holds a BS in Electrical Engineering, Coop, University of Akron, an M A in Theology and MDiv from Aquinas Institute, St. Louis, Missouri and a PhD in Systematic Theology from Boston College. His dissertation entitled: “Watching Clouds: Pursuing Dialogue Across Disparate World Views” focused on developing and analyzing a method of interreligious dialogue that fosters learning *about* and learning *from* other religious traditions, rather than seeking to determine how various religious truth claims fit together. Fr. Scott served as visiting professor of inter-religious theology at Aquinas Institute in St. Louis, Missouri, and is the Promoter General for the Internet for the Dominican Order.



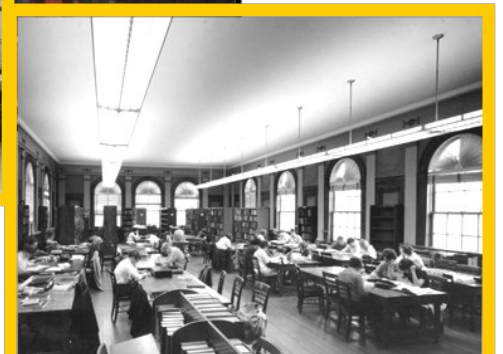
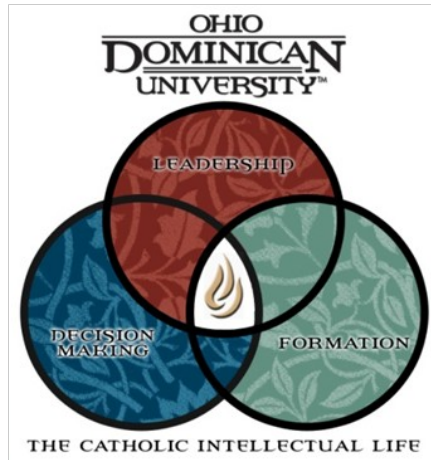
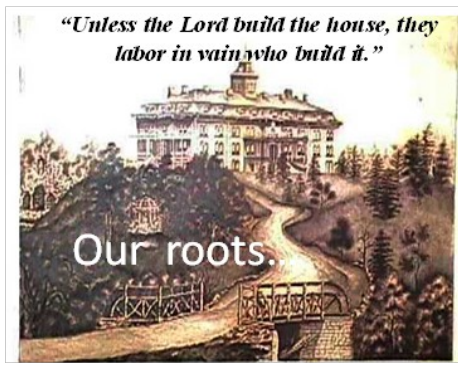
Fr. Scott Steinkerchner, OP, PhD
Associate Director of the CDS



Sr. Louis Mary Passeri, OP, MA
Assistant


Sister Louis Mary is a Dominican Sister of Peace. Sister is a graduate of St. Mary of the Springs, now Ohio Dominican University. She holds an MA in Elementary School Administration and a certificate in spiritual direction from the Wellsprings Program at the Spirituality Network in Columbus, Ohio. Sister has served in several diocese as an elementary teacher and administrator. Before joining the staff at The Center for Dominican Studies, she served as the Director of Religious Education in the parish of St. Mary’s, Lancaster, Ohio for sixteen years.

A snapshot of The Center for Dominican Studies events and memories that have been TRANSFORMATIVE...





**Dominican
Studies**

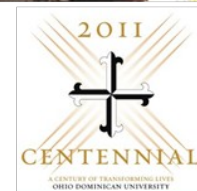
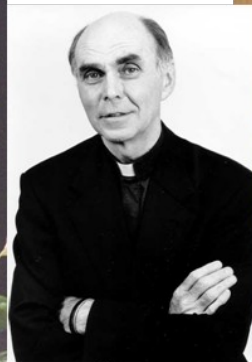


AN SCHOLARLY JOURNAL

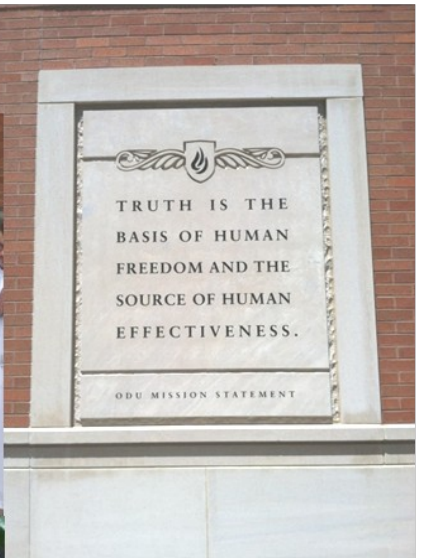
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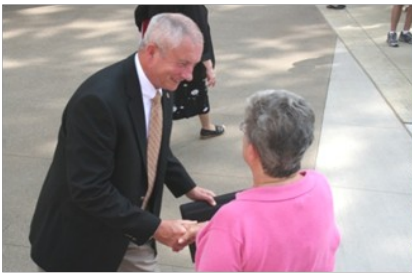
**OHIO
DOMINICAN
UNIVERSITY**



**Blessing of the Memorial Garden
Founders Day, October 5, 2010**



The outside walls of our new Science building named the Battelle Building, are etched with the words of wisdom and reflection from Albert the Great, Thomas Aquinas, Benedict XVI and an excerpt from the ODU Mission Statement appropriate for this learning environment,



**THIS CONTEMPLATIVE
MEMORIAL GARDEN
CELEBRATES AND HONORS
THE MEMORY OF ALL
WHO HAVE SHARED THEIR
TIME, TALENTS AND
CREATIVE GIFTS ON THIS
CAMPUS.**

**“IF THE ONLY PRAYER YOU
EVER SAY IN LIFE IS
‘THANK YOU,’ THAT IS
ENOUGH.”
(MEISTER ECKHART, OP)**



**The community joins together
to pray and celebrate the Kick-
off of our Centennial Year
Celebration!**



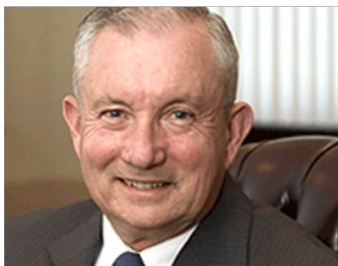
Center for Dominican Studies

Advisory Board

First Meeting: October 8, 2004



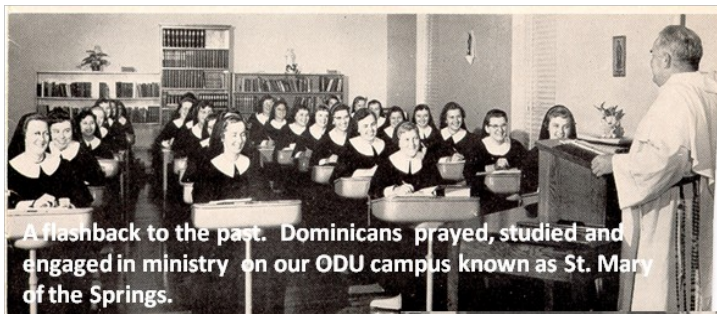
Members of the Advisory Board include: Bishop James A. Griffin, Diocese of Columbus; Rabbi Harold Berman, Temple Tifereth Israel, Columbus, OH; Dr. Ronald Carstens, Professor of Political Science, ODU, Sr. Ruth Caspar, O.P., Professor Emerita of Philosophy, ODU, Michael Curtin, President and Associate Publisher, The Columbus Dispatch, Columbus, OH; Dr. Patricia Daly, Professor of Education, ODU, Sr. Juliana D'Amato, O.P., Professor Emerita of Italian and Art History, Albertus Magnus College and Pastoral Ministry, St. Margaret Cortona Parish, Columbus, OH; Fr. Donald Goergen, O.P., Dominican Ashram, Kenosha, WI; Sr. Mary Jo Fox, O.P., Congregation of St. Mary of the Springs, Columbus, OH; Dr. Joseph Kelley, Vice President, Center for Augustinian Studies, Merrimack College North Andover, MA; Sr. Anne Kilbride, O.P., Prioress, Congregation of St. Mary of the Springs, Columbus, OH; Sr. Gilmory McCabe, O.P., Freshmen Advising and Campus Ministry, Albertus Magnus College, New Haven, CT; Donald McConnell, Chairman, Ohio Dominican University Board of Trustees and Corporate Senior Vice President and Chief Operating Officer for Battelle, Columbus, OH; Dr. Julia McNamara, President, Albertus Magnus College, New Haven, CT; Sr. Joan Scanlon, O.P., Dominican Sisters of St. Catharine, Kentucky and Executive Director of the Dominican Alliance, Dominican Sisters USA; John Christopher Scott, Director, Forum for Faith in the Workplace, Columbus, OH; Fr. Ken Sicard, O.P., Dean of Residence Life, Providence College and Provincial Treasurer of the Dominican Fathers, Providence, RI; Dr. Mary Todd, Vice President for Academic Affairs, ODU, Rev. Leon Troy, Chairman, House of Troy Foundation, Columbus, OH; Dr. Jack P. Calareso, President, ODU (ex officio); and Sr. Catherine Colby, O.P., Ed.D., Director, Center for Dominican Studies, ODU (ex officio).



**Dr. Peter Cimboric, Ph.D.,
President**

CURRENT ADVISORY BOARD: President Peter Cimboric, Sr. Catherine Colby, OP, and Scott Steinkerchner, OP (Ex Officio)

- | | | | |
|-------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------|------------------------|
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A flashback to the past. Dominicans prayed, studied and engaged in ministry on our ODU campus known as St. Mary of the Springs.



***From past to present a blessing!
Pictured above is the current
Leadership Team of The Dominican
Sisters of Peace.***

*For Dominic, **study** was the cultivation of the listening ear, using all the human techniques of language and science. It was the careful cultivation of a listening ear that would be hearing all truth, wherever it was coming from. It was limitless immersion in the Word of God, in the Scriptures as handed on in the Church of God. It was at the same time limitless immersion in the words of men and women, and in the world of nature, so that the truth that is there would be brought to light. But most of all, it was the thoughtful effort to build bridges of understanding and conversation between people, so that they could see a way through their differences and be drawn together in communion.*

**“Liam Walsh, OP Excerpt from a conference given to the Sisters of the Zim-
babwean Congregation at their General Chapter September 2002**

