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**The Affectivity of Good Teaching: Towards the Transformative Practice of Possessing a
Thinking Heart**

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Abstract

The aim of the article is to develop a phenomenological and theological approach to the affectivity of good teaching to foster a transformative practice of student engagement and awareness of the life of the soul as much as the mind and the heart. Drawing on the Catholic Intellectual Tradition's search for truth in the context of the theological virtues of faith, hope and love, the article sets out to articulate what it means to possess a thinking heart of education by way of engaging seven transcendental imperatives: be spontaneous, be imaginative, be hopeful, be faithful, be pastoral, be not afraid, and be vigilant. Together, these imperatives signify the transformative value of the search for truth evidencing a tradition of hopeful intelligence resonating with the affectivity of otherness, the turbulence and surprise of self-discovery, and a humble awareness of the wisdom of love at the service of love.

Keywords

Affectivity, Teaching, Theology, Truth

Introduction: The Affectivity of a Thinking Heart and the Search for Truth

The article will seek first to introduce the concept of affectivity and the Catholic Intellectual Tradition of the search for truth. We will then locate the metaphor of a 'thinking heart' to relate affectivity to truth and the theological virtues of faith, hope and love. This will provide a foundation to develop seven transcendental imperatives of transformative practice to inspire good teaching and learning. The article will then proceed to discuss and exemplify each transcendental imperative in relation to otherness and conclude with a vision of developing a thinking heart of education as the practice of truth as a journey of self-discovery in teaching and learning.

Affectivity is an essential part of the fabric of human behaviour and moreover, the life of the soul. By affectivity, I mean the way we react to the world with our emotions, actions and intentions. In terms of drawing from the phenomenological perspective of Emmanuel Levinas' ethical metaphysics for our study, we can suggest that affectivity is oriented ethically and spiritually by otherness (alterity) – being-for-the-other. Affectivity therefore speaks of the development of the life of the soul in the world so that the self may learn to be a gift of self for others. Moreover theologically, such affectivity reveals the spontaneity of conversion and faith, the melancholy of the hope of knowing the suffering and anguish of others, and the vigilance to love others deeply from the heart.

We can further relate affectivity as seeking 'the wisdom of love at the service of love' (Levinas 1992, 162) or as guiding the way we talk to God. We are now coming close to approaching a 'transcendental' sense of affectivity as possessing - to borrow a term from Etty Hillesum - a 'thinking heart' (Hillesum 1996, 55) wherein the language of faith, hope and love come to mind to animate the search for truth.

Hillesum, a Dutch Jew, died at Auschwitz at the age of 29 years in 1943. Her writings (diaries and letters) portray the language of faith and conversion as much as the search for truth amidst adversity. She possessed the soul of a poet allowing her affectivity of talking to God to develop a robust resilience of faith to love others so deeply from the heart and discover God's image through her encounters. Together, her writings produce a remarkable 'thinking heart' evidencing a life of bearing witness to truth, otherness and an outpouring of faith, hope and love. To give one example of her 'thinking heart of the barracks' (p. 199), she writes:

I would love to be like the lilies of the field. Someone who managed to read this age correctly would surely have learned just this: to be like a lily of the field.

I once thought, ‘I would like to feel the contours of these times with my fingertips.’ I was sitting at my desk with no idea what to make of life. This was because I had not yet arrived at the life in myself, was still sitting at this desk. And then I was suddenly flung into one of many flashpoints of human suffering. And changes of expression, life stories, I was suddenly able to read our age – and much more than our age alone. And then it suddenly happened: I was able to feel the contours of these times with my fingertips. ... Will I be able to describe all that one day? Perhaps God will give me the few simple words I need (p. 209).

Hillesum is not afraid of the truth of love and to discover it in her will as she forges meaning in the face of persecution. Moreover, through the spontaneity of letting herself be vulnerable to the other’s face and stories, the melancholy of knowing another’s suffering and the vigilance to love so deeply, she has found how her resilience of faith, hope and love can outlast the horror of suffering and evil. And indeed perhaps God has given her ‘the few simple words’ she needs, namely ‘to be like a lily of the field’ to know God’s heart. Now to speak of the affectivity of a thinking heart in relation to the theological virtues of faith, hope and love, we must at the same time, like Hillesum, learn to touch upon the mystery of truth.

In the Catholic Intellectual Tradition, truth is related to the sense of searching for meaning in life. Accordingly, within the human search for meaning lies key questions that help to define our human being in the world. Pope St. John Paul II relates these questions as follows in his encyclical, *Fides et Ratio* (no.1): ‘*Who am I? Where have I come from and where am I going? Why is there evil? What is there after this life?*’ These questions touch upon human identity and origins, the problem of evil and theodicy (the desire to explain the ‘ambiguity’

(Levinas 1998, 94) of God's existence in the 'evil of ["useless"] suffering' (p. 93)) and even an eschatological horizon of 'hope seeking understanding' (Kelly 2006, 53). To respond to these questions in the context of good teaching, we can suggest seven areas of affectivity helping to give light to the search for truth: (i) to realise self-discovery as a transformative path of education amidst the 'joys and the hopes, the griefs and the anxieties of' the people of our time, 'especially those who are poor or in any way afflicted' (*Gaudium et Spes*, no. 1) such as those experiencing the moods and difficulties of mental illness; (ii) to appreciate the growth of knowledge as a function of self-transcendence and an ongoing process of death and rebirth (cf. John 3), that is to say the ability to take on the journey to embrace 'ever new frontiers of knowledge' (*Fides et Ratio*, no. 4) with a spirit of wonder, imagination and curiosity; (iii) to embrace learning with an affective heart of hope, openness and personhood rather than an unhealthy optimism bent on fear, self-interest and 'any easy assurances of pretending to manage' (Kelly 2006, 5); (iv) to develop fidelity to a path of holiness as witnessed in the life of St. Augustine who introduced 'into his works a range of material which, drawing on experience, was a prelude to future developments in different currents of philosophy' (*Fides et Ratio*, no. 41) and theology; (v) to learn from Christ the Good Shepherd (John 10) that 'faithful self-giving' unveils a pastoral journey of discovering 'truth about existence' (no. 33); (vi) to appreciate the turbulence of a metaxic (in-between) world between 'conceptual language and truth' (no. 96) that we face a 'crisis of truth' (no. 98) wherein words have lost their value, taking 'on quite different meanings in diverse ideological systems' (*Gaudium et Spes*, no. 4) and producing 'a civilization composed of aphasiacs' (Levinas 1990, 207); and (vii) to develop vigilance of patient trust in the process 'that the human being - the one who seeks the truth - is also *the one who lives by belief*' (*Fides et Ratio*, no. 31), 'knowledge acquired by other people' (no. 32) and the 'expression of love' (no. 15).

Together, where we look at these seven areas of affectivity of the search for truth (of possessing a thinking heart of education) we can suggest seven corresponding transcendental acts or imperatives of transformative being to inspire good teaching, otherness and new ways of learning: (i) *be spontaneous* ‘to enter into a loving and fruitful relationship with each other’ in the world (Del Prete 1990, 31); (ii) *be imaginative* to know yourself even to the point of contemplating the significance of the paschal mystery (the suffering, death and resurrection of Christ) as ‘the gift of the ultimate truth about human life’ (*Fides et Ratio*, no. 2) and to seek a better world, ‘the beginning of a new creation’ (2 Cor 5:17) (Kelly 2006, 94); (iii) *be hopeful* to live a life ‘otherwise’ by refusing ‘to rest in anything less than the truly meaningful and the genuinely good’ (p.6); (iv) *be faithful* to learn the value of holiness and sanctity through an ‘intellectual conversion’ of ‘hope seeking understanding,’ namely to embrace difference and the grace of the virtues of ‘humility’ and ‘forgiveness’ (pp. 213-4); (v) *be pastoral* to care, sustain, heal, guide, and nurture the lives of others; (vi) *be not ‘afraid’* to break ‘free of all cultural limitations’ (*Fides et Ratio*, no. 23) that work to contain and conceal truth; and (vii) *be vigilant* to love and endure ‘the toil of ... enquiry into what makes life worth living’ and of ‘forming thought’ through the ‘culture’ (no.6) of the classroom and University.

In comparison, to which our study has found inspiration, Bernard Lonergan develops four transcendental imperatives to bring subjectivity of consciousness to an objective realm (that is to say where, ‘Genuine objectivity is the fruit of authentic subjectivity’): (i) be attentive (to experiencing); (ii) be intelligent (to understanding); (iii) be reasonable (to judging); and (iv) be responsible (to deciding) (Lonergan 1996, 14-15, 292). My difference with Lonergan is more of focus. I want to develop transcendental imperatives in the light of affectivity, ethical metaphysics and theology. Accordingly, I would speak of ‘authentic subjectivity’ in terms of

how it finds resonance in the values of the Kingdom of God such as mercy, justice, truth, love and forgiveness. Subjectivity then is more a function of an ethical, pastoral and paschal habitus of faith as a means to engage the ontological world of being and objectivity. In other words, subjectivity and objectivity come together spiritually and ethically to the extent to which the image and Kingdom of God resonates in the depths of our very being in the immemorial time of God. And possessing a thinking heart of education should aim to reflect such unity. Yet, where Lonergan's imperatives and my own come together would be evident in his analysis of 'the psychological analogy' (Doran 2008, 229) of being in love: 'The real root and ground of unity is being in love with God – the fact that God's love has flooded our inmost hearts through the Holy Spirit he has given us (Rom. 5, 5). The acceptance of this gift both constitutes religious conversion and leads to moral and even intellectual conversion' (Lonergan 1996, 327). In particular, our seventh transcendental imperative, be vigilant, brings together all the previous six imperatives in the affectivity and vigilance of loving the other so deeply from the heart as a means to respond to all the challenges, toils and hardships we encounter.

Having suggested our seven transcendental acts or imperatives of transformative being to inspire the search for truth in the context of facilitating good teaching and new ways of learning, we will set out now to deepen our analysis of these imperatives by situating them in relation to the affectivity of otherness as a means to provide a phenomenological (ethical metaphysical) and theological (transcendental) study and perspective of good teaching.

Introducing Seven Transcendental Imperatives of Transformative Being

Altogether we can summarise the affectivity of the search for truth in the context of good teaching as possessing a 'thinking heart'. A thinking heart will look at the transformative

value of truth and seek a contemplative mode of teaching and learning, and so bring to mind the value of spirituality, faith and reason and even possibilities for compassion and forgiveness to forge an opening into the classroom and University. In this way, we begin to approach the affectivity of otherness, of possessing a thinking heart for-the-other to provide a theological and ethical metaphysical horizon to engage transformative practice in good teaching. I want to suggest that the affectivity of otherness represents an eschatological practice of seeking the hope of ‘further intelligence’ (Kelly 2006, 213) so fundamental to the Catholic Intellectual Tradition. Such ‘further intelligence’ of a thinking heart brings us to the affectivity of love as Anthony Kelly explains: ‘Hope relies on God alone to reveal the final evidence of love at work in every moment of history’ (p. 54).

Given that through the paschal mystery the Church has ‘received the gift of the ultimate truth about human life,’ (*Fides et Ratio*, no. 2) we can add that the Christ is the archetype par excellence of the truth of love to approach affectivity and otherness in the pursuit of good teaching and developing a thinking heart, that is to say, an affectivity of ‘hopeful intelligence’: ‘that hope that is in you’ (1 Pet 3:15) which is a function of ‘gentleness’, ‘reverence,’ the ‘conscience’ (1 Peter 3:16) and the will deepened by the memory of hope. To this end of developing the affectivity of otherness and good teaching into a practical domain to bring to light the truth of love, we can now take up into service our seven transcendental imperatives of transformative being: (i) be spontaneous; (ii) be imaginative; (iii) be hopeful; (iv) be faithful; (v) be pastoral; (vi) be not afraid; and (vii) be vigilant.

Be Spontaneous

Karol Wojtyla (Pope St. John Paul II) has provided a helpful phenomenological reflection on the affectivity of spontaneity in relation specifically to how emotivity affects the psyche,

namely the human development and transformation in the soul. The psyche of the soul possesses almost a sacred spontaneity of openness and passivity to the workings of God in the soul. The affectivity of the 'emotional experiences' of spontaneity can point further to the act of self-determination where the self has a better sense of governing and possessing emotive experiences (Wojtyla 1979, 243). Spontaneity therefore becomes a way for the self to learn how to "cope with" "stirring emotions" and "passions" like love for example (p. 243). Indeed, Lonergan explains such transformation of the soul in terms of falling in love. He relates that 'the human subject ... was transcendent affectively when he fell in love, when the isolation of the individual was broken and he spontaneously functioned not just for himself but for others as well' (Lonergan 1996, 289).

To fall in love signifies the workings of faith and conversion. Spontaneity therefore represents the affectivity of 'hopeful intelligence,' the act of loving others that has formed at the deepest part of one's being in the psyche of the soul. Here we can speak of an ontological change, or in ethical metaphysical and theological terms that the conscience has heard the word of God in relation to encountering the other's suffering, fears and needs. The spontaneity of hearing God's word must not be a 'naïve' or 'infantile' representation of God in consciousness that reduces God's word to the objectivity of fantasy, pleasure or even cosmetic, rational or ideal 'presumptions', 'evasions' and 'reproaches' (Levinas 1999, 122) that seek to extricate goodness from God and place self-interest at the centre of consciousness. Essentially then where the psyche of the soul encounters the word of God it signifies an identity of 'the-one-for-the-other' (pp. 69-70). Ethical spontaneity represents then 'a loosening up or unclamping of identity' unveiling the gift of vulnerability, of 'panting' and 'shivering' (p. 68) before a world of responsibility for the other and knowing within the

acuteness of the grave responsibility of relating to others from the affectivity of possessing a thinking heart of hopeful intelligence.

Accordingly, the affectivity of panting and shivering before the other does not just signify weakness of the human condition, but rather the humility and sensibility to welcome and value the other with what we might articulate theologically as the incarnate love of Christ, or phenomenologically, of possessing ‘alterity in identity’ (Levinas 1999, 69). Hence, in the spontaneity of otherness, it may not be surprising to find oneself panting and shivering in preparation to ‘Go out at once into the streets and lanes of the town and bring in the poor, the crippled, the blind, and the lame’ (Luke 14:21). For panting and shivering evidences the gravity of the role of responsibility to care for others to the point of exposure to their needs and fears, hunger and thirst. In terms of good teaching we come then to the insight of good teaching that the signs of evidencing the affectivity of a spontaneity of otherness, of being a gift of self for students, is not by feeling over-confident with pride of one’s accomplishment and standing, but by showing the vulnerability of a little weakness and little love; of panting and shivering a little in fear of not to hurt or damage the students, and of wanting to value them from the heart with the spontaneity of a little goodness, wisdom and compassion.

Be Imaginative

In the search for truth, the momentum of history forges a path to be followed with imagination inspired by ‘the unceasing action of the Holy Spirit (cf. *Jn* 16:13)’ (*Fides et Ratio*, no. 11). One of the actions of the Spirit breaking into history relates to the incarnation, the logos of God made flesh in the person of Jesus the Christ, that to say, of seeing ‘what God does for humanity’ (no. 12).

Let us suggest then that the progress of education towards truth can learn from a theological perspective of the incarnation. The incarnation brings into conversation the nearness and newness of the Jesus' preaching of the Kingdom of God. Here we find a spiritual, biblical and theological imagination of Christ's personhood and mission of bringing good news to the poor (Lk 6:20) (in spirit (Matt 5:3)) (Kasper 1986, 84). In terms then of developing the theological imagination of faith and mission in education, we may ask two questions in developing the truth of the student's needs in desire for good teaching: (i) from a Lukan perspective, *Who are the 'really poor' students?* (p.84); and (ii) from a Matthean perspective, *How do students evidence a poverty of spirit?* (that is to say, a lack internal motivation to learn, to be curious and wonder about new ideas, theories and the discovery of finding practical ways of engagement).

To respond to these questions, let us first refer to Kasper's reflection on Jesus' relation to the poor: 'Jesus himself talks about the poor in the context of a series of parallel expressions; he also calls blessed the broken-hearted, the oppressed, the hated, and the mourners. 'Poor' is taken in a very broad sense; it includes the helpless, those without resources, the ill-treated, the abused' (Kasper 1986, 84). We are looking for an incarnational response, of the eternity of God colliding into our time of falling prey to 'egotism, self-seeking, self-will, self-advantage and self-importance' (p. 86). The incarnate One, Jesus, testifying to the Kingdom of God, puts into question the expression of self-interest as the meaning and purpose of existence. Truth then is to be found in the affectivity of love, the very 'soul of justice', as the time of 'the coming Kingdom of God' and 'the solution to the riddle of history' (pp. 86-7).

Moving forward then in terms of developing a thinking heart of education, the teacher can find resonance from the imagination of the incarnate Christ and take up the stance and hope

of the transcendental imperative of transformative teaching, to 'be imaginative'. To this end, the teacher is called to take on the flesh and blood reality of the students, to be sensitive to those who are 'really poor' in material terms and/or those who are evidencing for example forms of psychological suffering. Facing the 'riddle of history' in the context of teaching and learning, the teacher must seek out the spontaneity of the Kingdom of God, to be present to the student's world that orients their learning and understanding. In this way, the imagination of a thinking heart takes shape and moves towards the gift of hope in the classroom.

Be hopeful

In terms of the imperative, be hopeful, let us engage further our two questions: *Who are the 'really poor' students?* and *How do students evidence a poverty of spirit?* Hope theologically is a function of drawing out the meaning of life and death in the context of the paschal mystery. In other words, Christ's suffering, death and resurrection can help to bring out the theological imagination of hope to inspire the affectivity of good teaching and the habitus of developing a thinking heart for both teachers and students alike. Through the paschal mystery, Christ reveals the divine life: of being a gift of self for others. To nurture the gift of one's talents speaks of developing a habitus of knowing the Gospel and the suffering of others. A response to the 'riddle of history' is made in the personhood of a hopeful movement of imagining 'the world otherwise' (Kelly 2006, 182). If indeed those who are poor (in spirit) witness to the hope of the Kingdom of God, we are called then to seek the Kingdom of the Father through such ethical and religious stirrings of faith, repentance and righteousness. All our memories of the good offer testimony to the truth of the splendour of God's dwelling in the person of Christ whose Spirit blows embers upon our affectivity of spontaneity to give light to the imagination and hope.

Christ's death and resurrection unveils the divine presence of God and the offer of transcendence. For the death of self-interest will lead to the life of understanding the other and imagining the world otherwise as a place of hope; a classroom bearing the gift and anointing of 'eschatological shalom' (Kasper 1986, 73) which we can relate as a thinking heart. The students then who are 'really poor' find a place to express their vulnerability to inspire the affectivity of good teaching and a response of compassion. Accordingly, the segregation of the teacher and student need not be jealously guarded too easily lest overly impersonal ways of teaching infiltrate the teaching environment. Imagining the world otherwise, seeking a little truth and a little goodness, the teacher touches upon the materially poor students' fear of exclusion with care such as the warm embrace of hospitality and a gentle smile. Equally, as students who feel hurt, isolated, hostile or even numb about learning can do well to learn from the bodiliness of the students who are really poor materially as they enjoy and hope through the enjoyment and hopefulness of the teacher. The Kingdom of God and all that it embraces, even the love of learning and the development of the imagination, is there to be nurtured into a life of faithfulness to one's self, others, the world and to the person of Christ. We find then an appropriate place to explore our next imperative of good teaching.

Be faithful

In the context of nurturing the pursuit of truth and wisdom in the classroom, let us suggest that to be faithful speaks of the intellectual conversion of 'habits' and the development of the 'creative imagination' (Kelly 2006, 213). The affectivity then of being faithful suggests developing the patient endurance (Rev 14:12) to seek 'further intelligence' (p. 213). Moreover, as we look further at the passage from the Book of Revelation ('Here is a call for the endurance of the saints, those who keep the commandments of God and hold fast to the faith of Jesus') we discover that the nature of seeking 'further intelligence' situates the

transcendental imperative to be faithful in the light of hope (patient endurance/'endurance of saints'), holiness and sanctity ('the saints'), righteousness (keeping God's commands) and developing a close proximity to 'the faith of Jesus'. These elements of intellectual conversion at once need to be nurtured from the surprise of encountering the risen Jesus who breathes his Spirit upon us (John 20:19-23) giving 'room for more surprises' (p. 214).

To be faithful, to possess a thinking heart that is vulnerable to the surprise of encountering the risen Jesus, signifies that a 'conversation is never over' (Kelly 2006, 214). There is always something more. A sign of good teaching then is that the conversation continues outside the classroom, at home, in the world and through the course of life. This is further compelling given that we face the absurdity and meaninglessness of society obsessing with body images, social media and video content where the only 'intelligence' is to seek a kind of 'repressive control' (Kelly 2006, p. 214).

Moreover, to be faithful then takes on the vocation of discipleship to draw people out towards a more metaphysical and spiritual dimension of life to be close to 'the faith of Jesus'. In this way, the conversation continues to build up society and culture with the intelligence of hope in a personal way. A student can be inspired to understand that the world is a place in which, 'Each individual brings his or her own hopes, sufferings, and even guilt to the table of life. Each is to be welcomed in the open space, beyond any human imagining, of God's saving will for the salvation for all' (Kelly 2006, p. 214). Living out the affectivity of faithfulness inspiring the conversion of the intellect, 'habits' and the 'creative imagination', a student may well begin to ask in a contemplative fashion some searching questions about truth and the meaning of life itself such as: '*Who am I? Where have I come from and where am I going? Why is there evil? What is there after this life?*' (*Fides et Ratio*, no. 1). To ask these questions

is to take a step towards a life of holiness and sanctity, of being close of the faith of Jesus. Moreover, as pointed out at the beginning of the article, these questions help to provide the foundation for understanding the nature of affectivity itself. Following on then, to live in the world, the teacher and student alike are faced with the challenge to be pastoral, that is to say, to discover ways in which the practice and understanding of faith may further find expression within society beyond the classroom.

Be Pastoral

The transcendental imperative, be pastoral, brings to our attention the truth of love. If then love is the found in truth, the encounter with Jesus the Christ and ‘Good Shepherd’ (Jn 10:11), we are faced with the difficult challenge not to act like neither stupid sheep who cannot help others to mature and grow. Nor can we be like ‘false shepherds’ who are too self-interested in ‘their salary, their reputation, about structures, administration and the success of the group’ (Vanier 2004, 188-9). To take on an affectivity of being pastoral, the teacher can take note of two qualities: humility and humour. Let us take up humility first. Sustaining, healing, guiding, and nurturing are all key values in pastoral care. Humility much like patience acts as the hope to take on the affectivity of being pastoral. Such hope will find opportunities for expression particularly in the area of formation, namely to recognise one’s ‘faults and compulsions’ (p. 188) that can affect the excellence of good teaching.

In my view, just as University lecturers and professors for example can have the opportunity for continuing education through for example graduate programs in University teaching, or feedback through peer and student review of teaching performance and course content, what is equally, if not more necessary, is the spiritual formation of staff. In a Catholic University, regular opportunities through the year can be made available for staff spiritual reflection and

formation days given by priests, religious, theologians and other qualified professionals. However, developing even Graduate programs or including courses of Spiritual formation in regards to teaching would help to transmission of the Catholic Intellectual and Spiritual Tradition to the life of the University. Albeit the goal here is to introduce pastoral and spiritual formation as a foundation for good teaching. In this way, the affectivity of being pastoral, of being a good shepherd like Christ, can come in a more open and spontaneous way to help teachers break out of the 'shell of selfishness' and mature through the humility of acknowledging one's 'fault and compulsions' (p. 188), and seeking a pathway towards possessing a thinking heart of further intelligence.

The affectivity of being pastoral can also be deepened by humour. To embrace the 'slow process' of maturity and conversion, demonstrates a movement towards the value of personhood and relating to others rather than giving one's energies over towards objects and wishes like 'cars, houses, promotions and wealth' (Nouwen, Naus and McNeill 1974, 172). A sign of taking on the process of conversion is to 'be full of humour', that is to say, 'knowledge with a soft smile' (p. 172). Like old people who have developed a good sense of humour to help them be resilient to suffering and possess a not too over-serious thinking heart, the teacher can learn that, 'Humor is a great virtue because it makes you take yourself and your world seriously but never too seriously. It brings death into every moment of life, not as a morbid intruder, but as a gentle reminder of the contingency of things' (p. 173). To take on and learn the affectivity of being pastoral suggests then the openness to die to self a little each day and find life gifted with the world of what is beyond the self, namely other people and 'a universe of grace' (Kelly 2006, 111). Here we find the light in which the teacher might express something of the transforming power of Jesus' gift of life through his death on the cross, namely that existence contains the hope for 'new life' and that our lives

are not beholden to the ‘demonic powers’ (p. 112) of the world that cause for example economic oppression and political violence. In this way, teachers may convey the transcendental imperative to students to not be afraid in a world evidencing anxiety, anguish, madness, dehumanisation and alienation.

Be not afraid

Cultural limitations such as prejudice can help to distort truth producing aphasiacs, namely people mumbling, speaking and writing a jumble of words that have been drained of their value. In the desire to articulate about the meaning and truth of history, there can be a tendency to ignore the horrors of human history as we have seen in the twentieth century like ‘the Holocaust, the gulag, and the Khymer Rouge’ (Cohen 1994, xxi). Good teaching, in response to developing a thinking heart and a taste for truth, as it were, can do well to inspire confidence to take up a stance against prejudice and the tendency to avoid reflecting upon the tragedies of history especially in recent memory. A good teacher will then look to the Gospel as challenging the presence of sin in culture as a means to encourage students to not be afraid of evil and evil doers (Matt 5:38-40). Fear can lead to revenge and not possessing the will and grace to seek to understand the behaviour of those who harm us. In response to this, a good teacher will encourage students the art of becoming a philosopher. Almost implying taking up this pathway towards truth and wisdom, Pope St. John Paul II writes:

Moreover, the objective value of many concepts does not exclude that their meaning is often imperfect. This is where philosophical speculation can be very helpful. We may hope, then, that philosophy will be especially concerned to deepen the understanding of the relationship between conceptual language and truth, and to propose ways which will lead to a right understanding of that relationship (*Fides et Ratio*, no. 96).

The art then of ‘philosophical speculation,’ of learning to be a philosopher can help the student to live in a fecund way in a turbulent and metaxic (in-between) world of good and evil, hope and despair, and hence move towards discovering an antidote to the oppression of aphasia. Duly then language, if it is opened towards truth with the affectivity of a thinking heart, will not be afraid to evidence and utilise the gift and spiritual value of melancholy, producing the goodwill to be present to the sufferings and outrage of others with the gift of hope and the benediction of an ‘eschatological shalom’ (Kasper 1976, 73): the vigilance to love others ‘from your heart’ (Matt 18:35).

Be vigilant

To take on the otherness and affectivity to be vigilant demands the ability to ‘toil’ (*Fides et Ratio*, no. 6) towards a progress of meaning, understanding and enquiry. Towards appreciating such progress, we may ask, ‘Who in the end could forge anew the paths of experience and thought which have yielded the treasures of human wisdom and religion?’ (no. 31) In other words, how might the subjectivity of believing encourage the pursuit of truth? To be vigilant and draw out the affectivity of otherness speaks first of learning to love others so profoundly from the heart. Where our hearts are saturated in love, we can begin to catch within our conscience and consciousness the gift of believing in the one we love. Vigilance then is the living symbol of the way we give ourselves to the other with an outpouring of love. Moreover vigilance is the crown, as it were, of learning the transcendental imperatives: be spontaneous, be imaginative, be hopeful, be faithful, be pastoral and be not afraid. Our hope cannot rest until ‘God is finally ‘all in all’ (cf 1 Cor 15.28’, that is to say ‘‘God is love’ (1 Jn 4.8, 16)’ (Kasper 1976, 78, 83). For through the vigilance of love, we find the spontaneity of conversion and faith, the imagination to seek a better world (the Kingdom of God), the hope to live ‘otherwise’ for the good, the faith to be

holy, the pastoral spirit to care for others and the strength to not be afraid in the world in the midst of encountering evil and evil doers.

Moreover, the affectivity of vigilance can find resonance in the life of the martyrs of faith and charity. Pope St. John Paul II explains:

The martyrs know that they have found the truth about life in the encounter with Jesus Christ, and nothing and no-one could ever take this certainty from them. Neither suffering nor violent death could ever lead them to abandon the truth which they have discovered in the encounter with Christ. This is why to this day the witness of the martyrs continues to arouse such interest, to draw agreement, to win such a hearing and to invite emulation. This is why their word inspires such confidence: from the moment they speak to us of what we perceive deep down as the truth we have sought for so long, the martyrs provide evidence of a love that has no need of lengthy arguments in order to convince. The martyrs stir in us a profound trust because they give voice to what we already feel and they declare what we would like to have the strength to express (*Fides et Ratio*, no. 32).

The affectivity and otherness of vigilance signifies a vocation paralleling the experiences of the martyrs of the Christian faith: an uncompromising personal and intimate encounter with Jesus the Christ: the truth of love, namely the very affectivity and voice of ‘what we already feel’ at the level of the soul: the value of being a gift of self for others. We can suggest then that the transcendental imperative, be vigilant, articulates an affectivity and willingness to love others so deeply. Encountering Christ’s word in the depths of the soul and conscience

signifies hearing the language of truth, and accordingly the grace and vocation to make the voice of truth be heard as love.

In terms of good teaching, learning from the experience of the martyrs suggests that love is demanding even to the point of great sacrifice for the good of the students. The import for good teaching and possessing a thinking heart therefore means having the willingness to shed a little blood and haemorrhage for the good of the students. Love then is not afraid to encounter the moods and difficulties of the students and even be cut or wounded from their own limitations and weaknesses. The teacher will encounter difficult students. However, where the affectivity of the vigilance of love is at hand, the otherness of being vulnerable to students' wounds, to feel their suffering and hurt, brings about a sense of the wisdom and truth of love, namely compassion.

Conclusion: Towards a Thinking Heart of Education

Our seven transcendental imperatives of transformative being have helped to create a theological and phenomenological (ethical metaphysical) perspective of good teaching. To summarise, we can relate our imperatives as follows:

- (i) *be spontaneous* to offer a little goodness, wisdom and compassion.
- (ii) *be imaginative* to take on the flesh and blood reality of the world of the students.
- (iii) *be hopeful* to encourage students to express their ideas, memories and reflections.
- (iv) *be faithful* to help students develop their creative imagination.
- (v) *be pastoral* to commit to spiritual formation.
- (vi) *be not afraid* to nurture students in philosophical speculation and become a philosopher.

- (vii) *be vigilant* to allow love to penetrate the progress and toil of meaning, understanding and enquiry.

Accordingly, looking at these seven imperatives we have set out to bring to light the value of the Catholic Intellectual Tradition's search for truth in terms of how affectivity and otherness might help to inspire the desire for transformative learning and teaching. To this end, we have sought to evoke the metaphor of possessing the resilience of a thinking heart of further intelligence.

A thinking heart of education, of good teaching and learning, facilitates the practice of truth as a journey of self-discovery, the very 'admonition to know yourself' (*Fides et Ratio*, no. 1). Let us think of education as a journey wherein both teachers and students find themselves travelling towards new lands, new languages, new ways of being, and moreover new questions such as '*Who am I? Where have I come from and where am I going? Why is there evil? What is there after this life?*' (no. 1) Where a teacher then accompanies students along the journey of discovering and responding to these questions, we find here the hope that the journey has begun to make its way towards a biblical horizon of mystery of 'What no eye has seen, nor ear heard, nor human heart conceived, what God has prepared for those who love him' (1 Cor 2:9).

To ask questions of meaning and truth is to journey towards the place of faith, hope and love, the very Kingdom of God. Here we find thinking hearts of hope and compassion growing in acceptance of others, dismantling 'prejudices and social barriers', facilitating new ways of communication and inspiring warmth, intelligence, humour, intimacy 'and the sharing of sadness and joy' (Kasper 1976, 86). We can summarise and conclude that the affectivity of

good teaching is a transformative journey of awareness of the revelation of divine love at the source of truth, self-discovery and ‘the meaning of life’ (p. 86).

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